

Begbroke Parish Council

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Minutes of the Annual Council meeting April 7th 2025

1 Present:

1.1 Malcolm Ryder (Chair), David Wintersgill, Jeffrey Wright, Peter Finbow, Louise Wright, Leslie Allen, Lindsay Gregory, Dionne Wright, Lesley McLean

Apologies:

1.2 Beverley Appleton, Ian Middleton,

2 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman, Acceptance of Office Forms,

2.1 Chair – Proposer; Seconder-Agreed for the chair to continue as Malcolm Ryder

2.2 Vice Chair – Proposer; Seconder: Agreed for the vice chair to be Leslie Allen but this is to be re: discussed in December

2.3 Resignations: No resignations.

3 Minutes

3.1 The minutes of the meeting Monday 3 March 2025 were confirmed as a true record.

4 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Gifts or Hospitality-None declared.

5 Matters Arising

Lesley has been talking to Malcolm about the Royal Sun and LVS flooding-the council have said that it is a problem with the bend in the drainage-progress is being made. Looking to get this resolved.

Fiona is also talking to Stagecoach to have a bus to join the villages. This is looking positive.

AOG meeting last week and the paperwork will be distributed and Clerk will send this to the Parish Council-this email should be coming from Tom Darlington.

Flooding grant: Lesley will prepare a document to send off for the grant in line with that of Kidlington Parish Council. Begbroke council will adjust to suit. Lesley is doing a mapping exercise to see who owns what so all know who to go to get things sorted out.

Green lane: this has been brought up as a priority to be cleared and made accessible.

6 A44, Highways & Begbroke Science Park

6.1

7 Reports from County/District Councillors/Other contributors

OCC and CDC report for Feb - March 2025

OUFC Stadium, Major Developments & Local Infrastructure

OUFC Stadium:

Consideration of the planning application has now been delayed until June 2025. A report has been submitted outlining alternative sites supposedly considered by OUFC and their reasoning for focusing on the Triangle Site in Kidlington. However, there are still serious concerns about water and sewage capacity, as highlighted by Thames Water. This could impact not only the stadium proposal but also the development potential of other sites in the area.

If Thames Water's infrastructure cannot support development, this could affect Cherwell District Council's 5 Year Land Supply, potentially opening the door for speculative developments elsewhere. Ian has raised this concern with CDC.

Oxford North – Red Barn:

The newly built "Red Barn" is now highly visible from miles around, having received its striking red finish. Local Green councillors feel it is incongruous with the surrounding landscape, and Fiona issued a public statement, which received coverage in both local and national press. Others have noted that this building is similar in scale to the proposed OUFC stadium, offering a stark preview of the potential visual impact that structure could have.

Battery Storage – Cassington Roundabout:

A battery storage planning application near the Cassington Roundabout has been approved with conditions. Recommendations made by Yarnton Parish Council and Cllr Middleton, mainly regarding flooding and fire risks, were incorporated into the decision.

Bicester Road Potholes:

Ian met on-site last week with Highways Director Sean Rooney, inviting local residents to attend. While it was agreed that the major pothole on Bicester Road needs a better fix, complications exist due to it being a key route from the A44 to A34, and coordination is needed with bus operators.

A temporary fix using an experimental material was applied but is already showing signs of failure. Ian is continuing to press for a permanent solution. He also flagged other local problem areas to Sean, some of which have already been addressed.

Crossings, Trees, Reorganisation & Flooding

Begbroke Crossing:

The crossing is now fully constructed, and the lights are due to be switched on soon. A grand opening event is being planned for later in April. Ian has raised concerns that weeds are already growing through the new tarmac, and this issue has been flagged with the highways team.

Poplar Trees on the Bicester Road (Gosford section):

The diseased poplar trees have been felled. On inspection, it was clear they were significantly compromised internally. Clearing the undergrowth revealed a large amount of litter, and Ian has requested a CDC litter pick to tidy the area.

Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution:

Talks continue across all levels of government. Last month, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet met, where Ian spoke. OCC's preference is for a single Oxfordshire-wide unitary authority, and they have agreed to write to the Government supporting this idea—though dissenting views were expressed, including Ian's.

Cherwell District Council (CDC), however, currently prefers a unitary model shared with West Oxfordshire, possibly including Oxford City. Other possible options include a county-wide unitary or expanding Oxford City's boundaries to absorb Kidlington, Gosford and Water Eaton, Yarnton, Begbroke, and possibly more.

Flooding:

The Section 19 flood reports for Kidlington Garden City and Yarnton are nearly complete. We await the conclusions. Thames Water has shared some operational logs about the performance of the Morton Avenue Pumping Station during last September's floods, but these lack the detail needed.

Ian is pushing for more transparent data and has called for a joint meeting between OCC, Thames Water, local parishes, and affected residents. If Thames Water continues to claim the pumps were running at full capacity, this raises serious questions about whether the system's capacity needs upgrading—particularly as extreme weather events become more frequent.

7.2 Cherwell District Councillor – report.

District Councillor Report to Kidlington Parish Council Meeting 20 March 2025.

