

BINFIELD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Binfield Heath Parish Council Meeting held on Monday July 31st at 7.00pm in the Scout hut

Meeting of the Recreation Ground Charities & Allotment for the Labouring Poor Charity

16/23 Allotments. There is one person on the allotment waiting list and one plot available.

17/23 Recreation Ground

17.01/23 The Chairman has cleared greenery covering one of the waste bins. Other waste bins need repairs. Lock replacements are to be ordered. **(Clerk to action)**

17.02/23 The ROSPA inspection will take place in August. The chairman will accompany the inspector. The Clerk will check for a possible date. **(Clerk to action)**

17.03/23 A tree officer reported a dangerous tree in the recreation ground. This is to be pollarded initially. Two trees are to be removed. All other trees are to be inspected on 11th August.

The meeting of the Parish Council

Present Cllr P Rollason, Cllr L Ransom, Cllr H Lacey, Cllr Robert Davis, Cllr Summerland, Cllr D Bartholomew (OCC, SODC), Cllr L Rawlins (SODC) and sixteen members of the public.

082/23 Apologies Cllr Fulton-Urry

083/23 Declarations of Interest None

084/23 Minutes of the meetings held on Monday 26th June 2023. Cllr Summerland proposed the minutes were accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Ransom. All agreed.

085/23 Matters Arising

119/22 Code of Conduct This was discussed briefly as the date the existing Code of Conduct was adopted was not on the paperwork. The PC decided last year that it was not prepared to adopt the most recent Code. This position will be reviewed and the Clerk will try to ascertain the date of adoption of the earlier code. **(Clerk to action)**

086/23 County Councillor's report Cllr Bartholomew's full report is attached to the minutes. Cllr Bartholomew was asked about road closures as they have a huge impact when the buses do not run. The closure usually lasts far longer than the work needs. Cllr Bartholomew will investigate if he is made aware of the problem at the time. Cllr Bartholomew also mentioned the Road Officer's report into traffic issues in Binfield Heath. Speeding along Gravel Road which was raised by one of the residents had not been raised at the time.

087/23 District Councillor's report Cllr Rawlins' report is attached to these minutes. The new Councillor Grants are now live and close in October. Planning was also discussed regarding the applications below. Advice was given.

088/23 Financial Situation

088.01/23 The financial position had been circulated.

088.02/23 The July accounts were presented. Invoices to the value of £3,668.95 were authorised for payment. These payments were proposed by Cllr Ransom and seconded by Cllr Davis. All agreed. **(Clerk to action)**

089/23 Planning Matters

Applications GRANTED by SODC

Frieze Cottage Crowsley Henley on Thames RG9 4JL P23/1993/LB Add a block ridge to the thatch rather than a flush ridge.

Bottle and Glass Bones Lane Binfield Heath RG9 4JT P21/S1733/FUL Retrospective change of use of the agricultural Dutch barn to provide outdoor dining area, additional seating, external storage and kitchen containers and extraction unit to be used in association with the public house. Addition of timber cladding to barn and screening fencing around containers. (As amplified by floor plan and elevation plans submitted 08 March 2022) (As amended by plans 2023-02-10 to revise external appearance, provide additional parking, remove retail/shop within barn). (As amplified and amended by Transport Statement and plans to increase overflow car parking received 31 March 2023).

Keepers Cottage Kiln Lane RG9 4EL P23/S2151/HH Enlargement of window on ground floor level

west elevation and extension to tiled canopy to form new boiler room on west elevation.

Completed applications for ratification

Frieze Cottage Crowsley Henley on Thames RG9 4JL P23/1993/LB Add a block ridge to the thatch rather than a flush ridge. Recommended for approval. Decision ratified.

Keepers Cottage Kiln Lane RG9 4EL P23/S2151/HH Enlargement of window on ground floor level west elevation and extension to tiled canopy to form new boiler room on west elevation. Recommended for approval. Decision ratified.

8 Heathfield Close Binfield Heath RG9 4DS P23/S2213/HH Single storey rear extension and new side doorway. Recommended for approval. Decision ratified.

New Applications

Elm Tree Farm Common Lane Binfield Heath P23/S2203/HH Detached garage/carport. This was discussed and will be recommended for approval. **(Clerk to action)**

Orchard Cottage Common Lane Binfield Heath P23/S1036/FUL Amendment: as supported by plans received 7th July 2023 demonstrating proposed drainage measures. It was decided that no response to the amendment was necessary.

