



Chair's Report

Footpaths update

Regular walkers may have already noticed that we now have a replacement bridge crossing the river Ock on the well-used footpath that runs south out of the village towards Park Lane. The new crossing was funded and fitted by the county council. However, when it was first put in place it lacked access for dog walkers, and guardrails to prevent walkers falling into the stream. After voicing our views on its unsuitability to the county council, we're pleased to say that these defects have now been remedied and the path is now open to all with a safe, accessible crossing.

We have had reports from a local landowner of livestock being lost to cases of Neospora – a parasite affecting cows that can be transmitted by dog poo. If you are going for a walk along the local footpaths with your dog, please be mindful of the need to keep it under effective control, particularly in fields where livestock may be present. The Ramblers Association publishes a helpful dog walking code (<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking-hub/how-enjoy-great-dog-walks-responsibly>) that contains guidance on how to enjoy the countryside responsibly with your dog. In particular, please ensure you have a short lead with you and use it when needed (e.g., around livestock or where signage requests it) and that you do not let your dog off the lead unless you keep it in sight and close enough to come back to you on command. Diseases like Neospora can be transmitted through dog poo, so please always bag and bin your dog's poo wherever you are. You can use any public waste bin or your bin at home.

Please also keep to the designated footpaths and follow the countryside code (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code>). You can find an online map showing all of the public rights of way in Oxfordshire on the county council's website (<https://publicrightsofway.oxfordshire.gov.uk/standard-map.aspx>).

NHS health checks in the community

Getting an NHS health check is a great way to stay on top of your health. It's a simple process that can give you peace of mind and help you stay healthy.

Think of an NHS health check as an MOT for your body. The aim of the check is to keep you as healthy as possible and reduce the chances of problems in the future. It's all about prevention and helps detect potential problems before they get the chance to do real damage.

Health Checks Oxfordshire provides free NHS health checks on behalf of the county council at convenient community-based locations across the county, including libraries. This is in support of existing GP practice provision, making it easier than ever to get one.

You can book your free NHS Health Check with Health Checks Oxfordshire online today at <https://healthchecksoxfordshire.org/get-started/>. Further information is also available by calling 0800 122 3790 or by emailing information@healthchecksoxfordshire.co.uk.

Community orchard and woodland

Anyone who walks the QEII Field regularly (the field opposite the football club, at the top of Cottage Road) will probably be aware that we have the beginnings of a community orchard at the far end of the field, having planted about a dozen fruit trees over the last couple of years. We are now looking at planting a further batch of fruit trees over the winter, most likely in December. Our intention is to develop the orchard so that it provides fruit that walkers can pick as they pass by, as well as enhancing local biodiversity.

We are looking for volunteers to help us with the next stage of planting. With enough people, this shouldn't take longer than an hour or two – we will have around a half-dozen trees to plant – and will take place on a weekend morning over the winter. If you would like to come along for the morning and help with the planting, please contact the parish clerk (clerk@stanfordinthevalepc.co.uk), who will pass your details onto the person coordinating the planting. We'll then be in touch to arrange a convenient date.

The parish council is also responsible for maintaining the community woodland – the open access area of woodland between the QEII Field and the recycling centre. The woodland already has several thousand trees that have been progressively planted by the community over the last ten years. We've recently agreed a habitat management plan with the county council (who own the land) which is aimed at improving

the biodiversity of the site, establishing it as a lowland deciduous mixed woodland. The first step of this will involve tree planting to enhance the condition of the hedgerows and shield the site better from the A417. We'll also be looking for volunteers in the future to assist with this, so please also let us know if you'd like to help with this longer-term project. There may also be opportunities in the future to help with other activities, such as building places for reptiles to hibernate and bat and bird boxes.

Tree work

At our last meeting, the parish council approved a programme of tree work designed to ensure that all trees on our land are in a safe and healthy condition. We'll be carrying out this work over the next few months, using a local contractor.

During the tree survey that was a precursor to this work, the large lime tree at the corner of Church Green and Chapel Road was diagnosed as in decline, suffering from a fungal infection and with an increasing hollow and potentially unsound trunk. On the advice of two independent arboriculturists, we have agreed that the tree will be felled because leaving it in its current condition could result in a potential hazard. Obviously, this will have a considerable impact on the appearance of the green, but unfortunately, we have concluded it's impossible to save and maintain it in a safe condition. We will be arranging to plant a new tree in its place.

Village speed limits

At a recent county council transport meeting the parish council's request to extend the 30mph limit on the A417 north-westwards, replacing the existing 40mph speed limit in its entirety, was approved. When this change is implemented, on entering the village from Faringdon the speed limit will change straight from 50mph to 30mph without the intervening 40mph stretch. The parish council requested this change following a survey of the village that showed overwhelming support.

At the same meeting, approval was given for a toucan crossing to provide a safe means for crossing the A417 from and to the River Meadow estate, and for shared-use foot and cycleways on either side of the crossing, all of which should have been in place before occupancy but have been delayed in their implementation. Although the parish council has no power over highways matters, we have been pushing the county council to ensure the situation is rectified as soon as possible. It was at the parish council's instigation that the reduction in speed limit to 30mph was considered and approved.

