

Cllrs Lucy Edwards and Bethia Thomas

As always, we have been working for residents and communities in Faringdon and like to keep town members informed; if you have any questions or would like to meet with us, please get in touch. Our contact details are at the bottom of this report. Our Councillor surgeries are running as normal on the second Saturday every month, in the library from 10am – 11am.

Round-Up of Local Issues

Not all items are covered here, with a selection of the main updates listed below. Please get in touch for further details on these or other items.

- **Faringdon Leisure Centre, ATP:** Officers are progressing the legal and tender process, while simultaneously working with the Football Foundation (FF) on grant funding. This is progressing, however timings will be subject to change should the FF grant be successful. Officers are preparing a full update.
- **Faringdon Leisure Centre Decarbonisation** – Works are continuing to install the meter and officers are working closely with SSE and OCU Group.
- **Funding Previously Assigned to the Wessex Leisure Centre** – Funds were secured from OCC; these will be used in lieu of S106 funds previously assigned to Wessex LC; they are being ringfenced as a capital receipt and will be spent on an appropriate project locally.
- **Replacement Dog Bins** – A replacement dog bin has been confirmed at the bottom of Humpty Hill; another bin on Church Path may also need to be replaced.
- **Fernhill Gardens to Belmont Estate connection** – The strip of land between the two estates is privately owned (ransom strip) and this will require mediation with the landowner – either through a legal agreement or purchase.
- **Folly Park Paths and Carpark** – We are waiting on an officer update on any progress towards the upkeep and repair of paths in the park, as well as general maintenance of trees and shrubs overhanging the path; the carpark is subject to an ongoing adoption issue, which we are also trying to resolve with officers.
- **Grass Cutting** – We believe a few verges on Orchard Hill and Westlands were not cut at the beginning of the season. Generally grass verges are cut on the programme set by OCC; this will take place twice a year ongoing – April and Sept/Oct.

Planning

- **P25/V0744/HH, 5 Liddiards Row** – Amendments has been received, but we believe that the impact of the development is still significant so have maintained our request to call in the application – we are awaiting an update from officers.
- **P25/V1328/HH, 24 Leamington Drive** - After a call-in request was lodged, the application was refused by officers – at some point in the future another application may be lodged, as this one was the second on this site.
- **P25/V1407/HH, 24 Page Gardens** – Refused
- **P25/V1738/AG, Moorhens** - Refused

District News

Joint Local Plan (JLP)

The council was disappointed by the news that its JLP, created in partnership with SODC, was asked to be withdrawn by the planning inspectorate after its first phase of examination, due to the belief that it did not allow for the duty to cooperate, specifically with Oxford City and its unmet housing need. The JLP is an innovative planning policy covering many different aspects to address need in the Vale, including affordable housing, building standards, climate and environmental improvements, and represented a pause on building in the district. The council believes that the inspector's view was flawed, and is taking legal advice on next steps.

[The councils' response to the Planning Inspectors' findings on the Joint Local Plan](#)
[Councils to take positive steps to represent communities despite concerns with Inspectors' Local Plan decision](#)

Local Government Reorganisation

The Vale is working with South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Council to create a new and innovative council in its proposal for a new unitary council combining the best of each council to give its residents high quality services, and be responsive at a local level. The proposal is due to be submitted to the MHCLG by the 28th November 2025. We are currently preparing the full proposal which should be published by the end of the month. It includes the proposal for a second "Oxford and Shires" council in the north of the county. There are three proposals being put forward by councils in Oxfordshire.

Concurrently, councils across the region are discussing the possibility of creating a larger mayoral strategic authority or MSA which government has instructed us to investigate. Currently the agreed geography crosses Oxfordshire and Berkshire, but talks are ongoing with Buckinghamshire and Swindon.

Other News, Partnership Working & Consultations

Annual delivery plans

Since the Vale adopted its new Council Plan in February 2025, VOWHDC have been working hard on the development of its Annual Delivery Plan and interactive performance dashboards, which will be available on the Vale's website.

[At the Heart of the Vale: Council Plan 2025-29](#)

New Waste Contact Number

We have a new contact number for **waste-related queries** – from now on, residents who cannot find or report waste information online, should call

01235 422 123. The old 03000 waste number will soon be turned off.

This new number is for all district council household waste, recycling, food, garden waste (collections only*), bulky waste collections, clinical waste collections and street cleaning services. It is also the number to call to report fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles. Please help to spread the word by sharing this information with residents, friends and family in the local area.

Note that for queries about garden waste permits, residents should continue to call 01235 422 422.

For enquiries relating to [Household Waste and Recycling Centres \(HWRC's\)](#), people should continue to contact the county council on 0345 310 1111.

OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail

Oxfordshire County Council is preparing a plan to improve rail transport across the county over the next 15 years. The consultation for this plan asks for your thoughts on how the rail network can be improved to ensure it works well for everyone in Oxfordshire. The consultation materials can be viewed here: [OxRAIL 2040](#)

Wantage community hospital refurbishment

Following a successful bid to Community Infrastructure Levy fund for £950,000, work is now ready to start on refurbishing the ground floor of Wantage Community Hospital. This will offer improved access and functionality of the ground floor of the hospital to accommodate a wider range of health and care services with a corresponding increase in clinic space by eight rooms. This may form a part of the local reorganisation of health care county wide and is one to look out for.

Further information about the project, including the indicative timelines for the refurbishment of the community hospital's ground floor, can be found on [Oxford Health's Website](#).

Wantage Literary Festival is back at The Beacon!

The Wantage Literary Festival bursts back into The Beacon from Saturday 25 October to 1 November, bringing over 40 events packed with brilliant writers, bold ideas and a few star turns.

For more information and to book tickets, visit [The Beacon Website](#).

Contact Details

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