Binfield Heath Stores Arch Hill Binfield Heath RG9 4DU P23/S2237/FUL Proposal for two new detached dwellings in the rear garden of Binfield Heath Stores including new shared driveway and entrance gates, accessed via Arch Hill. This was discussed at length with the members of the public. The points that residents raised were the difficulty of seeing an overall plan for the important centre of the village rather than just a decision on two houses being developed behind the shop that needs renovation and maybe changes to the footprint. The overall site appears too small for 2 detached dwellings plus the shop accommodation with not enough garden space. There were a number of issues raised in terms of safety of entering and leaving the site with an entrance opposite an established road. Residents could envisage a parking issue with parking spaces for new residents and no available parking for the post office and shop. Already parking is an issue all the way up Arch Hill with little visibility for those exiting Heathfield Avenue. There were still fears that the licence for the post office might not be renewed if the shop was closed for too long. Cllr Rawlins suggested that a request was made to put the application on hold to see if some amendments could be made and the application for the shop development was in place. Cllr Ransom will draft the response to SODC.

(Clerk to action)

The application for Bournes Farmhouse (p22/S4374/FUL is to go to Committee on 9th August. The Clerk was asked if this date could be changed. **(Clerk to action)**

090/23 Neighbourhood Plan Cllr Davis had sent an update to the NP. Comments from residents have been mainly supportive. Any suggested changes will be looked at by the drafting group. A meeting with The Phillimore Estate had taken place and their comments were discussed. It was regrettable that these had arrived so late. The next step will be to submit the plan to SODC for examination. A resident asked about open spaces in terms of the plan and the proposed application of concern. There was a short discussion on this and the idea of infill.

091/23 Neighbourhood Watch Deferred

092/23 Community Matters

092.01/23 Arriva Buses A small window of opportunity to make a slight change to the bus service was taken by the Chairman. The new timetable will start in September.

092.02/23 Village Shop See Application P23/S2237/FUL

092.03/23 Oak trees in Gravel Rd Deferred

093/23 Highways/Transport and General Maintenance Discussed earlier

094/23 Green and Open Spaces This was part of the discussion on the Neighbourhood Plan and the application for the development of the shop area.

095/23 Public Forum The residents were mainly concerned with Application P23/S2237/FUL. See under **New Applications**

096/23 Matters for future consideration Basketball net
The meeting finished at 9.30pm.

Date of next meeting: Monday September 25th 2023 at the Scout Hut

REPORT TO BINFIELD HEATH PARISH COUNCIL JULY 2023 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

LTN IMPACT REPORT LEADS TO GROWING CALLS FOR RESIGNATIONS

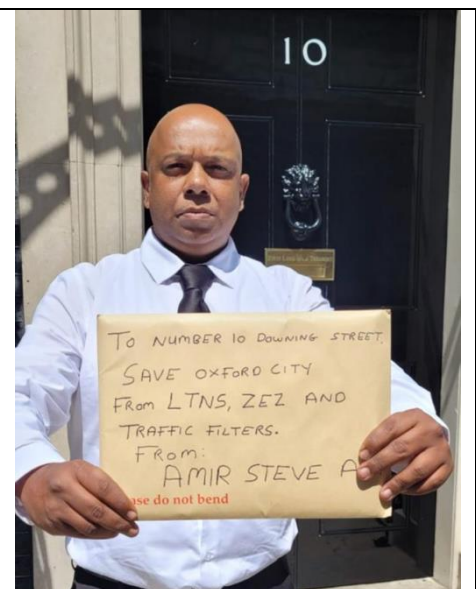
Leading OCC Cabinet members have faced calls to resign after a council report revealed modelling which showed Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) lead to ambulances experiencing delays when responding to “life threatening” calls. The council report analysed the impact of LTNs in East Oxford and Cowley on South Central Ambulance Service’s response times and found the traffic measures cause delays of between 35 to 45 seconds to response times for life threatening, emergency, and urgent calls in East Oxford. County councillor and leader of the Conservative group at the county council, Eddie Reeves, has since called for Andrew Gant, cabinet member for highways management and Duncan Enright, Cabinet member for travel, to resign for not releasing the information in an “open and transparent manner”.

