
STANFORD IN THE VALE PARISH COUNCIL



NEWS UPDATE February 2023

Parish council elections

The next set of local government elections are on Thursday 4th May, when all of the seats on the parish council will be up for re-election. Would you like to be involved with the future direction of your community? Are there things you think the parish council should be delivering for the village or particular issues that you think need addressing? Would you like to help to improve the place you live in? Then why not consider standing as a parish councillor?

The parish council has three main responsibilities: representing the whole electorate within the parish; delivering services to meet local needs; and striving to improve quality of life in the parish. No particular experience is needed – training can be provided – and it could be argued the parish councils work best when councillors have a range of experiences, backgrounds and perspectives on life. You would need to be able to attend council meetings, on the first Wednesday of every month, and to be able to put some time aside outside meetings to keep informed on local issues and to help to move forward matters that you feel need addressing.

If you are worried that this might be too big a commitment it is also possible to be co-opted as a non-councillor onto our environment or recreation and leisure committees. These meet roughly once every two months and might be a better fit if you would like to contribute in one of the specific areas covered by the committees.

There is guidance available on standing for election on the Electoral Commission's website (<http://bit.ly/3waK1N>) and you can also talk to an existing parish councillor or the parish council clerk to find out more.

If you would like to know more, the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councillors (OALC) – the body that represents parish councils in the county – is holding a series of free online training

sessions, entitled *So you want to be a councillor?*

There is no need to pre-register, and you can join on the day (Zoom meeting) using this link: <http://bit.ly/3ZCWH4O>, meeting ID 871 2501 2109, passcode 386520.

The session dates are:

- 24th January 7-8pm
- 13th February 10-11am
- 15th March 2-3pm

New councillors

We are pleased to say that the two casual vacancies on the parish council have now been filled by co-option and we are delighted to welcome our new councillors, Karen Boyle and James Brooks. These fill the vacancies left by the resignations of Cllr Tina Jenkins and Cllr Amanda Bailey. We'd like to thank both Tina and Amanda for giving up their time voluntarily for the benefit of the local community.

Village Noticeboards

The noticeboards around the village can be used to advertise non-profit, non-political activities and events in the Stanford in the Vale area, as can our parish council Facebook page. Please refrain from posting notices elsewhere (for example, pinned to telegraph poles). They frequently get left up after the event has been and gone, ending up littering the village.

If you would like something to be included on the noticeboards or on our Facebook page, please contact the clerk:
clerk@stanfordinthevalepc.co.uk.

Kevin Middleton

Chair – Stanford in the Vale Parish Council
kevinfmiddleton@gmail.com

VWHDC Household Support Fund Scheme

Vale of White Horse District Council has reopened the Household Support Fund scheme for people finding it hard to cope with the rising cost of food and energy bills.

The fund is initially open for applications to help eligible households that have not received any support from the fund previously. However, from 13 February, if funds remain, it will be opened up wider to households that have received some funding before May last year.

Residents can apply for support by filling in an online form on the council's website or by calling their Community Hub team during office hours on 01235 422600. The fund closes on 31 March, or sooner if it is fully allocated.

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/costofliving

The council is offering a wide range of advice, including information on free or affordable food banks and council tax support. They can also help to signpost people for debt advice and other cost of living support and provide information on housing support as well as guidance on how people can look after their mental health and wellbeing.



PPC News

As our community grows with new residents filling the new homes, we thought it would be good to start the year with a re-introduction to the Public Purposes Charity (PPC) and how we contribute to Stanford in the Vale.

The original Trustees specified that the principal purpose of PPC was to fund capital works, materials and equipment that represent lasting benefits. To this end PPC has paid for extensive repairs to the Church, the war memorial, public defibrillators, equipment for the Scouts, nets and lights for footballers, sound equipment for the amateur dramatists, display boards for the artists, the Jubilee party and a whole range of essential materials for the Primary and Pre-School. We also care for and manage the allotments.

PPC is proud of its contribution to the growth and vibrancy of Stanford in the Vale with Trustees who have been highly responsible about spending money while being passionate about delivering help and support throughout our community. They are also encouraged by the great positive response from

those who have been successful with their grant applications!

PPC came into being as a result of a lump sum being invested with CCLA, an organisation that manages funds for charities and religious organisations. The interest earned on that investment is spent solely on Stanford in the Vale. Successful management of our funds has seen the capital grow and therefore the benefit to the Village also increase.

In 2023 we look forward to assisting the Village with projects and activities that further enhance daily life and continue to build the great relationships we have with those providing community services and activities in Stanford in the Vale.

We have two Trustee positions coming vacant so would welcome inquiries for those who would like to join us. It involves approximately 4 meetings a year and some ongoing correspondence in between those meetings. If you think you might be Trustee material please make contact with us either at info@ppcstanford.org or by filling in the application form at:

<https://ppcstanford.org/contact> <https://ppcstanford.org/contact> I will be happy to give you more details about what we do and how we do it.

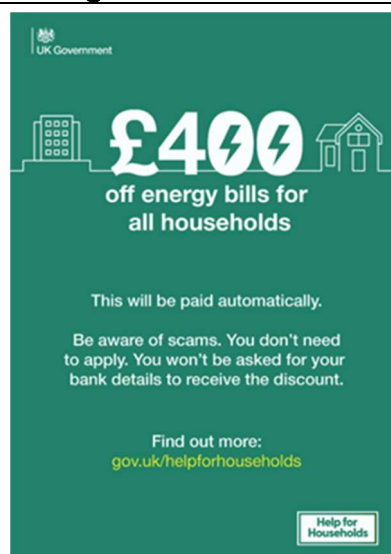
Wishing all of you a 2023 that celebrates family, friends and being part of a great community.

Caryl Oliver

Public Purposes Charity Stanford in the Vale

Caryl.oliver@ppctanford.org

Cost of living scams to look out for



Fake text messages and emails relating to cost of living and energy

The government is offering help for households but beware of criminals pretending to offer these support schemes.

These scam emails and text messages come in many different forms and promise financial gain. They are often official looking and pretend to be from the government or HMRC.

- fake cost of living related grants
- fake cost of living relief funds
- fake council tax reductions, rebates or refunds
- fake tax rebates from HMRC
- fake offers of assistance to help with universal credit applications

Look out for text messages and emails asking you to click on a link and check the official government website – do you need to apply for the support or is it paid automatically?

Did you know? You can easily report scam text messages and emails for free:

- **Text messages** - forward the text to 7726.
- **Emails** - forward the email to report@phishing.gov.uk.

Households across Great Britain will receive a £400 non-repayable discount off their electricity bills, via the government's Energy Bills Support Scheme. However, there is no need to apply for the scheme. **You will not be contacted by the Government or Ofgem asking you to share your bank details to claim this benefit.**

Find out more about the government support available - [Help for Households - Get government cost of living support](#)

Time to get walking again!

With Spring on its way we start to think about getting out to walk in the beautiful English Countryside again, but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Oxfordshire <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire> has loads of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

John Harris (who maintains the website) said 'There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Oxfordshire (part of the Walking in England website) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you'.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

John Harris

www.walkinginengland.co.uk

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