



CASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm on Thursday 6th April 2023 in the Village Hall, The Green.

Minutes

1. **Apologies – Cllr Levy & Cllr Goodwin**
2. **People in Attendance – Cllr King, Cllr Metcalf, Cllr Thompson, Cllr Mills, Cllr Rogers Clerk Mrs T Cameron – 11 members of the public**
3. **Declarations of interest**
(Any pecuniary interests should be declared also a review of current declarations of interests circulated)
4. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 2nd March 2023 – Minutes have been agreed.**
5. **Talk from Merylyn Davis from Blenheim – Has met with local schools trying to create a bio-diversity community. She is working with several different Parish Councils to discuss ways that Blenheim Estates can help the community.**
6. **Report from Clerk**
 - **Yew Tree in the Closed Burial Ground – clerk to get an upto date quote from DAX**
 - **Kings Coronation – Prices for Bottles – clerk to get a price on mugs alone. Parish Council have agreed to fund mugs.**
 - **Neighbourhood Plan – Public Referendum scheduled to be held 22nd June 2023**
7. **Planning**
 - a) Previous Planning Application Decisions

APPLICATION NO:	LOCATION:	PROPOSAL:	APPLICANT:	DECISION:
20/01734/OUT	Land North of A40 Section from Barnard Gate To Eynsham Roundabout Eynsham		Grosvenor Developments Ltd	UNDER CONSIDERATION

b) New Planning Applications

APPLICATION NO:	PROPOSAL:	LOCATION:	APPLICANT:	COMMENT DATE:
W/23/00245/PTEN	Private Party 12:00 - 23:45	Field South Of Cassington Oxfordshire		

- c) **Botley Solar Farm – Parish Council Donation – whilst the Parish Council are unable to make a donation anyone wishing to help please contact Ruth Atterstone. Against the Proper Officers advice the Parish Council have agreed to donate £100 to the group for Banners and Road signs**

The Parish Council would like to give there thanks to the Stop Botley West group for all their hard work.

8. **Correspondence**
 - **Trees on the concourse -** The school have asked that the Parish Council get the trees on the concourse looked at as some of the branches have fallen off in the strong wind. Clerk to contact Jag Trees
 - **Defib number has rubbed off – need to get number put back on**
9. **Reports from County and District & Parish Councillors**
 - a) County Councillor

Electoral Commission.

As most people will know, the neat West Oxfordshire arrangements, in place since 1983, where the parliamentary, district and county council boundaries all match is coming to an end. This is to ensure that each seat has roughly the same number of residents, and reflects the significant population growth in many places, including where we live here. It is a shame that the neatness will go, but we have been very unusual up to this point. Most other parts of Oxfordshire have a much more complex setup.

For parliamentary purposes, Cassington will be in the new Bicester and Woodstock constituency in any election after June this year. Stanton Harcourt and places south of there will be in the reshaped Witney constituency.

The Electoral Commission is also reviewing the County Council electoral divisions. The recommendations from the County Council, established by an all-party working group chaired by an independent member, will now go to the Electoral Commission. There will be a public consultation by the Electoral Commission after the May deadline. The proposal is that the new Eynsham Division will be largely as today, but with the two parishes of Standlake and Aston, Cote and Chimney becoming part of a new South Carterton and Bampton division. The detail is all in Item 14 of last week's County Council agenda. ([Public Pack](#)) [Addenda Agenda Supplement for County Council, 28/03/2023 10:30 \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Regardless of the new boundaries, I will of course continue to give my attention to all residents in the division I am honoured to represent. The new boundaries will be in place in time for the next set of County elections, in 2025.

Home to School Transport

Arrangement for school transport matters to all affected pupils and parents. Cassington is in a good position because it has both a local primary school and a close by single secondary school that is clearly the closest to all residents. People in other places have had a less fortunate experience. I don't think the County Council has handled recent changes well, and we have apologised to parents who have been affected. The County Council provides more than it is required to do by law, and more than its funding permits, but then the law doesn't reflect the real needs of residents or the unfairnesses that a fixed policy creates. A working party has recommended some substantial changes to some aspects of the policy. Where there are issues, we are committed to finding solutions.

I am pleased that the First and Last Mile service, run by a brilliant volunteer team, acts as a key provider of school services into Bartholomew from the south. That provides a win – win: a good school service and a regular timetabled bus. They are always on the lookout for volunteer drivers.

Verges

The County Council has adopted a new verges policy and is urging other councils including parishes to consider whether they might adopt it to. It was developed by researchers at the University and aims to promote biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions.

<https://www.biodiversity.ox.ac.uk/publications/urban-meadow-and-verge-guidelines-poster/>

Retrofitting insulation and upgrading houses.

The County Council has been awarded £6.4 m to support residents to upgrade their houses. The start date for applications was 1 April and details are on the County Council's website.

Suite of cost of living measures agreed for 23/24:

A range of measures, totalling £9.5m, to support residents with the cost of living was agreed by cabinet for 2023/2024. The measures are funded mostly through national grants, but with £2.3m contribution from OCC. National government funding does not cover the full range of measures that councils are encouraged to take. The measures include, council tax support, practical support for those leaving hospital, and significant funding for children in receipt of free school meals during school holidays. A new Local Crisis Fund (administered by district councils) has also been established, which will support people during periods of financial crisis.

Roads and transport.