THREE ROADS IN OXFORD TO BE MANAGED BY ANPR IN PLACE OF BOLLARDS

OCC has approved proposals to install automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras at three low traffic neighbourhood (LTN) closure points in Cowley, Oxford. The decision was made on Thursday 22 June by the Cabinet member for highways management at a delegated Cabinet member decision meeting. Motor vehicles without exemptions who drive through these points will be subject to a penalty charge notice.

PETITION DELIVERED TO DOWNING ST CALLING FOR NO CONFIDENCE VOTE IN OCC

Community champion Amir Steve Ali delivered a petition to Downing Street which calls for a no confidence vote in OCC due to its role in pushing ahead with Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs), the Zero Emissions Zone (ZEZ) and traffic filters (the four-sector plan). The petition on Change.org had been signed by more than 3,600 people on June 19 and it claims that the council’s traffic measures have caused more pollution and have led to emergency vehicles becoming stuck behind gridlocked traffic. The petition describes the council’s traffic measures as a “big threat to members of public freedom and businesses”. An Oxfordshire County Council spokesman said: “We are aware of the petition on Change.org. This is something for central government review subject to it meeting parliamentary petitions criteria.”



DECARBONISING PENSION INVESTMENTS IN OXFORDSHIRE

Pension funds invested for local government workers at Oxfordshire councils and a large number of other local organisations have been re-shaped to align investment decisions with the administration’s aim of creating a “greener, healthier and fairer county”. At its meeting earlier in June, the Pension Fund Committee agreed to reduce its allocation to the UK market and in particular to the FTSE100 companies that have links to major oil, gas and mining companies. The committee also chose to end investments in emerging markets reflecting concerns about social and

governance issues – specifically within China and Saudi Arabia.

HOME UPGRADE GRANT LAUNCH

OCC was recently awarded £6.417m of funding from the government's Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2). HUG2 follows on from the Sustainable Warmth funding that officially ended in March this year, and is a two-year scheme running across Oxfordshire (with the exception of Oxford City, which has its own scheme) until March 2025. HUG2 publicly launched in June and is aimed at low-income owner occupier or privately rented households living in off-gas homes rated EPC 'D' or below, to enable a range of energy efficiency improvements to be retrofitted free of charge e.g., cavity wall and loft insulation, heating upgrades and solar PV. More information about the funding and the eligibility criteria can be found on the OCC website.

OCC SEEKS GOVERNMENT PERMISSION TO ADOPT LANE RENTAL SCHEME

Utilities and other companies who close Oxfordshire's roads could be encouraged to minimise congestion and disruption when they carry out their work or face financial penalties of up to £2,500 a day. OCC will ask the government to allow it to introduce a lane rental scheme (LRS) which allows organisations working on the county's busiest roads at the busiest times to face extra charges. If approved, the LRS would encourage those working on the highway to prioritise off-peak hours and to complete the work as quickly as possible to reduce their costs. Surplus money raised by the council would be used to help manage and improve the highway network.

POTHOLE INNOVATION TRIAL

After a winter that saw the number of potholes reported in Oxfordshire double compared to the same period last year and heavy criticism from the public, a trial has taken place aimed at improving the repair process. On Monday and Tuesday, 26 - 27 June, OCC and its highways contractor Milestone Infrastructure used the road between Steventon and East Hanney as a test site to trial seven different methods of filling in potholes or repairing minor defects requiring 'patching'. Some of these methods are already used in Oxfordshire – including the Milestone [dragon patcher](#) – while the others were new ones sourced by Milestone. The Hanney/Steventon Road was closed and a 1km stretch was divided into sections. Each section had a different type of pothole or patch repair carried out to get a direct comparison of the various methods. Last year, Milestone Infrastructure, a part of M Group Services, repaired 31,413 road defects. This was against a backdrop of perfect pothole-forming weather conditions – a prolonged freeze over winter followed by a protracted period of wet weather, which led to an unprecedented increase in the number of emergency pothole repairs. The trial will allow comparisons of the type of repair, equipment, material, and labour used, and the time taken. This would include an understanding of the potential results, longevity of repairs, waste generated, carbon impact, use of recycled content and productivity that may be achievable. The next stage will involve contractors returning for at least four more days of work and additional testing and analysis to enable a longer-term review of the methods.

