Blewbury Parish Council

Clerk to the Council
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MINUTES of the meeting of the Parish Council held on **Wednesday 16th September 2026** at 7.00 pm in the Melland Room at the Blewbury Clubhouse.

In attendance:
Cllr. Julia Saunders (Chair)
Cllr. Sarah Parkin
Cllr. Shelia Austin
Cllr. Mark Shayler
Cllr. Benedict Scott
Cllr. Andy Evason
Cllr. Lee Robinson
Cllr. Andrew Calder
Parish Clerk: Michelle Taylor
Lengthman: Iain Wood
County Councillor: Rebecca Fletcher
District Councillor: Hayleigh Gascoigne
Members of the Public: 9

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1. Apologies for Absence
To receive and record apologies from members unable to attend.
- Cllr. Anne Millman (Vice Chair)

2. Declarations of Interest
Councillors are reminded to declare any interests relating to agenda items.
-Cllr. J Saunder-Item:4.1 Planning Application: P26/V3839/LB

-Cllr. M Shayler-Item: 16.1 August Payments

3. Public Participation
The public may speak during the first 15 minutes. Each speaker is limited to 3 minutes. Please inform the Clerk at least 48 hours in advance. Councillors may listen but not respond during this time unless invited by the Chair.

A member from the Blewbury Local History Group gave an overview of the group which has been running for over 70 years within the village. It was announced that last year they lost their storage for their historic achieves, of which are currently being stored in the Clubhouse. They are still seeking a longer-term solution for storage within the village to make resources more readily available. To be discussed under item: 11.1.

A local resident announced concerns over the management of a local estate within the village raising health and wellbeing concerns for residents. Cllr. Saunders announced this is not under the remit of the Parish Council. District Councillor Hayleigh Gascoigne and Cllr. Rebecca Fletcher confirmed that there are departments within the County and district that can be informed/ notified and asked for information to be sent directly for their attention.

A further resident raised proposed improvements for Coffin Way, Blewbury (email circulated to all Council members prior to the meeting), for walkers and cyclists. County Council Rebecca Fletcher confirmed this was on her radar, but there were concerns from landowners adjacent to Coffin Way. Councillor Fletcher announced she would be chasing this as it is currently with the Countryside access team and will report back with any information at the next meeting of Full Council.

Planning Matters

4. Planning Updates

4.1 Planning Application – for review and comments

> **P26/V3162/HH & P26/V3163/LB** The Cleve South Street Blewbury OX11 9PR
>
> Proposal: Demolition of single storey annexe and replacement with a new single storey extension with glazed link and associated external landscaping. Repairs to existing southern gable and provision of rendered external wood fibre insulation to this wall. Provision of new ASHP within timber acoustic enclosure and PV panels on the roof. Minor internal changes.
>
> **BPC had no objections to this planning application.**

P26/V3348/HH Button Mead Bessels Way Blewbury Didcot OX11 9NH

Proposal: Erection of a two-storey side extension incorporating a carport at ground floor level and a bedroom above.

BPC had no objections to this planning application.

P26/V3498/FUL Robinsons, Church Road, Blewbury, Didcot, OX11 9PY

Proposal: Conversion of Garage into a 1 bedroom apartment

BPC had no objection to this planning application, but would like to request that there is no subdivision between the property and the annex.

P26/V3434/FUL Downside Farm Woodway Road Blewbury Didcot OX11 9EX

Proposal: Erection of storage barn

BPC had no objections to this planning application.

P26/V3610/FUL Land at Coffin Way Coffin Way Westbrook Street OX11 9QD

Proposal: Change of use of land to short-stay holiday accommodation, comprising the siting of 2no. holiday pods, with parking, cycle and bin storage, boundary planting and associated works.

BPC had no objections to this planning application.

P26/V3839/LB The Charity School House Church Road Blewbury OX11 9PY

Proposal: Replacement of French windows with like for like white painted wood.

BPC had no objections to this planning application.

