

## Focus on Parishes with Cllr Bethia Thomas

### Coleshill, Faringdon Division

Jan 2025

*The new year brings a lot of change for local government, and while parish and town councils will remain largely untouched, district and county councils are in a state of flux. I will keep you updated as much as possible as events progress and will be happy to answer any questions you may have.*



### Parish Round-Up

**Collapsed Wall on Stanford Road** – Works have commenced after delays due to poor weather; Sovereign have been in touch with updates and communication is improved.

**Lighting on the Highworth Road** – The streetlights have now been restored on the Highworth Road after the position of SSE was resolved; I am still awaiting confirmation of lighting on the new estate and in touch with the developer to ensure this is delivered.

**Adult Social Care S106 Payments** – I will be sending on a summary of the latest correspondence separately.

**Land around the Library** – Fencing outside the library has been repaired.

**Fernham Road Pedestrian Refuge** – In construction phase, likely to be completed in a matter of weeks; temporary traffic lights are installed in the meantime.

**Wicklesham Quarry Application** – Still awaiting updates from highways before the application can go to the county planning committee.

**Speed Survey in Marlborough Gardens** – Results are back and show no significant evidence of speeding; with thanks to FTC for facilitating this survey.

**School Crossing Signage on Park Road** – I will be chasing this with officers as I have seen no progress since last month where installation was “imminent”.

**Bollards on Park Road** – Working with officers on replacement bollards where needed.

**TW Sewage Spill on Canada Lane** – Thames Water have now made repairs to potholes on Canada Lane, following the spill after protracted correspondence.

**Faringdon Parking Review** – While the town centre review is progressing, residents are highlighting other areas that may need to be reviewed in the future.

**Traffic Lights onto the A420** – No further updates.

## General News

- **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR):** Before Christmas the government announced its intention to reorganise local government. This has an effect on all of us in that they are asking for the total abolition of the two-tier system that we have in Oxfordshire, and for the establishment of Unitary Councils that sit within much larger Combined Mayoral Authorities. While I do support the establishment of smaller Unitary Councils, I generally oppose Combined Mayoral Authorities as they tend to reduce the level of overall democracy and take away the local voice. Nevertheless, the County Council will be writing to the Secretary of State requesting that we be considered in one of the first tranches for LGR and we will be working with partners within the county and our near neighbours to make sure we arrive at the best fit for our communities.
- **Faringdon Fire Station:** The station in Faringdon is undergoing a full refurbishment, with a significant investment to bring state of the art facilities to the building making it a great place to work for the fire crew with enhanced washing facilities and other features, including energy saving measures and solar panels to reduce costs, and reduce carbon emissions.
- **FATAC:** I am aware that the minutes of the last Faringdon Area Traffic Advisory Committee Meeting for Faringdon and neighbouring divisions have been distributed. I am happy to follow up any requests you may have for the next meeting in March.

## Live Public Consultations

- **National Highways and Transport (NHT) Network 2024** – Oxfordshire is taking part in a nationwide survey on public satisfaction with transport and road services. We're asking for your views on: accessibility, highways maintenance, public transport, road safety, tackling congestion, walking and cycling, and business users. The surveys are independent and have been created for the National Highways and Traffic Network (NHTN). Each survey will only take a few minutes. The answers you give will: help us to understand how you feel about our service, inform decisions about roads, cycling, bus services and public transport in Oxfordshire. The consultation closes on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2025. [Find out more on the website.](#)
- **Citizens' Assembly on Future Travel, Transport and Connectivity** – During February and March, 40 members of the public will take part in our first ever citizens' assembly. They'll discuss how we can make sure our transport system enables Oxfordshire's health, economy and environment to thrive in 2050. Participants, recruited to be broadly representative of our county, will dedicate 45 hours to answering this challenge. While the sessions will discuss implications for the whole county, a portion of the overall time has been allocated for the central Oxfordshire travel plan area. At the end of the assembly, participants will recommend how we can best achieve the vision and targets set out in the local transport and connectivity plan. For more information visit the dedicated webpage: [Citizens' Assembly.](#)

## **Councillor Surgeries**

I will be available for face-to-face surgeries between 10.00-11.00am at Faringdon Library on the following dates:

- 8th February
- 8th March

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