

County Councillor report

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Parishes: Blewbury, Chilton, Harwell, Upton, Western Valley

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Dear Parish Councillors and residents,

Summer is usually quite quiet for council work as many officers and councillors are taking leave during school holidays. This has regrettably led to delays in progressing my enquiries over the last month. I was, however, able to support the Parish Council in Chilton at a meeting with our trees officer to discuss maintenance and safety issues. If I'm available, I'm always happy to support councils and residents at officer meetings, if you think Councillor advocacy would help.

We are back in full swing now and I'm able to push a little bit harder to get remaining enquiries picked up. Top of my agenda for this month is traffic calming, for both Blewbury and Harwell, and I'm looking forward to getting officers out onsite to see the issues we're facing.

Full Council is on 9th September and I have had two questions accepted relating to SEND issues – I will be able to provide updates on these at parish council meetings this month.

Pubs of the Parishes

On 11th October (subject to the weather), I'm planning on doing a walk across the division with stops at local drinkeries. We'll be starting at The Station Garden, then stopping at The White Hart, The Harwellian, The Crown at Chilton, The George at Upton, The Red Lion in Blewbury and finishing at The Blueberry. If you would like to join me, either for a chat in your local, or for a walk in between them, please follow my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CllrBekahFletcher for updates nearer the time.

Best wishes
Bekah

Transport update

There are a lot of roadworks planned in the coming months. I will note only those where some delay is possible or likely, but for information there are also water and gasworks planned in Harwell, Chilton and Blewbury that should have no impact on transport.

Wantage Road, Harwell

10th-16th September, halfway between the Rowstock Garage and East Hendred for utility works. Delays are likely.

London Road, Blewbury

15th-19th September, there will be two-way signals for gas utility works. Delays are likely.

Reading Road, Harwell

22nd-29th September, there will be multi-way signals by the junction with The Winnaway for utility works. Delays possible.

Bessels Way, Blewbury

30th September – 7th October, there will be priority working for gas utility works. Delays are likely.

Bohams Road, Blewbury

1st-2nd October, the road will be CLOSED for highway improvement works.

Orchard Way, Harwell

2nd-9th October, for gas works. Traffic management is priority working, but delays are possible.

A34

Overnight only, on Sunday 28th and Monday 29th September (9pm-6am), the A34 will be closed Southbound Milton-Chilton.

Please continue to report any highway defects on www.fixmystreet.com.

Other news and information

Mobile digital twin – The council is investing money into a new data capture project designed to pinpoint areas of poor/no mobile coverage and provide informed solutions. The end goal is better mobile signal throughout Oxfordshire. You can read more at <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mglssueHistoryHome.aspx?lId=39581>

Councillor Priority Fund – All County Councillors have access to a pot of funding to support local community projects. Applications are open from now until November 2026. All parish councils and community groups or charities are welcome to submit applications – 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 queries I've raised on behalf of residents and Parish Councils include:

Ticket description	Status	Outcome/latest information
Traffic calming Harwell village	IN PROGRESS	The S278 has now been signed by developer and returned after very lengthy delay. Date to be confirmed asap (potentially October-ish)
Chilton bus stop placement	HANDED OVER	Brochure supplied to PC and put in touch with correct officer to take forward
GWP adoption	ONGOING	Spine roads adoption currently stuck in negotiations between Leap Utilities, SODC and Taylor Wimpey. We can't adopt any estate roads until the spine roads are adopted. I have further requested a briefing on what the obstacles are to adoption.
Blewbury road safety	IN PROGRESS	Requested briefing on proposed crossing at Savages and other traffic calming measures. Chased for a walkabout; the funding for wig wags expired so am pushing for reinstatement.
Broken drain cover on Bessels Way Blewbury	COMPLETE	Deadline for completion 13th August
Harwell roadworks	IN PROGRESS	Substantial back and forth on the contractors undertaking works on Grove Road. They are not our preferred suppliers and considerable problems have arisen - several meetings with officers and contractors to discuss. An investigation into the incident is underway
Harwell roadworks - repairs	IN PROGRESS	Further to the above, contractor vehicles damaged a manhole cover outside the High Street shops – this has been reported for repair and will also be followed up with the contractor
Road safety issues on A417	IN PROGRESS	Requested briefing on previous requests for crossing on Reading Road – a walkabout is being organised
Coffin Way cycle path	AWAITING RESPONSE	Requested briefing on previous work re: footpath/potential cycle route between Blewbury and Upton – relevant officer on leave
Steventon Lights/HIF 1 clash	AWAITING RESPONSE	Have asked for briefing on the mitigations being put in place against the potential increase in traffic through Harwell as a result of the works, and on whether we could bring forward the construction of a cycle path on Cow Lane to link Harwell to the A4130.
Harwell PC footpath right of way	IN PROGRESS	Asked for advice on how to support a request for Public Right of Way; meeting to be arranged with the correct officer
Bramble Lane broken manhole cover GWP	HANDED OVER	Passed to Taylor Wimpey as an urgent fix, and followed up with officers to ensure it happens
Thames Water road closures	RESPONSE RECEIVED, FOLLOWED UP	Complained about two “emergency” road closures preventing bus access, where TW seem to be deliberately avoiding normal planning process, and warned of another possible risk on Townsend, to avoid similar closure in future. Additionally reported to MP and followed up with Thames Water directly. Response highly unsatisfactory, will reply to that effect but unlikely to be able to change policy
D2A complaint	IN PROGRESS	Escalated resident complaint about Discharge to assess service from Didcot Community Hospital – followed up with officers
Chilton Main St traffic calming	AWAITING RESPONSE	Have asked about Vehicle activated speed signs and other potential measures
Library subscriptions	AWAITING RESPONSE	Query on when and why subscriptions via local libraries were removed