4.2. Planning Decisions from Vale of White Horse DC- TBC during the meeting of Full Council in October.

Reports & Updates

5. County Councillor-September report received and circulated to Council **(Appendix 3-BPC Website**). Cllr. Fletcher announced the road surfacing works from Blewbury to

Upton is due to commence during October, starting with patching and followed by resurfacing. Cllr. Fletcher confirmed that the consultation on adult social care is now open and that the County Councillor grant is still available until the end of November for projects towards the benefit of the community. An update was also given on the crossing at Savages, which is scheduled to commenced during December 2026.

6. District Councillor- September report received and circulated to Council **(Appendix 4-BPC Website)**. Cllr. Gascoigne reported on the progress of the local government reorganisation, which government are due to meet again during October. Further updates will be given at the next meeting of Full Council. Changes in the process of planning regulations were also announced, which are due to come in to force in October.

7. **Lengthman's Report – Iain Wood**
7.1. Skate Park Grass Area. Iain announced the grass is now growing, but there is an ongoing issue with the bike track users taking the fencing down and digging in the mounds to make jumps within the grassed area. This is a safety concern and will continue to be monitored.
7.2. Machinery Repairs. Iain reported the annual service of machinery and tools has commenced and is ongoing.

8. Dibleys Estate Service Charges and Management (JS & SA) Cllr. Saunders announced this was not under the remit of the Parish Council, and for any information to be sent to County and District Councillors for their information.

9. Chailey Gardens
9.1. Council members to discuss the ongoing Trinity Estates Management and Playground Concerns. Correspondence circulated to all Council members for their information. Council members raised concerns about health and safety issues at the play park in Chailey Gardens. Cllr. Saunders announced this was not under the remit of the Parish Council. The Clerk confirmed all correspondence has been sent to both County and District Councillors, along with the MP.

Clubs and Societies

10. Clubhouse
10.1. Council to note Hall Administrator Report. July report circulated to Council. Noted. The Clerk confirmed there have been issues with the borehole, having found tree roots in the main tank. The tank has now been cleared and she will ask for this to be included within the annual inspection.
10.2. **Roof Repairs.** Update on the repair to the Clubhouse roof ahead of the Cricket Season. **(SA)** Cllr. Austin confirmed the second quotation for the repairs has now been received and an update will be given at the next meeting of Full Council.

10.3. Clubhouse Working group recommendations **(SA, AM & BS)** Cllr. Austin reported on the Club House meeting. It was confirmed Cllr. Scott is now the liaison between the Parish Council and the Cricket Club. Actions to be discussed at the next meeting of Full Council.

11. Village Hall (SA)

11.1. Council to consider a new building on the Village Hall car park grounds to house the History Group. Cllr. Austin announced the building would be a permanent structure in the corner of the village hall car park. Further information to be announced at the next meeting of Full Council following further information on proposed plans.

12. Padel Courts Enquiry (JS)

12.1. Council to discuss the possibility of installing Padel Courts within the Village. Cllr. Saunders announced a recent proposal had been received with regards to renting land from the Parish Council to install Padel Courts. The majority of Council members were in favour, but could not define an area of land that would serve for this use.

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13. Traffic & Safety

13.1. Speedwatch data report for July and August and data trends over time. Noted.
13.2. Update on installation of traffic calming measures; crossing at Savages **(AM)** County Councillor Rebecca Fletcher confirmed the works have been scheduled to commence during the month of December 2026.

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14. Environment

14.1. A417 London Road flood alleviation **(AE & BS**) No further updates available at this time.
14.2. Church End flood alleviation **(AE & BS)** Cllr. Scott confirmed a Teams meeting had been held with the Oxfordshire County Council Flood mitigation officer. It was confirmed the grant is still available for the works to be carried out and the quotation for the works had been accepted. Further updates will be given at the next meeting of Full Council.
14.3. Coffin Way Improvements **(JS)** As above- Councillor Fletcher confirmed she this is currently with the Countryside access team and will report back with any information at the next meeting of Full Council.

Administrative Items

15. Approval of Minutes

15.1. The minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 15th July 2026 were approved and signed as a true record.
15.2. To review the effectiveness of Communications **(AM/ SP)** Ongoing
15.3. To note the External Auditor Report-Yearend 31st March 2026. Council members noted and thanked the Clerk for all her hard work during this process.

