

District Councillor Report

Councillors: Lesley McLean and Lisa Smith

Parish Councils: Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke

Period: July / August 2026

Dear Residents and Councillors

Please find below our District Council report which contains updates on flood equipment, much to report in planning, and other district news.

Change in District Representation

Since the last report, there has been a change in district representation for Kidlington West. Cllr Lisa Smith has now been elected as District Councillor for Kidlington West, joining Cllr Lesley McLean in representing the ward.

Cllr Dorothy Walker has sadly stood down due to ill health, and we would like to place on record our sincere thanks to Dorothy for her service to Kidlington West and the wider community. Dorothy has worked tirelessly on local planning, green spaces, flooding, enforcement and community issues, and we send her our very best wishes. A local bi-election will be held on 16th July.

District Council Meetings and Local Representation

At Annual Council on 20 May 2026, the Council agreed annual appointments and the committee structure for the 2026/27 municipal year, including Executive arrangements, committee memberships and outside body appointments. At that meeting Cllr Lesley McLean was appointed as Leader of Cherwell District Council and Cllr Lisa Smith was appointed as Executive Portfolio Holder for Leisure.

On 16 June 2026 Executive approved a new Housing Enforcement Policy and Housing Civil Penalties Policy, following changes under the Renters' Rights Act. These policies apply across all wards and are relevant locally where poor housing standards, landlord compliance, HMOs or private rented accommodation give rise to concern.

Executive also approved £250,000 from the Strategic Development Fund to support a new Cherwell Economic Plan and a Bicester town centre masterplan. The district-wide Economic Plan will follow and be informed by the High Street and Visitor Economy Strategy already underway; Parish and Town level engagement is on-going. The Economic Plan will be important in shaping future economic priorities, business support and regeneration across Cherwell, including the Kidlington area.

Major Planning and Development Matters

Land Behind the Moors - The Planning Inspectorate has now accepted the appeal under reference 6010646, with a start date of 29 June 2026. The original application, 25/01346/OUT which was refused by committee, sought outline permission for up to 340 dwellings, land for local community use and pavilion, landscaping, public open space and associated infrastructure, including demolition of 162 The Moors to enable access.

The appeal timetable is as follows:

Local Planning Authority questionnaire due:	6 July 2026.
Statements from the Local Planning Authority and any Rule 6 parties due:	3 August 2026.
Interested party comments due:	3 August 2026.
Statement of Common Ground due:	3 August 2026.
Case Management Conference due by:	24 August 2026.
Proofs of evidence and witnesses due:	15 September 2026.
Planning obligation due:	29 September 2026.
Public Inquiry opens:	17 November 2026
(expected to sit for six days)	

Following discussions with officers, local councillors have asked that the Planning Inspectorate consider holding the inquiry at a local venue in Kidlington, such as Exeter Hall, if logistically possible. This would help residents and community groups engage more easily with the appeal process. Officers have also confirmed that points raised on Grey Belt / Green Belt will be passed to the relevant planning witness.

Cllr Smith is liaising with potential Rule 6 and Interested Parties including the Land Behind The Moors Campaign, Kidlington Development Watch, Kidlington Town Council and CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) to co-ordinate local response to the Inquiry.

Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre — Crown Application

The Home Office has submitted a Crown Development application for the expansion of Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre, Evenlode Crescent, Kidlington. The Planning Inspectorate reference is CROWN/2026/0000004 and Cherwell's planning register also refers to 26/01402/CROWN.

The proposed development includes new accommodation blocks, ancillary supporting accommodation, conversion of existing site infrastructure, demolition of existing structures, additional car parking, landscaping and associated site infrastructure.

The application was accepted on 2 June 2026. The representation period runs from 5 June 2026 to 24 July 2026 at 11.59pm. Comments must be submitted through the Planning Inspectorate Crown Development application website rather than through the usual Cherwell planning process.

The Planning Inspectorate will decide whether the case proceeds by written representations, hearing or inquiry after the representation period closes. If residents wish to speak at any future hearing, they must request this when submitting their written representation. The decision will not be taken locally by Cherwell District Council in the normal way.

Concerns remain about the cumulative effect on local roads, water supply, drainage, sewage capacity, community services and wider infrastructure pressures around Kidlington, especially alongside other major development proposals.

PR6c / Frieze Farm — 26/00720/OUT

A major outline planning application has now been submitted for Land at Frieze Farm, Frieze Way, Gosford, OX2 8JX. The Cherwell planning application reference is 26/00720/OUT.

This is a very large proposal for a multi-phased "Innovation District", including; up to 290,500sqm gross external floorspace, research and development floorspace, higher education floorspace, a data centre, energy centre, up to 45 dwellings, a 180-bedroom hotel, further education space, commercial floorspace, a fire station, community floorspace and a large car parking station of up to 1,700 spaces. The QR code here takes you directly to the application page.



This is a substantial application associated with Policy PR6c: Land at Frieze Farm, which had previously been identified as a reserved site for a replacement golf course.