Part 1: Budget, Oversight, Solar Strategy & Devolution

CDC Budget 25/26 approved – Key points:

- First unanimous budget ever at Cherwell District Council.
- Transformation continues, with an aim to save around £16m over the next five years.
- Appointment of a Land Drainage Officer.
- Investment in the Heating Hardship Fund for struggling pensioners.
- Additional homelessness prevention support.
- Small increase to allowances in line with staff increases.
- One-year delay in review of Conservation Area Appraisals (Tory amendment).
- Removal of the proposed investment in the Waste Collection Partnership (Tory amendment).
- Council Tax increased by £5 from 1 April 2025 for a band D property.
- Garden Waste collection subscription increased to £49 per annum.
- Reduction in the period a property can remain empty before incurring 100% Council Tax surcharge from 2 years to 1 year.

Area Oversight Group – 4 / 5 Parishes:

Three Area Oversight Groups have been set up across Cherwell to support the largest growth areas. One of these covers the 4 Parishes: Kidlington, Gosford and Water Eaton, Yarnton, and Begbroke – now also joined by Shipton. This group aims to provide a holistic approach to planning and development, looking beyond individual sites to address wider infrastructure and regeneration needs. It will work collaboratively with residents, councillors, community groups, and partners to improve delivery across the area.

This approach is particularly vital as our community grows to meet Oxford's unmet housing needs. It promises to prioritise local voices and ensure development benefits residents.

The Four Parishes Area Oversight Group will meet later this month to identify where infrastructure or regeneration is most needed.

CDC Draft Solar Strategy published:

The draft Local Plan aims to increase Cherwell's solar power production fivefold, though it lacks a detailed route for achieving this. Following Cllr Walker's 2023 motion, a dedicated Solar Strategy was developed and approved. A final draft has now been prepared.

The strategy examines:

- Future energy needs and contributions to national targets
- Ground-based and rooftop solar potential
- Community energy networks and grid connection feasibility
- Financial, environmental, agricultural, and landscape implications

Prepared by the Local Partnerships Organisation, the report offers strategic recommendations and sparked many questions from councillors. Greater clarity is sought on how to meet the Local Plan's solar targets.

Government White Paper on Devolution:

Oxfordshire County Council and District Councils are in ongoing talks with the Government about devolution

and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), including the potential for a Mayoral Authority across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. Proposals for one or two unitary authorities are being considered.

Although this doesn't currently affect Parish Councils, Oxford City is proposing a boundary change that would absorb Kidlington into Oxford City. This is being monitored closely.

Part 2: Flood Prevention, Business Awards, Office Move & Growth Corridor

Flood Prevention Efforts:

Recent flooding incidents are under investigation by Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council. The S19 report for Garden City is expected soon, with other flood reports to follow.

The floods have reinforced the need for robust prevention strategies. Learning from the Yarnton Flood Defence Group, the Kidlington Flood Group has been reactivated. Its work feeds into the Oxfordshire Strategic Flood Task Group, where Cllr McLean now represents the area. This initiative aims to identify long-term mitigation strategies for development and climate change impacts.

Cherwell District Council is also funding an additional officer and providing more resources to support parishes affected by flooding.

Cherwell Business Awards:

The annual Business Awards launched last week at Oxford Technology Park in Kidlington. Local businesses are encouraged to apply and showcase their success and innovation.

Office Move:

Cherwell District Council will relocate to Castle Quays on **31st March 2025**, as part of the redevelopment of the former Gap and BHS retail sites into modern office space. All services will now be centrally located in Banbury. The Bodicote House site will be sold and redeveloped at a later date.

Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor:

The Government has announced the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor, including a new rail link. With **Oxford Parkway** identified as a key station, this development is expected to bring significant investment and improved infrastructure to Kidlington. However, it will be important to ensure that all developments respect the needs and concerns of residents.

Dorothy Walker, Lesley McLean, Jean Conway
17.03.25

7.3 OALC Report-None received.

7.4 Cherwell Parish Bulletin-due 28th April

8 Council Representatives

8.1 BVHMC Report.

- Google drive now set up to allow storage and retrieval of important documents.
- Clean up at front of playgroup area complete along with new fence.
- Proposals for adult exercise equipment to be evaluated – possibility of using Blenheim grant to assist funding.
- £41.6K at Bank.
- GDPR & CCTV policy in preparation along with any necessary additional power / data connection provision.
- Quote awaited for control revision to new playgroup heaters.

- Trustees report for Charity Commission in preparation.
- Kidlington & Yarnton football clubs interested in using the field – further discussions in progress.
- Updated safeguarding statement to be produced. And entry of an adult into the children's play area from a private access gate discussed & options to prevent reoccurrence being considered.
- General risk assessment for buildings and grounds being developed by M Hopcraft & Les Allen. (now complete and awaiting discussion with BVHMC).
- Fire risk assessment complete and requires signature of acceptance - awaiting quotes for fire alarm system.
- Legionella RA - certificate expires August 25. Pipe feeding bowling green doesn't seem to have been included on schematic.
- Mower repaired.
- Issue of additional car park raised - suggestions to be discussed at next meeting.
- Social club have completed a leaflet drop through all doors.
- No representatives from WI & Church.
- Next meeting 24 April 2025.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to the Village Hall Committee regarding the gate again-which enters the playground to request an update on what is happening. Clerk to contact.

