

County Councillor report

Date: October 2025

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

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Dear Parish Councillors and residents,

Over the last few weeks, I've been able to support Speedwatch teams and parish councillors at site meetings in Blewbury and Harwell. There has been some great progress made on this, with crossings and speed measures confirmed (and hopefully some more good news to come for Blewbury). I've worked really hard with officers to get these items progressed, but I give my full appreciation to the Councils and community members who have been pushing for these for a very long time – I wouldn't be able to get anything done without the community behind me, so thank you for your support.

I've also attended full council, People Oversight and Scrutiny and Education and Young People (EYP) Scrutiny. I have asked several questions around SEND provision and transparency of communication. As a result of these, we will be getting a visit from the cabinet member for Children and Young People to a local school to discuss best practice, and there will also be a cross-party working group looking at possible failings at one SEND school, including how we communicate with parents.

Pubs of the Parishes

It's now only a couple of days until my walk around the pubs of the parish on Saturday 11th October. The weather is currently looking as good as could be expected, so we'll be starting at The Station Garden at 11am, then stopping at The White Hart, The Harwellian, The Crown at Chilton, The George at Upton, The Blueberry, and finishing at The Red Lion in Blewbury. 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 full timings.

Best wishes

Bekah

Transport update

There are some really disruptive roadworks coming up, please let me know if you'd like more information on any of the below.

Church Street, Upton

20th-22nd October, a section of the road will be CLOSED for the installation of a fire hydrant.

Greenwood Way-Didcot Road junction, Great Western Park

24th October – 2nd November resurfacing works. There will be considerable disruption, including closures, of the entire signalised junction where Great Western Park meets Didcot Road. This will include late-night noisy works (residents have been informed). The diversion route is also quite convoluted so if at all possible, please avoid the area during half-term.

High Street-Drewitt's Corner-Church Lane, Harwell

9th and 11th November, road closures are expected for the Remembrance Sunday parade, and for Armistice Day ceremony. Please avoid driving in the area where possible out of respect for the services

High Street, Harwell

Works for traffic calming have now been confirmed, although no traffic management application appears to have been made yet. Works supposedly to be finished by 19th December, and there may be considerable disruption while works are carried out

Westbrook Street, Blewbury

17th-19th November, a very small section of the road will be CLOSED. These are listed as essential works so please be aware that legally, they could continue for up to 5 days (this is not anticipated)

A34

Overnight closures for resurfacing, 6th – 8th November (9pm-6am), Southbound Milton-Chilton.

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

Other news and information

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>

Congestion Charge Permits – The Oxford temporary congestion charge for cars comes into effect on 29th October. Oxfordshire residents can apply for a **free** permit that gives you 25 day passes per car per calendar year. Households can apply for a maximum of two cars. Each pass is valid for **one day's travel for all six congestion charge locations**. Without a permit, car drivers can choose an alternative route or mode of transport or pay the daily charge. Additional permits are available for certain groups including Blue Badge holders, unpaid carers, community health and care workers, mobile traders and patients required to attend frequent hospital appointments in Oxford.

You can apply here: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/oxfords-temporary-congestion-charge-cars/apply-permit>

HIF1 Major infrastructure scheme for Didcot and surrounding areas – there will be a series of drop-in events in the next couple of weeks, where members of the public can view designs for the scheme. We are approaching construction stages, so anyone who wants to find out more, ask questions or raise concerns can attend any of the events:

Wednesday 15 October 2025, 3:30pm – 8pm

District Community Centre, Gentian Mews, Great Western Park, Didcot, OX11 6GR

Friday 17 October 2025, 2pm - 8pm

Clifton Hampden Village Hall, Abingdon Rd, Clifton Hampden, Abingdon OX14 3EG

Saturday 18 October 2025, 11am – 4pm

Cornerstone Art Centre, Didcot, 25 Station Rd, Didcot OX11 7NE

Wednesday 22 October 2025, 2:30pm - 8pm

Sutton Courtenay Village Hall, Hobbyhorse Ln, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon OX14 4BB

Thursday 23 October 2025, 2pm - 8pm

Appleford Village Hall, Main Rd, Abingdon OX14 4PF

You can also read about the project here: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/roadworks/future-transport-projects/didcot-and-area-improvements>

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	CONFIRMED	Works have now been confirmed - due to be finished by 19 th December and may take up to 8 weeks. The Parish Council already has details of the works.
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 a briefing scheduled on what the obstacles are to adoption.
Blewbury road safety	IN PROGRESS	Funding confirmed for wig wags, dropped kerbs and bollards at multiple points on London Road and Bessels Way. Hoping this will be a Christmas present for Blewbury! Still pushing for funding for a crossing at Savages.
Harwell roadworks	IN PROGRESS	Investigation into the Grove Road works is ongoing
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. Virgin Media have now attended to put in temporary fix, due to return on 23 rd October
Road safety issues on A417	IN PROGRESS	Crossing confirmed at the Winnaway, with other speeding measures to be included as part of the works.
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	COMPLETE	This will be managed by the contractor working on the “Science Bridge” section of the scheme, but I'm assured the TM will be managed appropriately. Cow lane improvements not included in HIF1, but covered by S106 for Valley Park – officers currently investigating whether to request a contribution for improvements or to leave improvement to the developer.
Harwell PC footpath right of way	COMPLETE	Have been told I do not need to support this as it can be better handled between PC and DC. However, happy to support anyway if requested
Bramble Lane broken manhole cover GWP	COMPLETE	Passed to Taylor Wimpey as an urgent fix, and followed up with officers
Thames Water road closures	COMPLETE	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, have replied 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 twice
Chilton Main St traffic calming	HANDED OVER	PC would need to fund (approx. £6k for unit, £500 per pole) – will wait to hear decision
Library subscriptions	COMPLETE	Query on when and why subscriptions via local libraries were removed – cost-savings. Some subscriptions still available, but only onsite.
Newbury Road speed	AWAITING RESPONSE	Have asked about possibility of reducing the adopted section of Newbury Road to 20mph due to number of houses facing straight onto road and considerable traffic
Chilton Fields adoption	AWAITING RESPONSE	Chilton Fields – will there be further delays due to lighting upgrades – if so, can we prioritise this