16. Finance
16.1. The July and August payments were approved-**(Appendix 2)**
16.2. To approve the annual insurance renewal **(AC)** Cllr. Calder announced we have received a quotation direct from Zurich, which reduced the premium by 20% for the year ahead, instead of working through Marsh Insurance as a broker. Council agreed to go ahead with the quotation, direct with Zurich for a one-year contact, to be reviewed in September 2027.

17. TTF Play Space Adventure, Kids at Play and The Trim Trail
17.1. Council to approve to appoint The Play Inspection Company to carry out the annual inspections for all three play areas. Council agreed to appoint of The Play Inspection Company to carryout annual inspections on all three play areas.
17.2. TTF Play Space Signage. Council agreed to update the signage at TTF at a cost of up to £500.

18. Contacting Councillors
18.1. Council to review contact procedures. Council agreed to remove all personal information in the public domain, stating all contact requests to meet with Councillors to go through the Parish Clerk for an appointment.

Projects & Ongoing Matters

19. Skatepark Update (SA, AE & AC)
19.1. To receive an update from Skatepark Working Group to include Comms. Cllr. Parkin announced that further communications will be included within the bulletin. Cllr. Calder confirmed the welfare unit was still in the car park and the bench was still to be delivered.
19.2. Skate Park Official Opening Event/Budget. Council agreed to spend an amount of up to £500 for the official opening event of the skate park. Date and time to be confirmed.

Correspondence & Reports

20. Action Points
See **(Appendix 1)** for update on actions.

21. Chairman's Report

For information only – any additional updates. Cllr. Saunders announced that she would be stepping down as Chair from the end of October 2026 and Parish Councillor from the end of November 2026. Cllr. Millman will be taking over as Chair from November 2026.

22. Councillors' Reports
Other updates from Parish Councillors (not listed on agenda) None.

23. Future Agenda Items

- Neighbourhood Plan Review – (Following the adoption of the OCC Local Plan)
- Cob Wall Ownership/Maintenance/Village Fund
- Approval and Adoption of Policies
- Chailey Gardens- Trinity Estates Management and Playground Concerns
- Clubhouse Working Group- Meeting Actions
- Local History Group Premises/Storage
- Bike/Pump Track
- To agree a date for the Finance budget meeting in November

24. Date of Next Meeting
Wednesday, 21 October 2026.

Appendix 1

Actions from September Meeting, table 1

Item	Action	Ownership
10.1	Borehole Annual Maintenance-To contact supplier to include outside tank within the annual maintenance	Clerk
11.1	Village Hall Land-Local History Group Premises/Storage-To contact the Village Hall Committee for proposed plans	Clerk/Cllr. Austin
12.1	Padel Courts Enquiry-To respond to enquiry	Clerk
16.2	Annual Insurance Renewal. To appoint Zurich for a one-year duration.	Clerk
17.1	To appoint The Play Inspection Company to carry out the annual inspections for all three play areas.	Clerk
17.2	TTF Play Space Signage	Clerk/Cllr. Saunders

18.1	Councillor Contact-To update in the bulletin and Parish Council website	Cllr. Parkin/Clerk
19.1	Removal of Welfare Unit and Delivery of Bench	Clerk
19.2	Official Skate Park Opening	Cllr. Austin/Cllr. Parkin

Outstanding Actions from previous meetings - table 2

Item	Mtg	Action	Ownership	Update on action
8	December	Clubhouse roof tile repair	Cllr. Austin	Ongoing
10.2	December	Clubhouse Roof Repair- Research into preventive measures to protect the Clubhouse Roof from further damage during the Cricket season.	Cllr. Millman and Cllr. Austin	Ongoing
16	January	Transfer of email accounts to gov.uk	Clerk	Ongoing
12.2	February	Cob Wall Ownership/Maintenance- To set a date for a workshop day for residents	Cllr. Saunders/Clerk	Ongoing
10.6	April	Arrange installation of Bench- A417 Bus Stop	Cllr. Calder/Cllr. Shayler	Ongoing
7.3	June	To infill cemetery paths with the gravel pile in TFF Car park.	Cllr. Shayler/Iain	Ongoing

PART 2

Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

25. Bohams Road Cemetery. Cllr. Saunders updated Council members on the recent error in the cemetery software. Council have taken advise from the ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management) and will continue the process for ratification.

