

Focus on Parish Councils – Monthly Update

June 2025

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Dear parish councillors and residents,

My first month after election has been a busy one. We have had our induction, and first full council meeting. I've also attended meetings with 6 parishes. I will endeavour to make it in person to meetings of all parishes at my earliest opportunity.

I am also honoured to have been appointed to the cabinet on OCC, as the portfolio holder for Future Economy.

In the coming month I will be at several parish council meetings. I'm also planning to attend the Bix and Assendon summer fete on 14th June.

OCC News

1. Highways Maintenance and Road Safety All member briefing information

Road Maintenance

This may be familiar to all but some helpful State of the Nation information is set out below:

The Council takes a **dual approach to road maintenance**:

- **Reactive maintenance** addresses urgent defects and incidents, including potholes and gully issues. This includes services like the Dragon Patcher and minor works teams. In 2024/25, Oxfordshire recorded approximately 40,000 road defects, of which 35,000 were potholes. The County received 26,981 highway enquiries, averaging 107 per working day. The total spend on defect repairs was £4.78 million, with an average repair cost of £106 per defect.
- **Preventative maintenance** aims to extend road life and avoid more costly future repairs. This includes: Surface dressing and micro-surfacing; Edge strengthening; Embankment stabilisation; Resurfacing and patching. In 2025/26, the Council has committed £22 million to preventative treatments and £15 million to highway schemes, including drainage and footway improvements.

The [new contract](#) with M Group went live on April 1 2025 after a very long and thorough process. The key documents setting out the Council's approach are the [Highways Asset Management Policy](#) and its associated Plan and Strategy.

To make processing your report quicker, upload photos that show the pothole's location, plus a close-up with an object that helps show its size. Visit [FixMyStreet](#)

Road Safety and Vision Zero

The Council continues implementing its Vision Zero strategy, aiming to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries by 2050. This includes the 20mph programme (now closed), which has delivered works in 275 parishes and will be evaluated for impact on safety and speed. Furthermore the Traffic and Road Safety team, supported by a £2 million capital budget, manages a range of measures including traffic calming schemes, speed limit changes, and safety audits.

2. Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are strategic documents developed by local authorities to identify and prioritise improvements in cycling and walking infrastructure. They provide a long-term approach to developing comprehensive local networks for active travel.

Two LCWIPs have been approved and published for Abingdon and Didcot, available on Oxfordshire County Council's Active Travel webpage. These are currently the only approved LCWIPs for the South and Vale area. LCWIPs for Thame, Wantage & Grove, and the Wallingford area are in progress. Once completed, they will expand the coverage of planned active travel improvements across the division.

Development and Scope of LCWIPs: Further information is available on the [active travel webpage](#), including LCWIPs for other Oxfordshire districts, walking and cycling design standards, and the Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN), which addresses inter-area connectivity.

The Department for Transport's LCWIP [technical guidance](#) outlines the six stages of LCWIP development. This may be of interest to those seeking to understand the process and identify opportunities for community involvement, particularly in defining geographic scope.

Oxfordshire County Council aims to create LCWIPs for all areas, prioritising locations that meet the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) criteria (population over 10,000). Stages 1, 2 and 6 of LCWIP development will be led internally, with potential consultant support for Stages 3–5, subject to funding availability.

Delivery of improvements identified in LCWIPs will depend on funding sources such as developer contributions, S106, CIL, and national funds like the Consolidated Active Travel Fund (CATF).

Once current drafts are complete, attention will shift to a wider list of LCWIP areas identified for South Oxfordshire, with further work expected later this year or into next year.

I would be interested to know if Parish Councils would be interested in finding out more about the potential for developing an LCWIP for the our Division.

3. OCC Marmot Ambitions

Oxfordshire has committed to becoming a [Marmot Place](#), embedding equity-focused principles into public health and system-wide policy to reduce health inequalities shaped by social determinants. In partnership with the Institute of Health Equity, a two-year work programme is underway, focusing initially on three priorities: giving every child the best start in life, creating fair employment and good work for all, and ensuring a healthy standard of living for all.

Key workstreams include:

- early years development
- inclusive economic growth
- rural inequality mapping
- primary care engagement
- and collaborative policy research through the Oxfordshire Policy Lab.

A multi-agency governance structure, including a Steering Group and Advisory Board ensures accountability and integration with existing health and wellbeing strategies. Progress will be monitored through a new health equity framework, with outputs guiding funding bids and informing local action. The programme is resourced through the Council's Public Health budget, with £141,575 allocated across 2024–2026.

4. Overview of Current urgent and emergency care (UEC) Pressures in Oxfordshire (Report to HOSC)

The UEC system in Oxfordshire faces significant pressure due to rising demand and system constraints. Key challenges include:

- Delays in ambulance response and hospital handovers.
- Increasing emergency department (ED) attendances and admissions.
- Capacity limitations across hospital, virtual ward, and home-based care services.
- Mental health crisis response struggling to meet 24/7 needs and reduce inappropriate placements.

Improvement Plans and Strategic Priorities for 2025/26: The Oxfordshire system has established an integrated improvement programme with several core objectives:

- Enhance same-day emergency care and urgent treatment centre usage.
- Improve ambulance performance and ED flow, targeting 78% of patients discharged within four hours.
- Expand neighbourhood-based models for personalised, holistic care.
- Increase early discharge rates and home-based care options, aiming for more discharges by day 7.