MONEY-SAVING STREETLIGHTING PROJECT SET TO BE COMPLETED NEXT YEAR

All of Oxfordshire's streetlights are scheduled to be converted to energy efficient LED units in the next 12 months, saving millions of pounds and thousands of tonnes of carbon. The programme commenced under the previous Conservative administration. A total of 86 per cent of lights have now been converted. When completed, the £38 million project is expected to lead to energy savings of millions of pounds over the next 20 years. The LED lights will reduce the amount of carbon dioxide being produced by 70 per cent. Before the conversion programme started, the county's streetlights accounted for around 7,596 tonnes of CO2 every year – representing nearly 35 per cent of the council's total emissions.

SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR BINFIELD HEATH

SPEEDING NEAR PLAYGROUND AND BUS STOPS

As previously reported, refurbishment/upgrading of village speed signs and road markings should

be undertaken over the summer. Subsequent to the May PC meeting, at the request of the chairman, I asked the road team to look at Dunsden Way from the shop to Kings Common Close. The officer responsible did this and the response is as follows:

“As the bend itself is in the centre of the village we would expect vehicles to be traveling slowly, and as there are a number of existing warning signs around this bend we would expect drivers to be aware of unexpected obstructions in the carriageway. The Parish Council could encourage the hedge owner to side back the hedge away from the edge of the carriageway to improve visibility for traffic, especially as the forthcoming autumn and winter period could provide an opportunity for a significant cut back. Following this, if still desired, we could look into installing some verge markers similar to those just past Fosters Lane in the inside of the bend adjacent to the hedge.”

ACCESS ISSUES NEAR FRIEZE COTTAGE AND WELL HOUSE, RG9 4JL

I was asked to make enquiries with OCC officers and received the following response:

"I recently made a site inspection following a query on this matter, upon inspection there was no issue from a rights of way prospective, users such as horse riders, cyclist and on foot can use the right of way without any obstruction and the sign doesn't deter legitimate users. Regarding private vehicular rights, we don't get involved with the public exercising their private rights of access, unless there is conflict with public rights, so unfortunately there's nothing further we are able to do here, but we will monitor the situation."

BUS SERVICE CHANGES THROUGH BINFIELD HEATH

At short notice, I was advised of planned changes. The PC Chairman responded and made some suggestions. These were viewed positively.

SODC councillor's report Binfield Heath – 31st July 2023

Councillor Community Grants Funding available A new round of funding from the Councillor Community Grant Scheme has launched in South Oxfordshire, to help local charities and organisations across the district. Every ward in South Oxfordshire is given funding to support local projects that directly benefit local residents. Organisations can now apply for grants from £250 up to a maximum of £5,000 from each ward councillor where the project is located. As district councillors we have the choice of projects to approve but seek input from our parish councils to help inform those choices. Please consider the current priorities in the parish and consult with us. Before applying, do get in touch with Mike and Leigh to discuss the project. Applications are made online and are open until midday on Friday 20 October 2023. (Round 1 of 2). The last round of funding awarded £179,824 to help 99 projects - including biodiversity and wildlife, mental and physical health and wellbeing, community buildings and recreational areas. You can find out more about the Councillor Community Grant scheme, including eligibility, on our website at www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants or by contacting the Community Enablement team at grants@southandvale.gov.uk.

Rural England Prosperity Fund SODC has secured funding from the government's Rural England Prosperity Fund, which can be used to provide a boost to projects such as creating rural business hubs, setting up community energy schemes, and diversifying farm businesses beyond agriculture. Any organisation with legal status (inc. public, private and third sector) will be able to apply for the funding when it opens in the Autumn. Interested parties are encouraged to send an expression of interest before the scheme opens. More details can be found on the website - <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/business-and-economy/advice-for-businesses/rural-england-prosperity-fund/>

South Oxfordshire Bathing Water Status Organisations across South Oxfordshire are planning to apply for bathing water status on the River Thames at Wallingford and Henley.