26. TFF Incident. The Clerk announced this is in process and further information will be given at the meeting of Full Council once received.

Appendix 2

Finance July 2026			
Inv Date	**PAYMENTS APPROVED AT JULY MEETING**	Payee	Amount
20.07.2026	Plant Room Works-Relocation of existing filtration	Whatley and Co Ltd	2,972.92
20.07.2026	Venue Booking Licence	Hallmaster	279.00
20.07.2026	Skatepark Refurbishment Stage 3	Bendcrete	21,180.00
20.07.2026	Clerk Travel Expenses June 2026	M Taylor	19.99
20.07.2026	Kubota and Dumper Hire	Didcot Plant	630.97
20.07.2026	Blewbury Churchyard-June 2026	J J Woodage	200.00
20.07.2026	Barrier Fencing-Skate Park	Travis Perkins	313.06
	PAID: Salaries for July Month, Paid on 03.08.2026		
03.08.2026	July Cleaning Clubhouse & Village Hall	Jayne Newman	474.40
03.08.2027	M Taylor, July	M Taylor	1,389.05
03.08.2028	Expenses, Working from home allowance, July	M Taylor	26.00
03.08.2029	Village Hall and Clubhouse Administrator Salary, July	Helen Evi Holroyd	1,106.73
03.08.2030	Expenses, Working from home allowance, July	Helen Evi Holroyd	26.00
03.08.2031	Lengthman Service Salary, July	Iain Wood	1,208.62
03.08.2032	Employer/ee Tax/Ni Contributions, July	HMRC	906.29
03.08.2033	Payroll, July	SME Accounting Services Ltd	20.00
	PAID: Direct Debits/Standing Order		
03.07.2026	Clubhouse Internet	BT	39.54
03.07.2026	Public Work Loan Repayment	PWLB	3,132.50
17.07.2026	Clerks Mobile	EE	20.00
20.07.2026	Bank Charges	Lloyds	4.25
22.07.2026	Clerk and Lengthman's Pension Contributions	NEST	230.66
27.07.2026	Waste Collection	Biffa	199.98
27.07.2026	Clubhouse Electricity	British Gas	239.85
	PAID: Since previous meeting		
13.07.2026	S106-Refurbishment Funds	Village Hall Executive	14,230.16
21.07.2026	Cleaning Materials	Amazon	52.41
31.07.2026	Two Tower Fans for the Clubhouse	B&Q	139.90
	Total Expenditure		**49,042.28**
	RECEIPTS		
09.07.2026	Skate Park Funding	FCC	28,060.00
10.07.2026	Skate Park Donation	Village Hall Executive	1,000.00
10.07.2026	Skate Park Donation	Blewbury WI	200.00
16.07.2026	Melland Room Bookings April-June 2026	Village Hall Executive	3,958.24
17.07.2026	Staff Recharge-Q1	Village Hall Executive	1,931.50
17.07.2026	Susan Read Legacy	Hedges Law Limited	500.00
	Total Income		**35,649.74**