Mental Health and Neighbourhood Service Integration: Specific actions are underway to strengthen mental health and neighbourhood responses:

- Implementing a 24/7 mental health crisis team and expanding the “SUNRISE” all-age text service.
- Introducing a single point of access to streamline referrals and support discharge-to-assess models.
- Embedding multi-disciplinary neighbourhood teams to support complex community needs.
- Aligning virtual wards and visiting services to reduce unnecessary admissions and improve care at home.

[Read more](#)

5. Help for Schools to cut energy and carbon

Action on carbon and energy in schools (ACES) is a council funded service helping schools across Oxfordshire reduce their energy use, lower carbon emissions and save money on energy bills. Through the scheme, maintained schools can also apply for an interest free loan from OCC to finance bigger upgrades like LED lighting and rooftop Solar PV.

For more information please see [here](#).

6. Pizza and Politics Scheme for 11-18 year olds

Young people aged 11 to 18 in Oxfordshire can participate in the "Pizza and Politics" events organised by Oxfordshire County Council. These sessions provide an opportunity to learn about local democracy, engage in discussions with councillors and decision-makers, and share perspectives on issues affecting youth. Participants receive a £15 thank-you payment, reimbursement for travel expenses, and a certificate of participation. Events are held in various locations across the county and include refreshments. Find out more and sign up through the [website](#).

7. Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS): Overview and Access Information

The Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS), delivered by Oxfordshire County Council, provides personalised support to young people aged 11–18 who are experiencing challenges such as social isolation, low confidence, school exclusion, or unsafe living situations. Support is also extended to young people up to age 25 who have an EHCP or who have been in care.

TYSS offers both one-to-one and group-based support tailored to individual needs, aiming to build resilience, life skills, and positive relationships. Support sessions can take place in various settings including schools, homes, youth centres, or neutral community locations. Participation is voluntary, and young people are offered choice in how they communicate with the service (e.g. phone, email, WhatsApp).

Referral Routes

- Self-referral: Young people aged 13 and over may complete a referral form independently.

- Parental or carer referral: Parents and carers may also refer, with the consent of the young person.
- Professional referral: Schools, social workers, and other professionals are encouraged to support access through direct referral.

Contact and Further Resources

- [Website](#)
- [Referral Form](#)
- Email: tyss@oxfordshire.gov.uk
- [Tellmi App](#): Free, safe wellbeing support for 11–18 year olds in Oxfordshire
- [Activities Oxfordshire](#): Directory of local youth services and activities
- The [No Limits](#) programme supports Oxfordshire residents aged 16+ to access work, education, or training. It offers up to 30 hours of one-to-one support, including help with CVs, applications, interviews, and digital access

8. Civil Parking Enforcement

The current contract for civil parking enforcement in Oxfordshire is due to expire in April 2026. Preparatory work is well underway to scope and commission a new contract, with procurement planned to go out to tender in due course. This provides a key opportunity to evaluate service performance, expand capabilities, and ensure the next contract delivers enhanced outcomes for residents and road users.

Over the term of the existing contract, responsibility for civil enforcement has been integrated across all districts, leading to greater consistency and local control. There are also emerging links with other services, such as technical and back-office support for the traffic filters, which will be explored for greater operational synergy. The re-procurement process will additionally consider the integration of further powers and enforcement tools, such as Red Routes, enhanced observation periods for loading on double yellow lines, and potential provisions for pavement parking, all of which are subject to legislative context or ongoing national lobbying.

The central objective is to improve the consistency and visibility of parking enforcement across Oxfordshire. One of the primary challenges remains the recruitment and retention of civil enforcement officers. The council is also seeking to strengthen mechanisms for public reporting.

Residents can report illegal or unsafe parking via the council's [Civil Enforcement webpage](#). Dangerous parking causing obstruction is the responsibility of the Police.

9. Grants and Cost of Living

- **Hardship fund:** OCC's hardship fund (Resident Support Scheme) was launched in June. Phone: 01865 804171

- **The Warm Homes** provides funding to eligible low income households in Oxfordshire with poor energy efficiency ratings to support the installation of insulation and low carbon heating, helping to lower energy bills and reduce carbon emissions. [Find out more](#). Other retrofit opportunities can be found [here](#)

10. Consultations

- **Oxford to Caversham: A4074** - proposed 40mph & 50mph speed limits (closes 20th June 2025). [Find out more and respond](#)
- Oxfordshire **Rights of Way Improvement** Plan (RoWIP) [Find out more](#)
- Oxfordshire **Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment** 2025 consultation (closes 3rd Aug, 2025) [Find out more and respond](#)
- Oxfordshire **(Adults) Learning Disability** Plan 2025 – 2035, (closes on 13th July, 2025) [Find out more and respond](#)

Parish Round-Up

I hope to attend Parish Councils in person as regularly as I can. Below are some notes on issues raised at recent meetings:

- Watlington – Continued activity to promote the progress of the relief road. The closure of Shirburn Street for gas main works is causing significant disruption; I am working closely with the parish council to escalate changes and improvements to traffic management with OCC where possible.
- Britwell Salome – expansion of the 20mph area raised in parish council and will be discussed with council officers this month.
- Checkendon – review of application for extension of 20mph limit; flooding issue by pub
- Stoke Row – road conditions, lotting of woodland
- Pishill and Stonor – mobile phone coverage with retirement of analogue phonedines, community importance of Five Horseshoes pub.
- Cuxham – Chalgrove New Town and removal of bypass proposal, HGV traffic (including construction traffic), condition of roads.