

Long Wittenham Parish Council meeting held on 18th December 2025

Present: Chairman Liz Yuille, Cllr Steve Brown, Cllr Steve Bolton, Cllr Mark Thompson, RFO Clifford Bosley, District Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye.

In attendance: Martin Elliff (clerk) and no members of the public.

Chairman Yuille welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2025/203 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Ian Burton, County Cllr Johnny Hope-Smith.

2025/204 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

2025/205 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

2025/206 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Parish Council resolved to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 20th November 2025.

2025/207 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None.

2025/208 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Cllr Casey-Rerhaye reported:

1. The district council has passed a motion to ask the developers of the Abingdon Reservoir to create an emergency plan to address any flooding issues arising from it..
2. The council has a new leader: Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers.
3. Following the government's intervention, the examination into the Joint Local Plan can resume so that it can move forward towards adoption.

2025/209 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Hope-Smith's report for December, sent by email, is attached in appendix A.

2025/210 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None.

2025/211 COMMUNITY HUB

Cllr Brown, Cllr Yuille and the Clerk had a brief online update from Pye Homes on 15th December on progress to date. It is hoped that draft plans will be available mid January. Pye have approached Robert Weavers for an extension to the exclusivity period.

2025/212 ACKLINGS PLAYGROUND

Twelve trees were planted on 14th December to complete the project. Cllr Brown suggested that, as Claire Michellis has put much effort into the project, the council might express its thanks by giving her a Vine & Spice voucher for £50. Approved.

Actions: Cllr Brown to purchase a Vine & Spice voucher for Claire Michellis.

2025/213 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

Cllrs Yuille and Brown have provided comments on the first draft of the revised NDP. Cllr Thompson is awaiting revised maps from David Corney so that he can produce a second draft for review in January before it is sent to SODC for approval.

2025/214 SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES (SIDs)

OCC has agreed the location of the SID posts: opposite the post box on the High Street and between the Fieldside junction and the zebra crossing on Didcot Road. The invoice for the installation of the posts by OCC has been paid. Once these are installed, Mike Duff will approach suppliers for firm quotations for the SID units.

2025/215 PARISH CLERK / RFO RECRUITMENT

There are six applicants. Cllr Yuille will arrange interviews in January at the Village Hall. The interview panel will be Cllrs Yuille and Brown, the RFO and Clerk.

2025/216 PLAYGROUNDS MAINTENANCE

- Two of the minor issues have been fixed by Jim Brown: the loose screw on the slide bridge at Bodkins and the hole in the slide at Westfield. The Hex board replacement on the slide at Bodkins should be completed soon.
The pin board on the noticeboard at Saxons Heath has also been screwed back into place.
- The replacement swings at Bodkins were installed in the first week of December. A 'tango seat' was included, funded by the District Councillor Community Fund.
- Now that the new swings are installed, the security posts at the entrance to the playground need to be replaced with a picket fence.
- It was agreed for the Clerk to produce a new playgrounds inspections rota for six persons for the first half of the new year.

Actions: Cllr Brown to ask Logs Unlimited to quote for the picket fence at Bodkins.
Clerk to produce a playgrounds inspections rota for the first half of 2026.

2025/217 HIF1 LIAISON WITH CLIFTON HAMPDEN PC

Cllr Thompson has exchanged emails with Clifton Hampden Parish Council (CHPC) with a view to liaising over the way that Clifton Hampden Bridge will be used when the HIF1 project is completed. It was agreed that the best solution would be to limit access using ANPR technology if possible. Cllr Thompson will have further discussions with Kate Lowe, the vice Chair of CHPC in the new year.

2025/218 SESRO PARISH COUNCILS JOINT RESPONSE

The PC was approached by a member of East Hanney Parish Council asking if it wishes to be part of a joint response to the Abingdon Reservoir consultation. It was agreed that the clerk should ask for the council to see a draft of the proposed response.

Actions: Clerk to ask for a copy of the proposed joint response to the SESRO consultation.

