

OCC News July 2025

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Picture above showing Green Party members at the LGA Conference in Liverpool

OCC headlines:

July saw the annual Local Government Authority Conference in Liverpool for three interesting days of conference speeches and exhibitions. OCC was well represented with Senior officers attending as well as a select group of councillors. With our OCC Green Party leader unable to attend I was lucky enough to be able to (gratefully) take his place. This conference was meant to be all about innovation as well as providing a suitable venue for all parties to mingle and to get to know each other. Whilst succeeding in the latter aim, I was underwhelmed by the “innovative” aspect, although some elements were good.

We have now had two full council meetings the latest was on July 8th. Thankfully the second full council was more interesting with some great debates and political manoeuvring! Being new to this political world it is quite interesting to see the machinations involved and getting to understand the means by which motions are proposed, and decisions are taken. Unfortunately, our motion did not get heard at this meeting and we are currently reviewing whether we take this on to the next Full Council where it would be heard. Each party can submit one motion per full council meeting; these are then run through in party order. Our last proposed motion was to treat all opposition parties similarly, with the one budget spread across all and not effectively double the costs of running 2 main opposition parties at the same time (as is currently the case with Labour and Conservatives / their alliances both on 12).

Road Resurfacing: A comprehensive programme of resurfacing work to improve roads across Oxfordshire is under way with 111,000 square metres of roads to be addressed. Oxfordshire County Council and its principal highways contractor M Group will visit 36 sites to carry out essential resurfacing. Work started at the end of June and is scheduled to run until 17 October. More can be discovered [here](#) – including which sites are being managed.

My roles: I am involved in the following committees (as per June):

- Audit and Governance and associated Working Groups.
- Planning and regulation

I am now also:

- The Military Champion for RAF Benson.
- On the board of the Chilterns National Landscape, and
- On the board of the Bridge Estate Charity in Crowmarsh

NEWS IN BRIEF:

A4074 policing: Thames Valley Police (TVP) were out on Sunday 13th July on the A4074 (finally!) tackling the speeding and dangerous driving issues we are all too aware of locally. Please see [here](#) for more details. TVP have also been monitoring Port Way more recently as part of their crack down on speeding.

Industrial action at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH): Resident doctors at OUH took part in the planned British Medical Association industrial action which ran from July 25th to 30th. Urgent and emergency care pathways support will remain in place post the action for a few days to ensure patient safety.

Climate Emergency UK: As described last time. The full results can be seen [here](#).

Local Government reorganisation: There is a lot of talk over the proposed new Unitary Councils. In Oxfordshire we have three options which can be found [here](#).

Drain clearing: OCC has committed to cleaning every roadside gully, drain and manhole every year for the duration the current term. (more [here](#)).

Encouraging active travel and reducing congestion: Living Streets, the charity for everyday walking, is encouraging parents to swap the school run for an active travel journey, with children self-reporting how they get to school each day. All they have to do to join is either complete a simple online [form](#) or email: walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk. More information in the June newsletter.

Additional funding to tackle serious violence in Thames Valley: Matthew Barber (Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner) has awarded £1.8m of Home Office funding to help tackle serious crime in the Thames Valley.

LOCAL QUESTIONS TO FULL COUNCIL (8th July):

At last full council we managed to get to all of our local questions – full questions available in June Newsletter, the below is a summary of the responses:

1. Cycle lane that runs along the A4074 from Warborough to Benson. This is being looked at along with a proposal to create a separate Active Travel Maintenance team. Meeting Andrew Gant on this w/c 4th August.
2. OCC owned lands maintenance. There are on-going periodic reviews of all council owned lands. All lands are minimally inspected annually with some being done quarterly.
3. Speeding along the A4074: TVP have been more active on the A4074 recently and have issued fines for speeding and dangerous driving. Furthermore, they are looking at the information from the Autospeedwatch device owned by Crowmarsh PC.

Please contact me (details at top) if you wish me to raise any questions on your behalf. Questions for the September Full Council need to be submitted by the end of August (to me).

CURRENT CONSULTATIONS:

Congestion Charge (Oxford): With the Botley Road still closed, it has been suggested that a temporary Congestion Charge is put in place to reduce traffic and pollution in Oxford and to enable the public services to run on time. This will then morph into the previously agreed filter system once the Botley Road is open. The survey is now open and can be found [here](#): Responses should be submitted by 11:59pm on Sunday 3 August 2025.

Oxfordshire Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025: The Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board must produce an assessment of pharmaceutical services in its area every three years. The survey can be found [here](#) and runs until the 3rd August.

Residents Survey: Every year OCC ask people living in Oxfordshire for feedback on how we are doing as a County Council. Please visit [here](#) if you would like to participate in the survey. This will run until the 13th August.

Household waste recycling centre survey: OCC are asking residents' preferences and views for Oxfordshire's household waste recycling centre (HWRC) network. Please visit [here](#) if you would like to participate in the survey. This will run until August 11th.

Tobacco control strategy: OCC are looking for input to their tobacco control strategy 2026-2030. Please visit [here](#) if you would like to participate in the survey. This will run until August 10th.

PARISH ROUND-UP

Reminder: the OCC CEO will be visiting our area (as well as Wallingford and Berinsfield/Garsington) on the 8th September (along with two other senior officers). A Monday has been chosen to demonstrate the sheer volume of speeding traffic associated with the H Café. We will be collectively creating an agenda to cover the major issues in each of the parishes.

Please refer [here](#): for all Fix My Street queries in your area. There is a huge volume of these currently and cover the gamut of OCC responsibilities.

By Parish Council – in alphabetical order. These will expand as I get increasingly involved in your Parish Council meetings and understand more about your requirements.

Benson:

Questions have been raised about:

- Management of the various areas of land in Benson belonging to OCC. Ongoing.
- Inhabitants of the Cala development have concerns over water management which they are currently working on with SODC and Thames Water. Waiting on meeting with OCC.
- Possible drug dealing “gangs” in the alleyway between Birmingham Yard and St.Helens Way. Keeping a watch and reporting sightings to Community Police.

Crowmarsh:

- Need for a footpath exiting the French Gardens development.
- Need for a 30mph sign on the Port Way (meeting arranged for 10th July).
- Desire for a 40mph speed limit on Nosworthy Way (as opposed to 50).
- SID post requirement in North Stoke.
- Reduction in speed request for B4009.

Dorchester:

We are waiting on input on:

- The various Unitaries that are competing with the Ridgeway option.
- What time the lights would be turned off should Dorchester opt for this post a village review. ✓
- When the new markings will be implemented on the A4074. ✓
- Armco repair alongside the barrier (which was repaired) which is over the pedestrian underpass of the A4074 from Dorchester. ✓
- Pathway from Meadside to Dorchester needs fixing. ✓

Ewelme:

- A public meeting will happen on the 8th September about the proposed pathway on Cat Lane, hopefully after the visit (same day) from Martin Reeves.
- Introduced PC to those responsible for paths at OCC. ✓
- Introduced to those who understand land ownership along

Warborough / Shillingford:

- Have fed into the Neighbourhood plan (from OCC perspective). ✓
- Bollards – waiting on additional information.

Note:

I will be on holiday from August 4th-5th and then from August 11th-25th. I will not be answering emails during this time. If anything of import arises, please text me on my mobile. I will respond when I can.