

District Councillor Report.

Councillors: Dorothy Walker, Lesley McLean, Jean Conway.

Parish Councils: Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke

Period: Sept/Oct 2025

Area Oversight Group.

A green spaces review is currently underway to establish knowledge of the space and use. This will also begin to establish possible 'green and blue corridors' across the area. The Park Hill report is complete and will be released at the next AOG meeting in October, and reporting on the next area (Rutten Lane) will be shortly.

A local Priority Action Plan has been proposed and agreed by the AOG, and S106 developer contributions are being calculated to inform the priorities moving forward.

Five Parishes Lead Officer, Tom Darlington: "As the District Councils' Lead Officer for the area, I continue to work on progressing the priorities identified by the AOG and its stakeholders. Particular focus in recent weeks has been on helping to resolve outstanding issues related to the Partial Review sites, contributing to the preparation of East West Rail design options at Oxford Parkway, preparing phase two of an area-wide green spaces review and preparing to procure consultants to support the stakeholder engagement and design works for new sports pitches and supporting pavilion opposite the Kidlington roundabout".

Begbroke Playing Field.

Initial queries on the drainage of the playing field have been made, and the provision of perimeter ditches is being investigated as a proposed solution, further updates to be provided in due course.

Local Government Reorganisation.

This proposal will see two-tier authorities as seen in Oxfordshire, and new unitary councils created. Unitary proposals are due to be presented to Government shortly.

What options are being proposed?

- A single unitary council for Oxfordshire – Oxfordshire Council (responsible for all services for Oxfordshire residents). This is our preferred option.
- Two unitary councils: Oxford and Shires Council (previously referenced as North Oxfordshire Council) created from the existing district councils of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire. Ridgeway Council created from the existing district councils of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse and the unitary council of West Berkshire.
- Three unitary councils – with a unitary city on expanded boundaries (referred to as Greater Oxford) as well as northern and southern unitaries, also including West Berks

Flooding.

A budget has been provided for an additional full-time Flood Risk Officer who should join CDC in Nov/Dec and will provide additional capacity.

The Section 19 reports for Garden City and Yarnton have been released, and we are awaiting a further report for Mill End/Oxford Road and Begbroke/A44.

KPC recently held a community flood meeting to provide information on ongoing work in relation to flooding and how the funding provided by OCC will be used.

Yarnton designated a Rural Marmot place

This means that the District and County Councils will be focusing on addressing health inequalities in Yarnton by conducting detailed engagement with the community, and based on feedback, to develop initiatives to address those inequalities.

Tourism.

Figures released this week by Experience Oxfordshire, the county's Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and destination management organisation reveal an increase in visitor spend alongside a reduction in visitor numbers, indicating a more productive and resilient visitor economy despite challenging local and global conditions.

Councillor Lesley McLean, Deputy Leader of Cherwell District Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Property and Regeneration, said: **"The visitor economy in Cherwell was valued at £477m in 2024, generating significant income for local businesses and sustaining 10% of jobs, and we are delighted that North Oxfordshire continues to draw a strong proportion of visitor spend and outperforms all areas other than central Oxford. We appreciate Experience Oxfordshire's work promoting everything this district has to offer to both domestic and international visitors."**

Campsfield House Immigration Detention Centre

The Home Office held Councillor/MP and public information sessions at Exeter Hall, Kidlington on 3 September. The (fairly minimal) displays illustrated the broad outlines of the refurbishment (Phase 1) and new buildings (Phase 2) of the project. Occupation by 160 detainees of the Phase 1 refurbished building will take place in December, while an application for the Phase 2 new build section will be submitted to central government for determination under Crown Development Order early next year. A CDO means that the application will not be determined locally, although the District Council and other bodies are consultees. Phase 2, which will house 240 detainees will not be completed until 2030. Clearly, there is much to consider locally regarding the impact on infrastructure, and on roads, given the enormous amount of development that is underway and coming forward in the area.

Cherwell Spark and Accelerator

Business leaders and entrepreneurs are being encouraged to take part in significant business support programmes, returning to the Cherwell district this autumn, following a successful first phase last year.

The Cherwell Business Spark and Cherwell Business Accelerator programmes, delivered by Enterprise Oxfordshire on behalf of Cherwell District Council and funded via the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), are set to see dozens of the district's SMEs and those with a business idea gain access to vital support and expertise across a variety of critical areas.

The reemergence of the two programmes follows a successful first phase delivered during 2024, which saw dozens of Cherwell-based organisations and those looking to start their own business receive significant support, develop new skills and ideas, as well as gaining much inspiration too.

Cherwell residents access extra support

Cherwell's revenues and benefits teams have identified over 1,150 local families that could be entitled to free school meals and nearly 250 residents eligible to claim pension and savings credits.

The council will be writing to these residents with advice on what credits and funding are available to them, how they can apply, and next steps.

Families that qualify for free school meals can also register for [YouMove](#), a council supported healthy lifestyle initiative that provides low-cost and free activities across Cherwell.

Chair of CDC Charities

The chosen charities for this year are Homelessness Oxfordshire and Asylum Welcome. Lesley and Dorothy, together with other District Councillors, are participating in the Homelessness CEO Sleepout by joining many others who will sleep out in the open in University Parks on 11 October. This is an annual event which has raised tens of thousands of pounds to help support homeless, vulnerable people. A Go Fund me page is being opened, which we'll share with you – your sponsorship donations would be very welcome.

Roundham Crossing.

We are currently in conversation with officers in relation to the proposed closure of Roundham Crossing and will update Clerk when I have further information.