Dionne suggested asking if the owners could add a private property sign in the interim.

Lesley McLean will contact Cherwell council to see if there is a safeguarding officers who could help with support regarding the gate backing onto the play area.

8.2 Oxford Airport Consultative Committee-no updates.

9 New Business

9.1 Meetings for 2025-26— see bottom of agenda-Once dates agreed Clerk to book village hall.

9.2 Book library: A resident has asked if the village can apply for one of the free Penguin book library cases for the village to use, this was agreed in principle and the clerk will continue with the process. Clerk to pass along to the Village hall committee to see if it can be located in the vicinity of the hall.

9.3 Benches for village: 1 requested as a replacement for the one on spring hill. Jeff has been approached regarding a seat in the entrance to the lane. Unanimously agreed to order 2 new ones.

10 Planning

10.1 Search Results - Planning register | Planning register | Cherwell District Council

11 Correspondence (See register for full details of postal correspondence)

11.1

12 Financial Matters

12.1 Balances/Liabilities: Unity Trust Bank £20,565.32

Liabilities (listed below 11.3)

12.2 Income: VAT Refund £2,006.75

12.3 Expenditure

Voucher

No	Date	Total	Description	Supplier
124	29/03/2025 00:00	6	BANKING FEE	UNITY TRUST BANK
120	20/03/2025 00:00	146.4	STAFF COSTS	HMRC
121	20/03/2025 00:00	234.65	STAFF COSTS	BEGBROKE PARISH COUNCIL
122	20/03/2025 00:00	646.03	STAFF COSTS	BEGBROKE PARISH COUNCIL

123	20/03/2025 00:00	8.1	REFUNDABLE EXPENSES	BEGBROKE PARISH COUNCIL
119	11/03/2025 00:00	37.2	REFUNDABLE EXPENSES	ASSISTANT CLERK
118	06/03/2025 00:00	500	Grant Application	Begbroke Bowls club
117	28/02/2025 00:00	6	BANKING FEE	UNITY TRUST BANK

12.4 Quotations/Tenders/Grants

12.4.1 Quote for roundabout repairs Wicksteed WLLQ16344-Unanimously agree. **Clerk to organise**

12.4.2 Light for western bus stop - ordered.

12.5 Bank Matters

12.5.1 None

12.6 Other Financial Matters

12.6.1 Section 1 of AGAR return – Annual Governance Statement 2024-5. unanimously agreed.

12.6.2 Section 2 of AGAR return Accounting Statements 2024-5. unanimously agreed.

13 Health and Safety Matters

13.1 Playground inspection reports-Received, assistant clerk to scan and save.

13.2 Begbroke Parish Council Play Area Inspection Risk Assessment 14/03/2025-**Les has reviewed and unanimously agreed.**

14 Training

14.1 Requests-No requests.

15 Freedom of information requests/receipts

15.1. None

16 Footpaths, Bridleways and Restricted Byway (RUPP)

16.1

17 Village – Natural Environmental Matters-None

17.1 Action: Clerk to order some more daffodil bulbs in the green

18 Website & Information

18.1 Website reviewed -nothing to discuss.

19 Proposed dates of the Next Meeting (s): 2nd June

Signed

Malcolm Ryder, Chair to Begbroke Parish Council.

Proposed meeting timetable for 2025-2026

Month/Year	Day	Time	Subject of Meeting
2025			
April	7th	6.00 & 7 pm	ACM and AGM
May	12th	6.00 pm	No Meeting
June	2nd	6.00 pm	
July	7th	6.00 pm	
August	11th	6.00 pm	
September	1st	6.00 pm	
October	6th	6.00 pm	
November	3rd	6.00 pm	
December	1st	6.00 pm	
2026			
January	5th	6.00 pm	
February	2nd	6.00 pm	
March	2nd	6.00 pm	
April	13th	6.00 and 7 pm	ACM and AGM
May	11th	6.00 pm	

Bank holidays

Date	Day of the week	Bank holiday
18 April	Friday	Good Friday
21 April	Monday	Easter Monday
5 May	Monday	Early May Bank Holiday
26 May	Monday	Spring bank holiday
25 August	Monday	Summer bank holiday
25 December	Thursday	Christmas Day
26 December	Friday	Boxing Day
Upcoming bank holidays in England and Wales 2026		
1 January	Thursday	New Year's Day
3 April	Friday	Good Friday
6 April	Monday	Easter Monday
4 May	Monday	Early May Bank Holiday
25 May	Monday	Spring bank holiday
31 August	Monday	Summer bank holiday
25 December	Friday	Christmas Day
28 December	Monday	Boxing Day (substitute day)