Potholes

You will have noticed the appalling state of the roads. The County Council is fixing them as fast as it can. The annual spend on core capital roads maintenance is approximately £35m, of which c £16m has been covered by a capital grant from central government, and an additional £3m was awarded in the last budget. We estimate that it would cost about £45m pa to provide what is required, but this money is not available. There is as you can see a large annual shortfall which recent government announcements have not filled. **Botley Road**

Can I remind residents that Botley Road will be closed at the railway bridge for approx. 6 months starting April 11, and then again from March 2024 until October 2024. This is because Network Rail are rebuilding the station.

Buses will continue to run, and the final stop on Botley Road will be at St Frideswide Church. There will be pedestrian, bike, scooter, mobility scooter, etc, access under the railway except for a very brief period in August 24.

Stagecoach are intending that the S1 will run from Eynsham via the A40 and Woodstock Road, and there will be a new, less frequent E1 service through Farmoor to Botley Road. I have suggested to Stagecoach that they might want to keep this under review during the closure periods. It does mean that there will be an increased number of buses from Cassington to the city.

Trains will continue to run from Hanborough into the station, except for a brief summertime period.

Freight strategy engagement:

The county council is engaging with parish and town councils as it develops its freight strategy further. Parishes have been invited to input via LetsTalk. This is not a public consultation, but rather an opportunity for key stakeholders to input early, local knowledge on areas that would benefit from area weight restrictions and identify areas challenged by HGVs. The strategy seeks to keep HGV movements off inappropriate roads and keep them on the strategic road network (e.g. M40). Responses should be sent by 10th April.

A40

No update I am afraid. We are still waiting for proposals on how to fit the A40 upgrade plans into the money available. You will recall that this is money from Homes England, relating to the development of Salt Cross, in the deal inherited from the previous administrations in the city and district, and that the grant no longer covers the original plans.

Witney LCWIP

The County Council has approved a local cycling and walking plan for Witney. It is designed to set out where improvements ought to be made to make active travel safer and easier. When funding is available, having an LCWIP makes it more likely that competitive bids are successful, and sets guidance as to where money can best be spent. There is also work going on to develop a strategic bike network between major villages and market towns and the city. Clearly most people will still drive, but we want the option to choose to cycle to be there for those who want it.

b) District Councillors

There was a motion for WODC object to the Solar Farm Cllr Rylett asked for an amendment for them to do an impact assessment which was passed.

c) Parish Councillors

Cllr Rogers – Dry Stone wall on the left hand side in Little Lane – Tracey to contact James Mackintosh to come and survey Dog Running Area in Yarnton – Change of use – Tracey to email the clerk of Yarnton to get their point

10. **Ditches, Drainage and Flooding**
Resident said that they live at the top of Elms road behind the Pavilion have - Tracey to contact Blenheim and CC the Environment Agency

11. **Maintenance/ Grants**

12. **Traffic**

- Speed Watch

13. **Play Area & Recreation Ground**

14. **Finance**

a) **Payments to be approved:**

Individual/Company	Reason	Amount
Tracey Cameron	Clerk Pay	S/O paid £768.15 Extra to be £241.38
Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association	Membership	£45.00
HMRC	Tax & National Insurance	£8.63
Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	£18.00
Community First	Membership	£70.00
Netwise	Domain Charge for Website	£72.00

b) **Income:**

Individual/Company	Reason	Amount

c) **Balance of Unity Bank as of Sunday 02nd April 2023 - £8867.55**
Balance of Nationwide Account ending 31st March 2023 - £12,625.75

15. **Any other business:**

- Parish Council Objectives
- Tender for Grass Cutting 2023-2026
-

16. **Questions from the Public**

17. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday 4th May 2023 @ 7.30pm in St Peters School

Parish Council Objectives 2022 – 2025

The purpose of this document is to provide a list of objectives for Cassington Parish Council to lead in implementation over the period 2022 – 2025. It is suggested that this initial list of priorities is discussed and refined prior to presentation to the village.

~~1. Completion of the Neighbourhood Plan and adoption by the Parish Council and village of Cassington.~~

~~2. To look at sustainable energy supplies for the village of Cassington that can be provided at matched or lower costs than conventional power supplies. Adoption of additional strategies to reduce use of hydrocarbon-based fuels and reduction of energy waste.~~

~~3. To address increasing problems of rising levels of traffic and speeding in the village of Cassington and roads within the Parish.~~

4. To maintain a watching brief on flood prevention and drainage issues in Cassington and Worton villages.

5. To implement policies outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan and Green Infrastructure Plan with respect to nature conservation.
6. To work with St Peter's School to rectify the current funding and management issues with respect to the school swimming pool. To identify further priorities for fund raising for the school.
7. To develop a community food program through working with the allotment and other landowners around Cassington. This includes distribution of excess produce and the planting of a community orchard.
8. To work with West Oxfordshire District Council and local landowners to address sustainable transport for the village and to maintain and build upon the local network of footpaths and cycleways for both commuting and leisure, as outlined in the Green Infrastructure Plan and Neighbourhood Plan.
9. To examine provisions for young people and senior / vulnerable residents of Cassington. Can Cassington do more for these members of our village?
10. To look at what other measures can be taken to improve the quality of life of our villagers.
- ~~11. Current and future provisions of the Almshouse~~
12. A more accessible village car park
13. Maybe moving the gate to playing fields and introducing a fence to the perimeter to allow the car park to be use 24 hours?
14. Community glass house - I've heard of other villages who have provided facilities to allow produce to be grown all year round.
15. Finally, introduction of green initiatives we've discussed in the past - EV charging points at the VH and pavilion, plus cycles racks etc.