This application will need careful scrutiny because of its potential impact on Green Belt, traffic, public transport, active travel, drainage, biodiversity, energy demand, utilities, landscape and the cumulative effect of development around Kidlington, Oxford Parkway, Stratfield Brake and the A34 / A44 corridor.

Planning Enforcement

This remains a priority and Kidlington councillors have regular update meetings with the Planning Enforcement team due to the continuing number of local cases.

73 High Street, Kidlington

The applicant's appeal has been dismissed, and CDC are seeking an undertaking as to how the owners intend to comply with the enforcement notice.

Kebab Kid Signage

Signage now removed.

Illegal Waste Site

Cllrs Mclean and Smith visited the illegal waste site near the A34 recently to see first-hand the removal operation being carried out by Acumen Waste Services Limited.

The Environment Agency has confirmed that an estimated 21,000 tonnes of illegal waste will be removed. Around 15 to 30 lorry loads per day are currently leaving the site, and the operation is expected to be completed in the Autumn. The QR code here will take you directly to the EA webpage.



The site covers around 8,000 square metres, larger than the pitch at Wembley Stadium, and the waste includes commercial and household waste, tyres and shredded plastic.

The jumbo sandbags have now been removed, and final clearance is underway.

Four arrests have been made as part of the Environment Agency's criminal investigation.

We will continue to press for the site to be fully cleared, properly remediated and monitored for environmental impact.

Flooding

The threat of flooding remains a significant issue across Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke.

Funding has now been secured for Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke for local flood equipment to be held within the community for emergency use. Parish and Town clerks have submitted requests, and delivery is expected in the next period. This will include road signs, cones and in Kidlington's case pumping equipment.

A Flood Resilience Event is planned for 24th September. The event will bring together practical advice, flood protection manufacturers, information on flood wardens and opportunities for residents to get involved in community resilience.

Councillors will continue to press for practical support, local flood resilience and better coordination between Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, Thames Water and developers.

Green Spaces, REPF and Community Projects

The green spaces review across Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke is complete. This review is looking at how local green spaces are used, how they can be improved, and how we can make the best use of them for recreation, biodiversity and community benefit.

At Rutten Lane, a plan is being formalised in partnership with the Yarnton Park Renewal Group and the Parish Council. Funding is secured for one part of the scheme, quotations are awaited, and an agreement on installation management will then be required.

The Area Oversight Group continues to support coordination of local priorities, including infrastructure, transport connectivity, green spaces and long-term community needs. Previous reports recorded that £300,000 of funding had been awarded to the local area and that councils should continue to review the Area Priority Plan.

Roundham Crossing

This remains a significant local concern, particularly for Begbroke and Kidlington residents and those concerned about connectivity between communities. A petition has been presented to Oxfordshire County Council, and further discussions are expected once proposals for Begbroke station are better understood.

The next **community meeting will be held on 2nd September at Exeter Hall**. This will update residents on any requests received from Network Rail, as well as the work being carried out by OCC in relation to Begbroke Station. I am particularly keen that any future proposals are considered alongside the wider Movement & Place work, planned growth, Begbroke Station proposals, Rail 2040 and the need for safe, accessible walking and cycling routes.

General Cherwell News

Planning Designation.

Cherwell District Council has been designated by government in relation to the quality of decision-making on major planning applications. The designation is based on appeal performance data from April 2023 to March

2025, where just over 11% of major planning decisions were overturned at appeal, above the government's 10% threshold.

This is important locally because applicants for major developments can now choose whether to submit applications to Cherwell District Council or directly to the Planning Inspectorate. This could reduce local democratic influence over some major development decisions.

Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

The government decision on Local Government Reorganisation is expected imminently.

This decision could affect how local services are organised in future, including planning, housing, waste, environmental services, community support and strategic infrastructure.

Community Support

Cherwell continues to support residents through cost-of-living and wellbeing initiatives. Previous reports noted that Cherwell's revenues and benefits teams had helped residents access additional benefit support, including pension credits and other entitlements.

Families eligible for free school meals can also access YouMove, a council-supported healthy lifestyle initiative providing low-cost and free activities across Cherwell.

Kidlington and Wider Area Spatial Study

Work on the spatial study is now complete with both reports released. Work continues on developing a framework looking at coordinating development and infrastructure.

The cumulative impact of development around Kidlington, Yarnton and Begbroke remains a major concern. The Land Behind The Moors appeal, the Campsfield Crown application, the PR6c / Frieze Farm proposal, Oxford Technology Park 2, PR8, PR9 and other infrastructure pressures all need to be considered together, not in isolation.

We will continue to press for:

- proper infrastructure before development;
- robust planning enforcement;
- flood resilience and drainage improvements;
- protection of Green Belt and valued local green spaces;
- meaningful community engagement;
- local democratic accountability in major planning decisions;
- practical action on environmental issues, including the illegal waste site.

Please continue to raise local issues with us, particularly where there are concerns about planning breaches, flooding, drainage, highways, waste, environmental harm or the impact of development on local services.

Cllr Lesley McLean

Cllr Lisa Smith