Finance August 2026			
Inv Date	**PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED AT THE MEETING**	**Payee**	Amount
31.07.2026	Skate Park Refurbishment- Final Payment	Bendcrete	51,240.00
17.08.2026	Quarterly rental x 2-April-September 2026	Blewbury Hall Executives	600.00
20.08.2026	Churchyard Grass Cutting-August	J J Woodage	200.00
02.09.2026	ROSPA Inspection-3X Play Areas	Play Safety Limited	528.00
12.08.2026	Clerk Travel Expenses-August	M Taylor	15.75
12.09.2026	Kids At Play Repairs	HAGS	274.17
Inv Date	**Payments in August**	Payee	Amount
21.08.2026	Plant Room Electrical Works	Walters Electrical Services	655.00
21.08.2026	TFF Bench Repairs	M Shayler	135.37
21.08.2026	Annual Tractor Insurance	Gallagher	222.49
21.08.2026	Kubota Hire-TFF	Didcot Plant Hire	162.35
21.08.2026	Clerk Travel Expenses-July	M Taylor	16.16
	PAID: Salaries for August Month, Paid on 01.09.2026		
01.09.2026	August Cleaning Clubhouse & Village Hall	Jayne Newman	384.40
01.09.2026	M Taylor, August	M Taylor-To include Back Pay from April	1,634.48
01.09.2026	Expenses, Working from home allowance, August	M Taylor	26.00
01.09.2026	Village Hall and Clubhouse Administrator Salary, August	Helen Evi Holroyd	1,095.04
01.09.2026	Expenses, Working from home allowance, August	Helen Evi Holroyd	26.00
01.09.2026	Lengthman Service Salary, August	Iain Wood	1,219.45
01.09.2026	Employer/ee Tax/Ni Contributions, August	HMRC	1,061.92
01.09.2026	Payroll, August	SME Accounting Services Ltd	20.00
	PAID: Direct Debits/Standing Order		
04.08.2026	Clubhouse Internet	BT	39.54
10.08.2026	Clubhouse Electricity	British Gas	121.62
17.08.2026	Clerks Mobile	EE	20.00
18.08.2026	Bank Charges	Lloyds	4.25
20.08.2026	Clerk and Lengthman's Pension Contributions	NEST	227.75
24.08.2026	Waste Collection	Biffa	175.2
24.08.2026	Scout Hut Electricity	SSE	495.62
	PAID: Since previous meeting		
21.08.2026	Stationary and Cleaning Materials	Amazon	55.11
	Total Expenditure		**9,415.67**
	RECEIPTS		
25.08.2026	Refund	Amazon	1.00
12.08.2026	Annual Maintenance Fee	Blewbury Tennis Club	350.00
	Total Income		**351.00**

Appendix 3

County Councillor report

Date: September 2026
Author: Cllr Rebekah Fletcher
Parishes: Blewbury, Chilton, Harwell, Upton, Western Valley
Contact details: rebekah.fletcher@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Dear Parish Councillors and residents,

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer. It's quite difficult to progress things during July/August due to officer availability, and I have also had some time away for work, so thank you for everyone's patience. Council resumes again fully on 8th September and I will chase again all the outstanding items. Some of these have been several months ongoing, so I'm now starting to escalate beyond usual channels.

Although the government announced the three unitary authority model for Oxfordshire less than two months ago, they have now decided to pause Local Government Reorganisation. Given that LGR has already cost a huge amount of money, this U-turn is extremely frustrating and we don't yet know whether the original decision will stand or be reversed, so we are somewhat in limbo as to what impact this will have on the forward plan. I will let residents know once I have more information.

Last month, I was able to facilitate multiple meetings with officers and with the Didcot Community Partnership to discuss plans for the new Family Hub on Park Road in Didcot. It's a heartening example of the council working with brilliant grassroots community organisations to build services that reflect and support the communities they're in. Once I have a timeline for the new hub, I will let you know.

This month, I'm looking forward to attending the 80th anniversary celebrations of the County Print Finishers, which is a Council-run supported business. It employs people who need support beyond reasonable adjustments in the workplace, with the aim of giving them the essential skills to move into external employment. It makes a real difference to the lives of people across Oxfordshire, and I'm delighted that it's reached such a fantastic milestone.

Lastly, after multiple reports of contractors leaving signage and cones out around the division, I've told officers that I will collect them all so that they can be removed in one go. To this end, I would be very grateful if people could let me know of any offending contractor clutter so that I can do this!

Best wishes

Bekah

Transport update

A4130 Steventon Lights scheme – from now **until end of September**, there will be two-way traffic lights off-peak on the A4130 High Street and Abingdon Road. Construction on the traffic islands will then start until **late 2026**, which will mean temporary three-way lights to replace the mini roundabout. Full update is here: Steventon lights scheme

Harwell Link Road– **now until 24th September** there will be two-way traffic lights while Thames Water put in a new water connection. They're working in 200m sections, currently halfway up the link road. I've asked why this has apparently been extended for a month as I was expecting it to be done by now.

High St, Harwell – **22nd – 28th September** multi-way traffic lights so Gigaclear can install new ducts. I've asked officers why no-waiting cones are already out.

High St, Harwell – **5th October – 23rd October** two-way signals for traffic calming works are still on the schedule, but I'm unclear as to whether these will go ahead given the delays with Taylor Wimpey.

