

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS FROM YOUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR JUNE 2014

CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE

The Leader of the Council, Ian Hudspeth, launched Connecting Oxfordshire in April. This outlined the strategic transport schemes that the County Council and our partners, such as Network Rail, will deliver between now and 2020.

Over the coming months he will be travelling around Oxfordshire giving presentations to residents, with particular focus to those local areas. Each meeting takes place at 7.00pm:



Mon 23 June	Banbury	Town Hall
Wed 25 June	Wantage	Civic Centre
Mon 30 June	Bicester	Littlebury Hotel
Mon 7 July	Witney	Henry Box School
Tue 15 July	Didcot	Cornerstone
Wed 16 July	Henley	Town Hall

We are starting the process for the next Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and discussions from these events will also feed into that plan. It is vital that we have a transport system which will enable residents to move around the county efficiently.

For more information on Connecting Oxfordshire, please see:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2014/apr/county-council-leader-outlines-his-vision-transport-connecting-oxfordshire>

ADULT SOCIAL CARE GRANT

Thanks to a successful bid by the County Council, we have been granted £459k to expand and develop social care in Oxfordshire. It will be spent on a range of initiatives designed to enhance social care delivery locally, including the establishment of a behaviour-based recruitment pilot and training on assistive technology that will allow people to be cared for in their own homes for longer rather than being admitted to a care home.

For more information: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2014/may/council-gets-%C2%A3450k-grant-develop-local-adult-social-care-workforce>

OFSTED INSPECTIONS

A four-week inspection of Oxfordshire schools took place in May. While the Children's Services Directorate prepares for these regular inspections, Ofsted will only give 24 hours' notice to see schools performing as they would on an everyday basis.

The results will be known at the end of June and give a clear indicator of performance (either inadequate, requires improvement, good or outstanding). Schools will strive to continuously improve themselves and the recommendations from inspectors should help us to advance.

THRIVING FAMILIES INITIATIVE

Latest Government figures show the 'Thriving Families' scheme run by the County Council has turned around the lives of more than 400 families in Oxfordshire – continuing to place the county among the best performing local areas. This is known nationally as the Troubled Families programme and has been set up to turn around 120,000 troubled families nationwide by March 2015.

New figures show the programme, in which a dedicated worker is assigned to each family to give hands-on support, has brought about positive outcomes for 444 of Oxfordshire's most troubled families, by tackling problems such as crime and antisocial behaviour, poor school attendance and unemployment. This means more than half (55 per cent) of the 700 families the council has worked with so far, have turned their lives around. This is well above the national average of 33 per cent.

This success rate makes the county third best across the South East region, with only West Berkshire and Southampton recording a higher percentage, albeit having worked with fewer families than Oxfordshire, 116 and 685 families respectively, compared to our 700 families.

The council has invested £1.6million in the scheme and Oxfordshire is trialling a DCLG Cost Benefit Analysis tool, the only Shire County to do so, which shows that for every pound invested the Thriving Families Team saves the public purse £3.22.

ARMED FORCES DAY

Armed Forces Day is a chance to show your support for the whole of the Armed Forces Community, from serving personnel to Forces' families and cadets. It is also an opportunity to raise public awareness of the contribution by those who serve and have served in Her Majesty's Armed Forces.

Oxfordshire County Council will be celebrating the Armed Forces Day with a Flag Raising Ceremony on Monday 23 June 2014. The flag will be raised at 11am above Oxford Castle Unlocked.

The ceremony will be attended by the Chairman of the County Council, Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, local Mayors, Councillors and representatives from RAF Brize Norton and Benson, Bicester Garrison, 7 Rifles, the Royal British Legion and Cadets from across the county.

CLA GAME FAIR

The CLA Game Fair is returning to Blenheim Palace on **18th, 19th & 20th July**. This national event is billed as the largest countryside event in the World and expects to attract 150,000 visitors that weekend. This will inevitably add to traffic, particularly on the Friday.

The County Council will put in place a similar traffic management plan to that used in 2011, with all organisations working to reduce the impact on the area.

DISTRICT & EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

On 22nd May, Oxfordshire residents had the opportunity to vote for their Members of the European Parliament. Our county elects as part of the South East of England Constituency that returns 10 MEPs to the 751-strong Parliament. There are now 4 UKIP and 3 Conservatives alongside one each for Labour, Green and Liberal Democrat.

There were also district elections in a third of the seats in Cherwell and West Oxfordshire, and for half the seats in Oxford City. West Oxfordshire and Cherwell remain under Conservative control; Oxford is held by Labour.

RECYCLING INITIATIVE IN BICESTER

Oxfordshire County Council has teamed up with Bicester Green sustainability centre and Viridor to ensure that bikes and furniture are saved from becoming waste.

County Councillor David Nimmo Smith, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet member for environment, said: "The success of this partnership is really heartening as it is always better that something is reused than thrown away, even if it is recycled. I hope that we will see more and more bikes and furniture finds its way through Bicester Green and back into more local homes."

More information and for details of opening times to make donations please see:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2014/may/recycling-cycles-and-more-bicester>

DEMENTIA FRIENDS CAMPAIGN

Oxfordshire County Council is backing this important Alzheimer's Society Campaign. By becoming a Dementia Friend, you can find out more about how you can help someone in your family or neighbourhood.

More information is available at: <https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/>

Cllr Patrick Greene – Didcot East * Hagbourne Division - OCC