



TOWN NEWS

A NEWSLETTER
PRODUCED BY
WANTAGE
TOWN COUNCIL

NEW WANTAGE MAYOR AND DEPUTY



Cllr Dr Iain Cameron has been appointed Mayor of Wantage for 2025–2026, with Cllr Dr Chris Walters as Deputy Mayor. The Council thanks outgoing Mayor Cllr Dr Angela Dunford for her outstanding service.

MESSAGE FROM THE NEW MAYOR



“

I am honoured and humbled to be elected Mayor, and I want to thank my predecessor Angela Dunford for her work as Mayor.

I will be ably supported by the Deputy Mayor, Chris Walters. I will act to the best of my ability in the interests of the town, its residents, and its businesses, and will represent Wantage both locally and beyond.

Please get in touch if there is an event or celebration in the town that you would like me to support with my presence.

I have lived in Wantage for over 30 years, and my children were largely brought up here. I am a retired scientist and currently represent the Town Council as Chair of Trustees at the Vale and Downland Museum.

The first of my Mayor’s Charities is Parkinsons.Me, which supports individuals and families affected by Parkinson’s, along with the Parkinsons.Me garden located in West Lockinge.

-Cllr Dr Iain Cameron

”

FOLLOW US!

Want more regular updates between newsletters?



Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and BlueSky for the latest news, event updates, and useful information.

Don’t miss out on what’s happening in our town – join the conversation and be part of our growing online community.

Just search @WantageTownCouncil to follow us!

2025 SAVE THE DATES!

Exciting events are coming! Below are your save the dates for the rest of the year!

JUL 06
FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL
11 AM - 4 PM

OCT 26
ALFRED FEST
11 AM - 3 PM

NOV 30
CHRISTMAS ARTISAN MARKET
11 AM - 3 PM

DEC 05
DICKENSIAN EVENING
4 PM - 9 PM

ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE IN WANTAGE MARKET PLACE



COMMUNITY ORCHARD



The County Council recently offered free fruit trees to local communities, and Wantage chose Grove Road and Stockham Park allotment sites to benefit from this initiative.

Once matured, these fruit trees, which were planted in March by county officers, will provide fresh fruit for everyone in our community to enjoy—completely free. A big thank you to the county for helping us grow a more sustainable and fruitful future.



A service to mark VJ Day will be held in Wantage. Location to be confirmed—please check the Wantage Town Council website for updates and further details.

ALL WELCOME!

JOIN US FOR A
PUBLIC FLOOD MEETING

TUESDAY
22 July, 2025

START AT
7:30 PM

AT THE BEACON
Portway, OX12 9BX

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION

The new flood group in Wantage is hosting a public meeting to explore local flooding issues. This is an opportunity to hear more about flooding in the area, ask questions, and find out how you can get involved in local efforts. All are welcome to join the discussion.

For more information wantagecouncil.gov.uk

SUPPORT AND WELLBEING SERVICES

Oxfordshire County Council is launching several new services to support residents' health and wellbeing:

Oxfordshire Advice Navigator

An easy-to-use tool for advice on debt, benefits, and support services, with tailored local information.

Free DrinkCoach Online Sessions

Helping residents reduce alcohol consumption with free online coaching.

BetterPoints App

Rewards for walking, cycling, and using public transport, with rewards redeemable for vouchers or charity donations.

For more details, visit the Oxfordshire County Council website.

CORRECTION

We apologise for an error in a previous newsletter: Angela Dunford was incorrectly listed as Chair of Betjeman Park. We regret the confusion and appreciate your understanding.



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MP



“ In recent weeks, I’ve been focused on Planning. I was appointed to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill Committee, where MPs from various parties scrutinise this new government legislation. We are reviewing the bill line by line, suggesting improvements before it returns to the House of Commons. Experts and charities have provided evidence, and I have advocated for amendments to protect nature, ensure genuinely affordable housing with necessary infrastructure, and introduce solar panels above car parks.

The committee debated the vital role of planning committees in ensuring transparency and community engagement. While the government may not adopt many amendments, we continue pushing for improvements as this legislation makes it was through parliament.

I also led my first Westminster Hall debate last month, championing walking and cycling for journeys to school, and urging its prioritisation in the Road Safety Strategy. I raised local examples, including a safe crossing over the A415 in Culham for Europa School students and improvements to the walking and cycling path there, and a much-delayed walking and cycling bridge project over the A34 in Milton, to link Milton Heights and with Milton Park and Milton Village.

We discussed safety concerns like pavement parking forcing people using wheelchairs and buggies onto the road and the need for investment in rural cycle and footpaths.

Minister Lillian Greenwood is set to visit a local school to observe Bikeability training, which boosts children's confidence in cycling to school.

