

## County Councillor Report for Faringdon Division

Bethia Thomas, August 2021

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I do hope everyone has had a chance to have a relaxing break over the summer. As things have slowed down a bit, my report will probably be shorter than normal, but with the Faringdon Area Traffic Advisory Committee (FATAC) coming up in September, and developments around Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) taking shape, I am sure I will have a lot to update you on in my next report.

Looking through the diary it doesn't seem as though there are many parish meetings scheduled for September, but as always, I would always encourage you to get in touch with me directly if you have any queries; any major news stories will be available through the website at: [news.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

All the best,

*Bethia.*

### News from Across the Division

As I have already mentioned, the next FATAC Meeting is scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> September. This is a great forum to speak about specific traffic concerns, and several of you have already expressed interest in attending. This meeting is critical to our area and I would want your input on this in the future.

I would like to take the opportunity to remind you of the Fix My Street Service the council runs. Fix My Street is a simple app for your mobile phone on which you can report all sorts of issues, most obviously potholes, but also signage, lighting, and fly tipping. I have been using it a lot lately myself and have had some success getting things fixed. We are looking into more training for Fix My Street Superusers – these users get to skip a step and order works directly, speeding up the service. If you are interested, please let me know and I will look into it for you.

I also wanted to remind you of the new out-of-hours highways service, with a dedicated telephone number (01223 849731) for Oxfordshire residents to call for urgent out of hours highways related issues

### Buckland

It was a great pleasure to be able to attend my first meeting of Buckland Parish Council in late July. As mentioned there, I am chasing up officers about improvements to the footpath along the A420 making it safer and more accessible – this is a concern in many different areas, and I hope to see some improvements in maintenance of and ensure that they are scheduled in for regular works in the future. I would like to remind you of two temporary road closures planned for the coming months. The first, to repair the parapets on Tadpole Bridge, will see the Bampton Rd closed for approximately five nights from the 12<sup>th</sup> September – works are scheduled between 22:00 and 05:00 hours to minimise disruption and local businesses have been contacted directly. The second, scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> October on Orchard Rd will see works between 09:30 and 15:30.

### Buscot

I hope you have had a lovely summer by the river. As always, I have been following up issues around speeding and heavy haulage on the A417 closer to Faringdon, towards Eaton Hastings for residents there. They have also mentioned a few issues of concern closer to you, damage to the barriers near Cheese Wharf, which I believe have recently been repaired, and the state of the signage along the A417 between Buscot and Eaton Hastings. I will be looking into this to see if anything can be done, or perhaps come out with a sponge and bucket of soapy water next time I'm out there myself – I am very hands on!

### Coleshill

It was a delight to spend some of the summer exploring Coleshill and its surrounds, it is a beautiful village. I believe you may have already registered to speak at FATAC this month – if you haven't had a chance, I would be happy to follow it up and raise any issues on your behalf with officers if you are unable to attend.

### Eaton Hastings

As mentioned above, I am following up a few issues that have been reported on the A417 between Buscot and Eaton Hastings and will be following them up if need be. After being contacted by a resident about repairs to the church road, I am following up additional repairs to the final stretch of the road to the church. I have reported it and have been told that it scheduled for works, though I am not sure when this is due to commence.

### Faringdon

I hope all officers and councillors have had a relaxing summer, with fewer meetings scheduled, it would be nice to think that you have all had a well-deserved break. While I have also been on leave, I have continued to work on various aspects of the town that are affected by county activity.

The most pressing thing to report here is the resurfacing of Park Road. This was due to be completed in August, but unfortunately, because of delays brought about by a number of factors, including previous delays to works around the new development, completion will be postponed until October.

I have been speaking with residents and asking what they would like me to focus on, and I have constructed a new list that I will continue to report on in the coming months. At this stage, providing details of progress would mean little, but I hope to report more about progress on each item in my next report and will keep you updated as much as possible in the interim. Please let me know if there are other items, specific to Faringdon you would like to add.

- Rejuvenating the Town Centre and other roads in Faringdon (including Park Rd);
- The proposed intersection on the A420 at Great Coxwell;
- Faringdon Library Refurbishment;
- The Ferndale Street Bridge;
- Civil Parking Enforcement;
- 20mph for the Town Centre;
- Safer Schools Programmes;
- The new school build off Park Rd;
- Pedestrian crossing on Henry Blake Way;
- Proposed Active Travel Working Group and support for FCB.

### Great Coxwell

Since my last report I have investigated the recent appeal decision on the South Steeds development and its effect on the proposed intersection improvements onto the A420 from the Great Coxwell Roundabout and can confirm that funds for this have been secured. Together with contributions from other developments they should fund this improvement. I am still unsure of the timescale on this as it may well be dependent on when a specified trigger. I will continue to investigate this and get back to you with any updates.

I have been in contact with some of you over the intersection at the top of the Hollow Road, and this has now been cut back, improving visibility. I have also seen that a road sign on the B4019 between Badbury and Faringdon has been exposed, but another is still covered by overgrowth – it is barely visible, so will try and report it as soon as I can. I have also had enquiries on the new signage and gateway that has been installed on the road to Badbury Hill House.

I continue to enjoy receiving updates through the village newsletter. I look forward to visiting during the Great Barn Festival and may see some of you there.

### Little Coxwell

I have had some enquiries about the 'For Sale' sign that has appeared at the Stanford Rd Roundabout on the A420. It appears this is related to the sale of land near the quarry. Details are lodged with Marriotts and anyone interested can contact Andrew Brown for further information. Sadly, I see the date for your next parish meeting, on October 12<sup>th</sup> clashes with not one, but three other appointments I have, so I will send early apologies now, and make sure that I am up to date with anything on the agenda. Please do contact me if you have any concerns in the interim.

### Littleworth

It was lovely to catch up with you at the end of lockdown get-together in the village, and I was sad not to be able to join you again at your recent pop-up pub event. I enjoy hearing updates from the village newsletter and am happy to respond to any queries before your next meeting.

### [News from across the County](#)

Council life tends to get a bit quieter over the summer, with fewer meetings. The next full council meeting is to be held on Sept 14<sup>th</sup> and the new structure for council scrutiny will be put in place after members have received appropriate levels of training. Despite quieter times, there has been a great deal of work behind the scenes, and particularly for this area, on the lead up to the introduction of CPE, which will start to affect areas in Faringdon from November. We will keep you updated on this when more information is announced.

### Covid Updates

As always, we encourage caution to reduce the spread of covid. Infection levels have recently increased, particularly in younger individuals and this may be exacerbated by September's return to school. Vaccination take-up for this age-group has generally been positive locally, and we would like to thank all those involved in the distribution of vaccines in Faringdon and surrounding villages. Full details and current advice can be found on the council's website.

### Other News

Sometimes international stories touch us locally, and in this instance, we are gratified that the council is working closely with partners across the county and central government to help resettle and support those who are fleeing the dreadful situation in Afghanistan.

Further details of this scheme as well as other news stories can be found at:

[news.oxfordshire.gov.uk](https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### Councillor Activity Report

Summer has been a quiet time, but I am looking forward to restarting a full schedule going into September.

Face-to-face surgeries are still suspended, but we are working on ways to address this. My full details are available on the website, and I am very happy for you to contact me directly using my council email address: [bethia.thomas@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:bethia.thomas@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

I would also like to remind you of the Councillor Priority Fund which allows me to fund community projects to benefit residents across the division is still available. Details of this fund can be found on the website.