2025/219 LAND OPPOSITE HOME FARM ADVERSE POSSESSION

The PC was advised on 1st December that a section of the land bordering the river opposite Home Farm has been claimed in adverse possession on behalf of Mr Jerald Pratt of Shillingford and that any objection had to be made by 12th December. Cllr Brown has lodge an objection with the Land Registry.

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2025/220 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- Long Wittenham Athletic Club
None.
- Village Hall Committee (VHC)
Nick Caw, the chair of the VHC, held an 'open meeting' on 26th November and several residents came forward to take roles on the VHC to allow Nick Caw to step down.

2025/221 ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- Defibrillator Course
Following the success of the course in January, Cllr Brown suggested that another should be run in the new year. Agreed. The clerk will approach the South Central Ambulance Charity (SCAC) to set up a course.
- Hedges
Cllr Bolton said that hedges at Saxons Heath, Bodkins, Westfield Road Playground and Acklings need cutting rather than trimming. A specialist contractor is needed. It was suggested that he talks to the Earth Trust and Gabriel Hemery who may be able to advise.
- Didcot Road Traffic Calming
Cllr Brown reported that OCC will be installing bollards with better reflective capabilities at the Didcot Road chicane to deter drivers from hitting them. He suggested a planter might be more effective but it was agreed to give the new bollards a chance.
- Fieldside Noticeboard
It has been necessary to remove the cover which was broken. Cllr Brown suggested installing a 6mm rubber sheet to act as a weatherproof pinboard without the need for the cover. He will circulate prices.
- Pumping House at The Cross
Cllr Bolton asked why this has been cordoned off for some days. Not known.

Actions: Clerk to approach SCAC to set up another defibrillator course.
Cllr Brown to circulate prices for a new rubber pin board for the Fieldside noticeboard.

2025/222 FINANCIAL REPORT

- 2026-27 Precept
The RFO had circulated a projection of the accounts to the end of the year and a preliminary budget for next year by email. It was suggested that the precept be increased by 5% (£1,294) to £27,188. Approved.
- Income during November
10/11/2025 Wittenham Warriors (Bonfire Night Reimbursement) £2,375.00
- Expenditure during November
04/11/2025 SLCC Inv MEM255624-3 (Membership) £110.00
04/11/2025 Logs Unlimited Inv 25045 £620.40
11/11/2025 Ornamental Trees Ltd Inv INV-GB-26418 (Acklings Upgrade) £2,430.33
18/11/2025 Bank Service Charge £4.25
19/11/2025 Clerk's Salary November 2025 £354.25
25/11/2025 Grant 024 Citizens Advice Oxfordshire £400.00
November Expenditure Total £3,919.23

Actions: Clerk to advise SODC of the 2026-27 Precept amount.



Meeting Closed at 8:40pm.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 15th January 2026

Signed: 

Date: 15/1/26

APPENDIX A

County Councillor Report December 2025

1. Consultation – Improving Oxfordshire's Fire and Rescue Service

Oxfordshire County Council is consulting on proposals to improve how the Fire and Rescue Service responds to emergencies and delivers community safety. The aim is to ensure:

- More fire engines available during peak risk times
- Faster response to incidents across Oxfordshire
- Better alignment of resources to areas of greatest need
- Futureproofing the service for growth and sustainability

Key dates

- Consultation Closes: 20 January 2026
- Decision: Spring 2026 after Cabinet review

2. Your residents will need to book a visit to a household waste recycling centre from January

Oxfordshire County Council has agreed changes to how the county's seven HWRCs will operate, following a public consultation with over 5,800 responses

Why the changes?

It is designed to improve recycling rates and traffic flow and ensure fairer costs for Oxfordshire taxpayers.

Key Details

- Booking system starts: 14 January 2026
- Residents to book up to two weeks in advance or 30 minutes before visiting.
- Customers must separate recyclable material from mixed waste before visiting.
- £15 charge for non-Oxfordshire residents per visit.
- Van/trailer permits reduced to 10 per year.

