



Maintenance person needed

The parish council is looking for an additional maintenance person for occasional work. The role is varied and includes general maintenance around the village.

The work will include a variety of tasks such as:

- Minor fixes of playground equipment
- Erecting and securing signs
- Repairing or painting gates, fences, benches, bus shelters and noticeboards
- General garden maintenance such as weeding, strimming, pruning

The chosen contractor will be self-employed on an hourly rate of £12.50 and have the necessary equipment, insurance, and own transport. The ideal person will have a broad range of practical skills and experience of general maintenance outdoors.

If you live in or around Stanford in the Vale and care about the village then we'd love to hear from you. Contact the Parish Clerk at clerk@stanfordinthevalepc.co.uk or call 07710 760894.

Conservation area

You may have been aware that Vale of White Horse District Council has been conducting a review of the Stanford in the Vale conservation area, including a proposal for its extension. The parish council was a consultee and submitted a response that was supportive of the proposed extension and that also proposed some additional areas for consideration

Following on from the consultation, a set of changes, including some extensions to include parts of the village considered to be of conservation importance, were agreed at the district council's cabinet meeting at the end of September. The new boundaries now include the verges at the western end of High Street, some properties along High Street and areas in the vicinity of Green Lane and Horsecroft

The revised conservation area can be found on the district council's website (<https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2023/11/Stanford-in-the-Vale-FINAL.pdf>).

Copies of the parish council's response to the consultation are available on request from the clerk.

Daffodil planting

The parish council has recently arranged for the planting of in excess of 2000 daffodils on Church Green, Upper Green, Jubilee Green and the A417 verge opposite the Horse and Jockey. The planting was funded by a generous donation from a parishioner, with some additional funds to top up the display contributed by the parish council.

Our thanks go to Nick Boden who planted all 2400 bulbs himself after unforeseen circumstances meant that the Scouts were unable to do it as originally planned. This will give us all some much-needed cheerful spring colour to look forward to over winter.

High Street Bus Stop

A number of parishioners have contacted us about the move of the Faringdon-bound bus stop on the High Street from its previous location just west of the junction with Hunters field to outside the village shops, cafe and school. Conversations with the county council have revealed that the move was unintended and due to an error in the county council's bus stop map combined with Thames Travel's installation of a new timetable in the wrong location.

The county council have now agreed to move the stop back to its original location. However, the current situation is somewhat confusing to say the least, as the timetable has now been removed but Thames Travel's website is still showing the stop outside the school. We'll continue to pursue this with the county council until things are fully resolved.

Not all stops in the village are marked by a sign but a map of stops is displayed on the parish council's noticeboard.

Footbridge over the River Ock

In August the county council closed the footbridge over the River Ock on the footpath connecting Marlborough Lane to Park Lane. This is a very well used path for local walks around the village as well as forming part of the Vale Way long distance path.

The bridge has been under threat of closure for some time due to weak abutments and the county council has now deemed it unsafe. A replacement bridge is in their 2024/25 capital programme but we do not yet have confirmed date for its installation.

We have put a considerable amount of work in over the last few months to explore with the county council options for bringing this date forward but without success. We have also attempted to secure a safer alternative route, without the need to walk alongside the A417, but this has not been possible as we have been unable to secure all of the necessary agreements from landowners.

We recognise this is an important, well-used path and will be monitoring progress on a replacement carefully and will let parishioners know when we have further news.

Public works of art

In the last council meeting, the parish council expressed its support for Stanford in the Vale Primary School's application to the district council for Section 106 (S106) funding for an artwork to celebrate 150 years of the school.

However, there are still further S106 funds available for the creation and installation of works of art around the village. If you have any creative suggestions for a public work of art or a project to create one, we would like to hear from you. Please contact the clerk or one of your parish councillors.

S106 agreements are drawn up between the planning authority (in this case Vale of White Horse District Council) and a developer to mitigate the impact of a development which would

not otherwise be considered acceptable. They can include obligations on a developer to provide financial contributions to local infrastructure and are designated for specific purposes – in this case works of art around the village.

New litter picker

We're pleased to announce that Stephen Rolls will be taking over as our parish litter picker. This is one of those really important jobs that is often only noticed and appreciated when it's suddenly not happening any more. If you see Stephen around the village, please say hello and make his job a little easier by putting any litter in the bin.

We'd also like to thank Kay and Bruce for their work litter picking over the summer and autumn.

Kevin Middleton

Chair – Stanford in the Vale Parish Council
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Don't fall prey to loan sharks this Christmas

Read on our website:

news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/dont-fall-prey-to-loan-sharksthis-christmas

Residents are being warned by Oxfordshire County Council not to turn to loan sharks, who will be seeking to prey on people who are struggling financially in the lead up to, during and after the Christmas period.

Illegal lenders or loan sharks, as they are more commonly known, are people who lend money without authorisation from the Financial Conduct Authority.

Borrowers generally won't receive any paperwork and the lender will add high interest on top of the amount borrowed. If payments are not made, coercive controlling methods may be used and in some cases violence, keeping people in an endless spiral of debt that is very hard to get out of.

Councillor Dr Nathan Ley, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for

Public Health, Inequalities and Community Safety, said: "During the Christmas period, many families facing extra financial pressure may feel

tempted to borrow money to make ends meet or to cover the costs of Christmas.

"No matter how tempting it may seem, a loan shark is never the answer. They target vulnerable or desperate people who may feel they have nowhere else to go. People get trapped in a cycle of debt with exorbitant interest rates and can face intimidation and threats of violence.

"There are plenty of well established, safe and legal organisations such as credit unions that can help people access affordable loans. There is also plenty of information about support available to help with living costs on our website."

Jody Kerman, Head of Trading Standards at Oxfordshire County Council, said:

"Unfortunately, many illegal lenders seek to exploit and cash in on those struggling over the festival period. They do untold damage to families and communities. We must do all we can to prevent loan sharks from ruining lives."

Find out more about loan sharks, and support available to those who need it by visiting the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT)'s website. Residents can report loan sharks by calling 0300 555 2222



PUBLIC PURPOSES CHARITY – WHAT'S THAT?

Stanford in the Vale is blessed with something that is not available to most other Villages – a source of funds for the benefit of the community: Repairs to the Church, Equipment for the School and Pre-School, Support for Clubs and Organisations and funding for significant events and activities.

Founded just over 20 years ago, PPC wisely invested a sum of money which has now grown and delivers some £27,000 a year for the sole purpose of supporting Stanford in the Vale.

Managed by a small group of Trustees, all from within the Village, PPC welcomes applications for grants to improve the fabric of the Village or support

activity that benefits the community at all ages. The Trustees are keen to share the money and to see the benefits around the Village in the form of happy scouts, skaters and pickle ball players, extra learning equipment for our children, lifesaving defibrillators and a structurally sound Church!

Check out some the projects we have supported and see the grant guidelines at:
<https://ppcstanford.org/projects>

We are also delighted to welcome two new Trustees:

Derek Monahan-Smith and Mike Penman have both had much travelled business lives but are now deeply committed to the Village. We welcome the experience and knowledge that they bring which adds value to PPC.

Please do congratulate them if you bump into them in the Village, they may not be able to answer all your questions about PPC yet but will be happy to bring them to the Trustee table!

See the website at www.ppcstanford.org and do make contact if you have a project that benefits the community and needs some support.

Wishing all our Villagers a Happy Christmas with family, friends, good cheer and togetherness!

Caryl Oliver

Clerk/Correspondent

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