

County Councillor report

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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 workaround: 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