Drewitts Corner and Burr St, Harwell – **29th September – 1st October** multi-way signals for Gigaclear to install new ducts. Works should be rolling so lights are only on one street at a time

Blenheim Hill, Harwell – **26th October – 13th November,** road space is booked for a new pedestrian crossing, but again, I'm not sure where Taylor Wimpey is with this.

Various roads, Chilton – **30th September – 5th October** Microsurfacing will necessitate road closures across the village. There are many so I've attached a separate map at the end of my report. Access will be maintained for residents and businesses.

London Road, Upton to Blewbury – **5th – 10th October** Pre-surfacing works are scheduled for the rest of London Road – this should be some patching prior to surface dressing, which should be done before the end of the year.
Please continue to report any highway defects on www.fixmystreet.com.

Other news and information

Big Conversation on Care – Baroness Casey is chairing the Independent Commission on Adult Social Care. They are seeking public input on key questions about how social care should be funded, fairly and sustainably. I'm really passionate about this initiative so please do take part here; social care affects us all.

Shared Lives Carers – If you might be interested in opening up your home to an adult who needs additional support to be independent, please do consider becoming a Shared Lives Carer. It's a paid role, our carers describe it as hugely rewarding, and it can genuinely change lives for people with additional support needs.

Free BP checks at libraries this week! All Oxfordshire libraries are offering free blood pressure checks this week, until 13th September. Didcot library's opening hours are available here.

Councillor Priority Fund – All County Councillors have access to a pot of funding to support local community projects. Applications are open until November 2026, and I still have around 50% of my fund remaining so any local charity or parish council, please do apply! The minimum grant is £500, and there are rules regarding eligibility of applicants and projects. You can read more at https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/communities/councillor-priority-fund

Councillor queries

Recent and ongoing queries raised on behalf of residents and Parish Councils include: **Ticket description**	**Status**	**Outcome/latest information**
Traffic calming Harwell village	IN PROGRESS	Latest update: work on Tyrells close junction has been paused, remaining work is scheduled. Taylor Wimpey have been chased
GWP adoption	ONGOING	Latest update: the required remedial works at Didcot Road last year weren't up to standard and had to be redone in places. Highways Agreements have therefore imposed another 3-month review on Taylor Wimpey before adoption.
Damage to electrical unit at skate park, GWP	ONGOING	Repeated damage to the electrical unit at the skate park – Taylor Wimpey is in discussions with SSE on providing a more robust housing unit. Latest update; consideration of whether the unit should go underground, but no decision communicated. Have asked for update.
Network Management Concerns	IN PROGRESS	Latest update: I've now got a named officer contact, and am in regular

		communication. Still awaiting wider rollout.
Coffin Way cycle path	STALLED	Requested briefing on previous work re: footpath/potential cycle route between Blewbury and Upton – relevant officer on leave. Latest update: team looking to reopen conversations with landowner; with countryside access, but have offered a walkaround: I suggested several July dates but these were not taken up; have escalated.
Harwell – High St. flooding	IN PROGRESS	Latest update: Have now seen gully reports from January gully cleansing; silt had been between 25% and 75% and now all cleared; will monitor whether this improves situation.
Harwell – pavement repairs and maintenance	IN PROGRESS	Footway slurry treatments in progress. Additionally, Didcot Road, Blenheim Hill, and Burr Street are marked for footway reconstruction, while Westfield Road is set for carriageway surface inlay. Have also reported High St/Wantage Rd as particularly bad. Latest update: no slurry treatment scheduled; once latest round of roadworks is done, I will push for this
Blewbury flooding	IN PROGRESS	Sheencroft corner flooding problems – identified more than 50% of gullies non-operational. Now chasing to get action on fix – will come to IC.
Reading Road - flooding	AWAITING RESPONSE	Flooding query - now that the weather has turned, asked for flooding sites to be re-investigated. Latest update: Reading Road is on the list, but no date provided.
Flooding GWP North	COMPLETE	Latest update: new drain installed.
Hagbourne Hill improvements	ONGOING	Stagnated due to problems with funding and utilities; I am chasing regularly, and have asked for a better interim solution as part of the forward planning works. Currently financially unviable, escalated to cabinet member.
Upton-W.Hagbourne one-way route	ONGOING	Query as to whether the road from W.Hagbourne to Upton could be southbound only, with Upton-W.Hagbourne diverted via roundabout. Update: haven't even had an officer assigned; have escalated
Knightsward Chilton	IN PROGRESS	Query re: upkeep of this care home. Latest update: operator to implement maintenance programme, some work has already been done
A417 safety	IN PROGRESS	Query re: deer signs on A417 Reading Road – being looked into