3. EV Charging for Homes Without Driveways – Gul-e Rollout

Oxfordshire County Council has appointed ODS to deliver up to 500 cross-pavement EV charging cable channels across the county, using the innovative Gul-e system. This is part of the UK's largest programme of its kind and a wider £4.3 million government-backed project to expand EV infrastructure. Around one-third of Oxfordshire households lack off-street parking — this scheme

makes EV ownership more practical and affordable. This supports Oxfordshire's net zero goals and complements plans for 1,200 public EV chargers by 2027.

Key Details

- Gul-e units allow safe, trip-free charging from home electricity to vehicles parked at the kerbside.
- Applications are still open via the council's website; each site will be assessed for safety and suitability.
- Successful applicants will benefit from significantly reduced installation costs thanks to a £700,000 government grant.
- Residents must install a compliant home EV charger once the Gul-e channel is fitted.
- ODS will maintain and inspect installations twice yearly.

4. INFO - Nearly 70,000 Gullies Cleaned Since April

Oxfordshire County Council is on track to clean every highway drainage gully in the county by March 2026, as part of a £2.6 million programme to improve drainage and reduce flooding risk.

Key Details

- Target: Clean 145,000 gullies and manholes in 12 months.
- Progress: 67,000 gullies cleaned by end of October; 17,000 in October alone.
- Investment: £1.5m additional funding approved in the 2025–26 budget.
- Delivery: Crews doubled from 6 to 12, working day and evening shifts for efficiency.

5. INFO - New Management Plan for North Wessex Downs National Landscape

I was this year appointed by Oxfordshire County Council to represent the authority on the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (NWDNL) partnership and am pleased to say that the NWDNL has launched a new five-year Management Plan, setting ambitious targets for nature recovery and stronger protections for this nationally important area.

Key Details

- Covers 668 sq miles across Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, and Wiltshire.
- First plan since the law changed in 2023 to require authorities to "seek to further" the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty.
- Nature targets:
 - Increase wildlife-rich habitat, tree canopy, and woodland by 3,400 hectares by 2030.
 - Contributes to national goal of protecting 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030.

6. INFO - SEND Service update

A recent monitoring inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has confirmed that Oxfordshire's local area partnership has taken effective action to improve services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) following the 2023 inspection.

Key Improvements

- All five priority areas addressed, including governance, communication, and family involvement.
- Better EHCP timeliness and quality, with faster decisions and improved waiting times.
- Enhanced partnership working between education, health, and social care.
- More opportunities for families and young people to contribute, including SEND Youth Forum and SEND Together events.
- Successful pilots in areas like speech and language screening.



7. INFO - Oxfordshire's Gritters Get New Names

Oxfordshire County Council has named its fleet of 30 gritting lorries after famous local figures, landmarks, and cultural icons following a public competition that attracted nearly 1,500 suggestions.

Key Details

- Names include Sir Winston Churchill, Agatha Christie, Alfred the Great, Inspector Morse, Radiospread, Prof Stephen Hawking, and Sir Roger Bannister.
- Local landmarks feature too including local Grittenham Clumps.
- Pupils from schools near gritter depots helped choose names and will meet their gritters later this winter.
- The fleet treats 42% of Oxfordshire's road network, covering 27 routes and over 1,960km each time temperatures drop below freezing.
- Salt barns in Woodcote, Deddington, and Drayton store 10,000 tonnes of salt for winter operations.

8. REMINDER: Councillor Priority Fund – Supporting Local Projects

The Councillor Priority Fund has reopened, offering each Oxfordshire County Councillor £10,000 to support community projects within their division. This funding is designed to help deliver local priorities and strengthen community initiatives.

Parish councils, community groups, and local organisations are encouraged to apply for funding to support projects that benefit residents. Examples might include:

- Improvements to community facilities
- Local environmental initiatives
- Activities that promote wellbeing or inclusion
- Smaller-scale projects are especially encouraged, as the fund is modest and intended to support a wide range of communities across Oxfordshire

Key details:

- Applications must be submitted by 30 November 2026
- Grants are typically paid within 28 days of approval
- Applicants must register for an account to apply and track progress
- Monitoring and reporting are required for successful projects

To ensure your project meets the funding criteria, please read the guidance document before applying.

For more information or to apply, visit the Councillor Priority Fund page.

<https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillorpriorityfund>

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