SODC is aiming to work with Wallingford Town Council to make a joint application to Defra for granting bathing water status. It is also supporting the bid for bathing water status being made by Henley Town Council. Both applications will be supported by environmental charity Thames21. Thames21 will use data gathered from the 2023 bathing season in the applications. This will include the numbers of those using the river as well as water samples taken by Thames21 and local trained volunteers. Thames21 plan to publicise the water quality data on an online story map on their website during the bathing season. If bathing water status is awarded, Thames Water would be legally required to treat waste outflows to a much higher standard, while the Environment Agency would need to monitor (and publish) water quality findings from May - September. "If the government is unwilling to support cleaner waters in South Oxfordshire, the council will move ahead towards that goal, working with Thames21 and our other partners", commented Cllr Freddie Van Mierlo, SODC Cabinet member for climate change and nature recovery. There has been interest in our ward, from both Shiplake and Eye & Dunsden. (Mike and Leigh are supportive of proposals from our ward, and would be pleased to discuss further.)

Make a Splash at Riverside The newly refurbished splash pad at Riverside Park and Pools in Wallingford will be welcoming visitors from Saturday 8 July. Opening times are 9am to 6pm, and it is free to use with no bookings required. The refurbishment work, which started in May, has introduced lots of new and exciting features including: water arches, play zones and much more. A new disabled access pathway has also been installed. SODC deployed 'community infrastructure levy' revenues to help fund the improvements.

Rubbish and recycling updates! SODC is advising residents to contact Biffa directly in first instance with any issues over missed or incorrect waste bin collections. They can be contacted either by phone on 03000 610610, or at admin.southoxford.biffa.co.uk Please then escalate to the SODC waste team if Biffa do not resolve in a satisfactory manner - waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk, or by calling 01235 422146. Additionally, please report any fly-tipping via southoxon.gov.uk/flytipping or call 03000 610610. SODC will take firm action, and indeed recently an individual had to pay £1,400 after dumping garden waste near Great Haseley.

Have Your Say on Air Quality SODC are running a survey on new proposals to enhance air quality in the local area. Please offer your views here - <https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/AirQualityActionPlan>. The survey closes on 27 July. This builds on the previous plan, which led to a consistent reduction in nitrogen dioxide, one of the main pollutants measured.

Covid-19 The reliability of data on Covid cases is now much reduced following the end of test and trace. However national figures have shown a strong fall in cases. At 22nd July 2023, reported cases in SODC were at a weekly rate per 100k of population of 8 (it peaked at 1,504 on 6th January 2022) – a very low level - albeit that reporting may be somewhat incomplete. (Many don't report it.)

Gateway SODC continue to progress the potential from the Gateway project in Didcot. This project is in partnership with Homes England to regenerate and develop a derelict area of central Didcot opposite the Railway station; the area will include housing developed by Homes England and a mixed use office and commercial building. The building will provide council offices lost in the fire of January 2015 at Crowmarsh and commercial space for let. The council would save rental costs and receive rentals from VoWH council and commercial tenants. A draft design for has been put together for the office and commercial building following expert design and planning input. This will now be developed as a planning application and be subject to detailed costing quotes.

Housing Strategy and Local Authority Housing Fund Government has recognised that the refugees from Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Ukraine have contributed to pre-existing pressures on social housing. In order to make a contribution towards helping this Government are offering a couple of “Local Authority Housing Funds” whereby councils will be supported in the purchase of extra housing stock but government grant of some 40+% of the total cost. Councils will be enabled to borrow the balance of the investment to be funded and paid down by the future rents from the properties. This housing stock will remain owned by (district or unitary) councils after purchase – even after they may cease to be needed by the specified refugees. No refund of grant will ever be required by government. SODC intends to participate in this scheme and hopes to acquire some 23 homes. These will be supported by suitable staffing and create the potential for more housing acquisitions in the future – subject to government facilitation and sustainable financial scope.

Homes for Ukraine – call for landlords In Oxfordshire, many arrangements between hosts and Ukrainian nationals have continued for quite a long time and some are coming to an end. SODC are launching a campaign (with other councils) aimed at encouraging landlords (or potential landlords) to come forward for more information about housing Ukrainians. Many Ukrainians in Oxfordshire will have settled in local communities and found work, so identifying a range of affordable properties across the county is very important to allow them to start rebuilding their future with more independence. Please share with your local networks. Landlords can contact the central housing team on oxfordshirehousingcapacity@southandvale.gov.uk or calling 07858687569 or 07849574859. For more information, visit our South Oxfordshire Homes for Ukraine webpage.

Leigh Rawlins & Mike Giles
District Councillors