

STANFORD IN THE VALE PARISH COUNCIL



NEWS UPDATE JUNE 2025

Annual parish meeting

On Wednesday 7 May, as well as the usual parish council meeting, we held our annual parish meeting. This is not a parish council meeting, but rather a separate parish meeting during which the council reports on its activities throughout the year.

Over the past year, your parish council:

- developed a detailed scheme for a public work of art wayfinder trail, obtained funding and commissioned a series of artworks in local stone reflecting the story of the village, ready for installation later this year
- commissioned the purchase and installation of a new children's play fort in the play area, part-funded by the Stanford in the Vale Public Purposes Charity
- secured a number of footpath improvements from the county council, including replacement of the bridge over the River Ock and the installation of accessible footpath gates
- continued our programme of tree maintenance, tackling the high priority work remaining from last year
- maintained our grass cutting and routine maintenance activities, including repairs and upkeep of play equipment
- commissioned a full archaeological survey of the QEII Field, which we expect to clear the way for planning permission to be grant
- saw our application for a village-wide 20mph come into effect
- planted a further batch of daffodils around the village
- purchased and installed an additional defibrillator on the Bow Road estate
- funded new netball posts, tennis and pickleball nets for the multi-use games area
- planted a further batch of fruit trees in the community woodland

You can find a full report in the minutes section of our parish council website (quick link: <https://bit.ly/SITVapm2025>).

Wayfinder Trail

As we reported in the February newsletter, the parish council has been awarded funding for a "Wayfinder Trail". The idea of the "trail" is to bring the history of our village to life by placing large stones from one of our local quarries in nineteen strategic locations around the village. Each stone will have a mosaic inlaid and a QR code. The mosaic will represent an aspect of the history of village life over hundreds of years, and the QR code will offer a link to the parish council website, where a more detailed explanation of the relevance of the siting of each stone will be explained, along with some historical content relating to the surrounding area.

We are making good progress with the trail, and hope to begin laying the stones around the village during August and September. The stones (from Hatford Quarry and kindly donated by EarthLine Ltd.) have now been selected and are being stored at the quarry, prior to pressure washing and delivery to the selected locations around our village.

The parish council would like to thank our local history society and both the vicar and churchwardens for their support and assistance in drafting the content for the parish council website. If you would like more information about the wayfinder trail, please contact Councillor Bob Kent (contact details at the end of this newsletter).

Monthly Parish Council Surgeries

The parish council is committed to engaging with all parishioners and helping (where we can) with improving all aspects of living in the village. Members of the public are very welcome to attend our parish council meetings (held on the first Wednesday of every month, excluding August), where specific agenda items are always set aside for questions and comments from parishioners. Meeting agendas and locations (usually the large village hall, but please check prior to attending) are available on our website and the village notice boards in advance of meetings. However, we do appreciate that not everyone is able to attend the monthly meetings, and if they do, time for

detailed discussion is often quite limited as there is usually a packed agenda.

In an effort to offer additional access to the parish council, we propose to trial a monthly "surgery" between 10.00 and 12.00 on the first Saturday of every month at Stanford Coffee Shop (next to the Co-Op) starting on Saturday 7th June 2025.

It's your opportunity to come and meet members of the parish council and discuss your thoughts on how we all work together to make Stanford in the Vale an even better place to live.

QEII Field

As many of you may be aware, the parish council has a long-term plan to develop the QEII Field on Cottage Road (opposite the football club) to provide new leisure facilities for the village, including additional sports pitches, tennis courts and, ultimately, a pavilion for community use. As the final stage in obtaining planning permission, we have now completed an extensive archaeological survey of the field. The results of the survey have been accepted by the county council without the need for further investigations and we are now awaiting a final decision from the local planning authority (the district council).

The archaeological work was part-funded by Butler & Duke, who donated £500, and Oxfordshire County Council, who provided a grant of around £5,000 from their Councillor Priority Fund, with the remainder being provided by Section 106 funding (financial contributions from developers for community and social infrastructure projects). If we are finally successful in obtaining planning permission, we will be putting in place arrangements for levelling the field and installing new sports pitches. In the meantime, our parish council working group has already started work on planning and coordination of activities.

New play equipment on the way

As part of our ongoing programme of refurbishment and upgrade of the play area adjacent to the pre-school and village hall, we will be installing a new toddlers' play unit to replace the existing one, which has reached the end of its useful life.

The new play unit is manufactured using sustainable construction techniques for an extremely environmentally friendly product and incorporates plenty of features for toddlers to enjoy and explore, such as a slide, steps and a small platform area where children can sit together while playing. It is part of an overall programme of play area improvements, which will see stage-by-stage replacement and

renewal of equipment. We have chosen to do the work gradually, rather than all in one go, to minimise disruption and allow us to target specific pieces of equipment based on needs and the current state of equipment.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, we can confirm that our new teen shelter will be installed in the skate park in late May/early June. We have also started the project to replace the whole skate park with a new, more inclusive facility, designed with all abilities in mind. We expect to be launching a survey soon to gather the views of riders, parents and residents about what the new park should look like.

Issues with drug-dealing in the village

A number of parishioners have brought to our attention the problem of regular drug dealing taking place at a number of locations in the village. As your parish council, we have no powers ourselves to tackle this issue, and we cannot report to the police details of any incidents passed to us by residents. However, we would encourage anyone witnessing suspicious activity to report it directly to the police. We have been in touch with our local police community support team to raise the issue, and their advice is that reporting of any such problems is vital, as it is only with this information that they can build up a detailed picture over time of what may be happening and then direct resources to address the problem.

If you witness a crime, such as drug-dealing, in progress and are able to do so safely at the time, the police advice is to ring 999. You can also report incidents after the fact, either online at <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>, or by phone on 101. Any reports will be treated in-confidence.

Additional information

Your parish council

- 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.
- Stanford in the Vale Parish Council by convention does not operate along party-political lines. All councillors are unpaid volunteers. Our parish clerk is employed for 20 hours per week

- The parish council lobbies district and county councils over local issues 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, including:
 - Village greens
 - The play area next to the village hall
 - The QEII Field
 - The skate park and multi-use games area
 - The Millennium Green
 - Mowing some areas of the village on behalf of the county council
 - Litter picking, for which we employ a litter picker for several hours per week

Other useful contacts

- Your member of parliament is Olly Glover: olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk
- Your county councillor is Lee Evans: Lee.Evans@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
- Your district councillor is Sue Caul: sue.caul@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
- Your county council is responsible, among other things, for schools, roads and footpaths, transport and travel, recycling facilities, children's services and adult social care. See: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>
- The district council collects your council tax and is responsible, among other things, for planning, rubbish & waste services, leisure facilities, housing, benefit management and running elections. See: <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/>

Parish Council Contact Detail

Kevin Middleton (Chair)	kevinfmiddleton@gmail.com	01367 718395
Peter Lewis (Vice Chair)	plewis.sitv@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	-
Mike Foulkes	mjfoulkes57@gmail.com	-
Parish Clerk (Claire Lewis)	clerk@stanfordinthevalepc.co.uk	07710 760894