

Focus on Parishes with Cllr Bethia Thomas

Faringdon Division

January 2023



New year, new look for my monthly update – I hope you like it. While it may be a bit shorter, I hope it covers more details on the issues that matter to you and give you more updates on the council and my activities within the county. If you have any questions or would like to meet with me, please get in touch.

Parish Round-Up

Not all items are covered here, with a selection of the main updates listed below. Please get in touch for further details on these or other items.

Buckland

- **40 MPH Zone Buckland Marsh:** This proposal is now out to consultation until Feb 3rd; visit: letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk for the link.
- **20 MPH Zone:** Application for the 20MPH Zone is scheduled for the second phase of this programme (2023/2024); SIDs have been installed with some assistance from highways officers.
- **Signage on the A420:** Conversations have resumed to discuss plans to improve signage for footpaths within officer's recommendations.

Buscot

- **Continued Flooding on the A417:** Over the new year period there were several reports of flooding with calls for further improvements to the works done last year; officers are following this up.
- **Speeding on the A417:** At the last parish meeting we discussed the implications of changes in the speed limit at Eaton Hastings, and future improvements and checks at Buscot. I am still following this up.

Coleshill

- **Speed Reduction Chicane & SIDs:** Planned for later this month with the road closed between the 16th and the 27th Jan. I am aware of the discussions around signage and am happy to follow this up if necessary.
- **TVP:** We have received a further response from TVP about issues residents have been having over call-outs. They do seem to be taking the matter very seriously, and I am happy to follow this up; they are asking for details of specific examples to investigate further.

Eaton Hastings

- **Speeding on A417:** Having written to Cllr Gant after the last speed survey, he seems to be in favour of lowering the speed limit to 40MPH, and initial discussions with officers indicate their support as well, though they warn that each location has its own features so this may be a guarded response initially - I will follow up with officers.

Faringdon

- **20MPH Zone and SIDs:** The proposal for the expanded 20MPH Zone is now out to consultation until Feb 3rd; visit: letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk for the link. Money has now been found to install another pole to mount a SID in Gloucester Street; many thanks also to the Farcycles for their contribution to this scheme.
- **London Rd Speed Survey:** A speed survey will be ordered for the top of London Road following a suggestion from a resident.
- **Faringdon Infant School:** Now confirmed to be a new SEND School to open in 2025.
- **Folly View Primary:** Access to new school has been questioned; improvements under investigation which may link in with Safer Ways to School.
- **Southampton Street Bridge:** Reopened discussion on the bridge and underpass and continued works around that section of Southampton Street.
- **Folly Park View Estate:** Looking into the maintenance of roads on the estate; there have been several queries sent directly to me as well as on FMS.
- **S106 Social Service Contributions:** No further feedback – will chase up.

Great Coxwell

- **Highways Matter:** I have followed up on many of the issues discussed at the last meeting; a speed survey has been ordered for the B4019 at the top of the Hollow Rd.

Little Coxwell

- **Grundon Liaison Group:** This is progressing with a ToR and the hope of an initial meeting this month or next.
- **40MPH Zone:** Will be decided at a delegated decision meeting on the 26th Jan – I will be writing a submission endorsing the scheme.

Littleworth

- **Crossing:** Officers were following up improvements including lighting before Christmas – will chase and report back.
- **Footpaths:** These have now been cleared, but have had a further request on stretch further closer to St Hugh's which I am currently addressing.
- **Gutters and flooding:** Have followed up gutter clearance reported on FMS.

Activity Report

My recent meetings:

- 5th December: Oxfordshire Military Champions Quarterly Meeting
- 12th December: Faringdon Area Traffic Advisory Committee - FATAC
- 12th December: Faringdon Town Council, Full Council
- 13th December: Full Council, Oxford County Council
- 15th December: Littleworth Parish Council, Apologies

Upcoming meetings:

- 9th January: Coleshill Parish Council, Apologies
- 9th January: Faringdon Town Council, Full Council, Apologies
- 11th January: Buscot Parish Council
- 12th January: People Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- 17th January: The Place AGM
- 23rd January: FATAC A420 Special Meeting
- 30th January: Faringdon and Wantage Locality Meeting

FATAC Report:

FATAC is always a busy meeting; we have now called an additional meeting on the A420 which will review its history of RTCs and focus minds on all safety improvements that are planned and any that may be suggested for future works. All affected parishes are invited to contribute either in person or by submission. A regular newsletter will be produced to keep you updated on safety on the A420 given the recent RTCs in the area.

Highways News:

- 40MPH Zone in Little Coxwell in line with 20MPH in the rest of the village.
- 40MPH Zone proposed for London Road coming off the A420; speed survey ordered.
- 20MPH Zones being considered for many of the parishes in the division.
- SIDS installed in Faringdon and Buckland.
- Coleshill Chicane to be installed with the 20MPH Zone in place in the division.
- Speed survey ordered for the B4019 near Badbury Clump.
- Speed reduction being considered for A417 at Eaton Hastings.
- Traffic refuge to be installed on the A420 at the Fernham Rd Little Coxwell.

OCC News

Reduced bus fares: For 3 months (Jan-Mar), bus passengers can enjoy a [£2 cap on bus fares](#). Paid for by a government scheme, fares with participating bus firms will cost a maximum of £2 per adult single fare (includes Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel). Concessions are unaffected and school services are excluded. This will be of great benefit to many of us travelling by bus down the A420.

Anti-sewage motion passes and water summit: A Lib Dem motion at Full Council in December condemning the practice of dumping sewage into waterways passed with near unanimity (one conservative opposed). Over the Christmas period, Thames Water released raw sewage 6 times into Oxfordshire rivers. A [water summit](#) in December also looked at challenges facing water supply and demand in Oxfordshire. I have had several comments recently on issues surrounding Thames Water.

Three in four streetlamps now LED: Over 75% of the 60,000+ street lighting assets in OCC control are now run with energy saving LED lights. Streetlighting is the largest

source of carbon emissions in OCC's operations and is a growing cost due to rising energy prices. Since 2019/20 OCC has reduced carbon emissions by 21%, in large part thanks to the LED scheme. The milestone represents a significant improvement in the pace of rollout and will save the council [£77m over 20 years](#).

Successful bid for children's homes: OCC has successfully bid for a £5.2m grant to part fund four new residential children's homes. The homes would provide accommodation and support for children requiring solo provision or who can only share with one other child, children with autism, and children who have had adverse childhood experiences. These new homes would add to OCC's portfolio of three homes, along with the new 4-bedroom home being constructed in Aston. The matched funding by OCC is still to be finalised.

Tree planting: As part of the new Tree Policy for Oxfordshire, [450 trees](#) will be planted on highways over the winter period, supported by £185,000 from budget reserves. If you haven't been in touch about planting a tree in your parish, please get in touch with officers.

Health consultation: A draft strategy developed by local healthcare leaders from across the health and care system in the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire (BOB) area is being consulted on (closes 29th Jan). Survey: [link](#)

News in Brief

New Chief Executive: Dr Martin Reeves has been appointed OCC's new chief executive

Award winning council: OCC wins three [environmental awards](#)

Guide to adulthood for SEND children: Guide on refreshed [website](#)

Increase in highways funding 22/23: OCC increased funding by £0.8m for 22/23

Leadership of Vale Council: You may have heard that I have been appointed as leader of VoWHDC; please be assured that this will not affect my service to parishes as a county councillor.

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