Be Free Young Carers	IN PROGRESS	Query re: young carers provision (BFYC no commissioning contract at present – awaiting briefing on alternative provisions) Latest update; this is covered by Children's Services; have asked to be briefed by officers
Commissioning transport	COMPLETE	Query re: Volunteer Driver Service CIC commissioning; response received
Bus stop, Bessels Lea	IN PROGRESS	Latest update: signs to be replaced
Watts Lane Blewbury	COMPLETE	Assistance with footpath; is not a bridleway, officer contact provided
Gully clearance Blewbury	IN PROGRESS	Gully clearance earlier this year identified several issues that need to be fixed; chasing for timeline of these repairs. Coming to informal cabinet
void under carriageway in Chilton	COMPLETE	Escalation of Fix My Street report dating back to March 26 - scheduled for repair within 28 days
Bus disruption in Harwell	RESPONSE RECEIVED	Escalation of prior complaints about roadworks since April 26
Chilton School congestion	COMPLETE	Assistance with congestion around school drop-off: officer to contact Head of School to discuss
Harwell bus stop placement	IN PROGRESS	Wantage Road bus stop placement obstructing buggies and wheelchairs; to be moved
bus stop sign replacement	IN PROGRESS	Chilton Main St - asked for replacement sign – to be provided

Chilton resurfacing



Appendix 4



Tuesday 15th September, 2026

Monthly Update

Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne

Vale of White Horse District Council

Post summer energy

Autumn has begun and the weather has started to turn, though it remains unseasonably warm and dry. August is a quiet time at the District Council. Whilst projects and services are continued to be delivered, there are fewer meetings and therefore political decisions during this time. The Autumn months will surely make up for it, as there is an extra council meeting scheduled in September. This is necessary to make constitutional changes in order to meet the Government's new requirements on how planning decisions are made. Whilst their intention is to streamline, my fear is that there will be even less input from those you have elected to represent you.

Speaking of planning applications, I noted that a recent planning application for signage at the Great Western Park shops, is for a Greggs..!

Local Government Reorganisation

At the start of the summer, and just before parliament went on recess, it announced the geographies for the new unitary councils to be created. Essentially getting rid of District Councils and County Councils, and creating one level of council that delivers all the services. Whilst the officers at the Councils have been working hard to bring forward the plans set out by government (the three unitaries in Oxfordshire model), the start of September, and Parliament returning from summer saw a new announcement that the plans are "under review"! The minister says this is intended to provide confidence that the process has been followed correctly, and that any future decisions align with the government's priorities, are sustainable and can be implemented successfully.

This does, however, leave us in an uncertain position now. We don't know what the timeline of the changes is, what the changes will be, and really, if they will go ahead at all! When we have updates, I will keep you informed.

What we do know is that now the timeline is too short to elect councillors to these new councils next May, there will still be elections, for the District Councils (Vale and South) – something that would have happened anyway, before any of these changes were brought in by government.

Voter Registration Canvass

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Districts Councils are sending requests to more than 88,000 properties requiring the householders to check and confirm their voter registration details are correct.

The canvass helps the councils to keep the electoral register up to date, to identify anyone who risks missing their chance to vote at any upcoming elections, and to encourage them to register before it's too late. You only need respond once for each household.

Wayfinding signs

Visitors to or residents of Didcot may have noticed new wayfinding signs that have been erected across the town. The new signs aim to help people find their way around Didcot more easily, as well as encourage sustainable travel and strengthen connections between neighbourhoods, facilities and open spaces. The project, run by the Didcot Garden Town team, has been running for a while and funded by money from the government specifically for Didcot Garden Town, and contributions from developers.

During the installation, it appears that there have been a number of issues reported, such inaccuracies on the signs. I have contacted senior colleagues at the council to understand how this has happened, and remain