In the meantime, we are still pressing for a temporary crossing to be installed and a temporary 30mph limit to be put in place in advance of the permanent works being carried out.

Our application for a 20mph limit throughout the village was also approved at the meeting and we are now awaiting its implementation.

We don't have definite dates on any of these but will continue to monitor all of these activities closely and will feed back information via this newsletter as and when we have it.

Jubilee Gardens

Some time ago the parish council was awarded a grant from the district council's Climate Action Fund to revitalise Jubilee Gardens (the small area of garden adjacent to the toddlers' play area, near the pre-school). Some challenges over resources for completing the work have meant that we haven't been able to progress it as quickly as we had first envisaged.

However, we now have a plan in place to make a design for the garden over the winter using a local garden designer and to then plant it out in the spring. Nearer the time, we'll be asking for volunteers to help with the planting.

QEII Field

As many of you may be aware, the parish council has a long-term plan to develop the QEII Field to provide new leisure facilities for the village, including additional sports pitches, tennis courts and, ultimately, a pavilion for community use.

We have been in negotiation with the district council over planning permission for several years now, trying to resolve a number of issues which were blocking things moving forwards. We believe that we now have a resolution in principle to all of the obstacles to planning permission. The final hurdle to negotiate is a further archaeological survey of the field, for which we now have funding in place. We will be moving forward with plans to do the survey, involving digging a number of trenches in the field, over the winter months. Once the survey is complete, and subject to its findings, we should be in a position to be granted planning permission for the first phase of work, which will comprise levelling the field and preparing the ground for pitches.

New councillors

We are pleased to have welcomed several new co-opted members to our parish council over recent months, namely councillors Sean Silk, Bryan Burls, Mike Foulkes and Jason Page. As always you can find details contact information for all councillors in the newsletter and on the parish council website. If there is an issue concerning you in our community, please reach out to any of them.

Additional Information

Your Member of Parliament is Olly Glover (Lib Dem): olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk

Your County Councillor is Juliette Ash (Con): juliette.ash@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Your County Council is a coalition of Lib Dem-Green Party alliance as a minority administration. They are responsible for schools, roads and footpaths, transport and travel, recycling facilities, children's services and adult social care; see: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>

Your District Councillor is Sue Caul (Lib Dem): sue.caul@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Your District Council is Lib Dem Controlled. They collect Council Tax and are responsible for planning, rubbish & waste services, leisure facilities, housing, benefit management and running elections; see: <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/>

Your Parish Council by convention does not operate along party political lines. All councillors are unpaid volunteers. Our Parish Clerk is employed for 15 hours per week. Contact Details:

Kevin Middleton (Chair) kevinmittleton@gmail.com	01367 718395
Peter Lewis (Vice Chair) plewissitv@gmail.com	07941 500442
Bryan Burls bryanburlsatoxford@gmail.com	07904 593627
Mike Dixon	01367 710713
Simon Howes	07875 249265
Mark Isaacs	01367 718719
Bob Kent bob_kent@btinternet.com	07501 250407
Sean Silk sean.silk@btinternet.com	07795 540360
Jason Page jpage1970@gmail.com	
Parish Clerk (Claire Lewis) clerk@stanfordinthevalepc.co.uk	07710 760894

Parish, town and community councils in England and Wales have a number of basic responsibilities in making the lives of local communities more comfortable. Essentially these powers fall within three main categories: representing the whole electorate within the parish, delivering services to meet local needs and striving to improve quality of life in the parish.

The Parish Council lobbies District & County Councils over issues in the Parish and scrutinises and comments on Planning Applications. The District Council decides most Planning Applications.

The Parish Council is responsible for the upkeep of a number of areas within the village:

- Village Greens
- The play area next to the village hall
- The QEII field
- The skate park and MUGA
- The Millennium Green
- Mowing some areas of the village on behalf of the County Council
- Litter picking – we employ a litter picker for several hours per week



SPRUCING UP THE VILLAGE...

The new fort in the playground is now old news. Keep your ears open for a sweeter sounding organ and repaired bells – did you know that even woodworm infested wood has a degree of heritage protection? Keep your eyes open for further improvements to the clock.

Good news for those looking for sport, a new Netball Club is being established. Watch out for people wearing strange letters like GD,WA or C on their chests!

We are very sad to advise of the passing of Trustee Derek Monahan-Smith who left us on 9 November. Our thoughts and prayers with his family and friends.

We wish everyone in the Village a happy and harmonious Christmas, enjoy the snow and look forward to rediscovering your gardens and allotments in the Spring.

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

The Trustees are always happy to discuss what we can do to make our Village just that bit more special for those of us living here and we welcome anyone who might like to become a Trustee – a valuable but not onerous undertaking.

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

Caryl Oliver

Clerk/Correspondent

Caryl.oliver@ppctanford.org