Recent Westminster activities include meeting Lord Vallance to discuss concerns that our local area may not benefit from the proposed ‘Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor’, and summing up a debate on St George’s Day, where I referenced Dragon Hill in Uffington and The George pub in Upton. I also participated in a debate on estate management fees affecting new residents and raised questions with ministers on various local concerns, including export license processing for small businesses, stalking protections, transgender rights, and the lack of coordination in roadworks.

Following discussions with County Council leadership on the shocking state of the A417, we agreed that flooding issues near East Challow and Mellor’s Garage must be resolved before full resurfacing, but that urgent pothole repairs were needed in the short term. I’m pleased to see this initial work has recently been completed, and I will keep working with local councillors to ensure longer-term improvements happen.

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill Committee has kept me in Westminster more than I’d like, but I was glad to meet residents in Wantage at my advice surgeries, visit Church Street and Newbury Street GP practices and had a lovely time celebrating VE Day in Wantage.

Feel free to contact me at olly.glover.MP@parliament.uk (or leave a message on 0207 219 7657). ”

- Olly Glover MP for Didcot and Wantage Constituency



WELCOME TO THE FUTURE OF WANTAGE MARKET PLACE!



Our vision for Wantage Market Place is to create a vibrant, welcoming, and accessible space for everyone.



Wantage Market Place suffers with daily congestion of vehicles passing through and not stopping.

In 2024, Wantage Town Council and Oxfordshire County Council committed to exploring ways to make the Market Place more accessible and safer for those with mobility issues. Our goal is to create a space where everyone feels comfortable, safe and enjoys spending time.

Officers from the county council have been working with the local community to investigate how to make the town centre a better place to spend time for shopping, leisure or business. Any improvements would complement the town's history and character but would also help to improve the look and feel of Wantage for residents and visitors alike.

Working with the local community, we have outlined four key objectives for the Wantage Market Place Improvements project:

1. **Creating a Welcoming Space:** We want everyone to feel welcome in the Market Place by making the area more accessible, increasing road safety and encouraging a sense of community.
2. **Enhancing the Environment:** Our goal is to reduce pollution and increase biodiversity by adding more trees and plants. We also aim to have more people coming to the area by walking, wheeling or cycling.
3. **Improving Public Transport Access:** We plan to make traveling to and from the Market Place by bus quicker, easier, and more reliable.
4. **Supporting Local Businesses and Economy:** We aim to create a vibrant social space for various activities to promote the market town, encourage people to visit and stay longer.



Romsey, Hampshire, a historic market town near Southampton that was regenerated in 2019.

How you can help?

The project is at an early stage and a design is yet to be developed. We need your thoughts, feelings and suggestions to help shape the project designs and goals. We would like to find out what is important to the local community and how we can make it economically and environmentally useful for future years.

Your feedback will be used to develop a preliminary design and masterplan, which we will then present for further consultation early next year.

We invite you to take part in our community engagement activities, including an online survey, digital interactive map where you can drop pins and make comments and two drop-in events where you can speak with the project team.

Together, we can transform Wantage Market Place into a vibrant, accessible, and enjoyable space for everyone. Join us in shaping its future!

If you, or anyone you know is unable to view the information online or visit our drop-in events, printed copies of the survey will also be available from the following locations:

- **Wantage Library, Stirlings Rd, Wantage OX12 7BB**
- **The Beacon Centre, Portway, Wantage OX12 9BX**
- **Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, OX1 1ND**



Hitchin Market Place, a historic market town in North Hertfordshire. Improvements were made to the town centre in 2022, to prioritise pedestrians.



Wantage

Market Place Improvements



Oxfordshire County Council would like to work with you, seeking your help to shape the designs for improvements to Wantage Market Place.

Online community engagement will run from


12 noon Tuesday 24 June to 11:59pm Tuesday 22 July 2025

Public events:

- **Saturday 5 July, 10am–4pm**
Vale & Downland Museum,
19 Church St, Wantage OX12 8BL
- **Wednesday 9 July, 5pm–8pm**
Wantage Methodist Church,
20 Newbury St, Wantage OX12 8DA



Find out more and take part by visiting

 www.letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wantage-market-place

(link will be activated at 12 noon on 24 June)

For paper copies of information, please contact the team:

 WantageMarketPlace@oxfordshire.gov.uk  Customer services: 01865 792 422

Please note our customer service team is unable to answer detailed questions.



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**



WANTAGE MARKS 80 YEARS SINCE VE DAY WITH 1940S STREET PARTY



On Sunday 11th May, Wantage town centre was transported back to the 1940s for a spectacular celebration marking the 80th anniversary of VE Day.

Under sunny skies, residents and visitors enjoyed a lively street party filled with music, dancing, and nostalgic fun.

The stage buzzed with performances from Wantage Big Band, Moonlighting, and The Vintage Sweethearts, with Swing Dance Summertown drawing crowds for Lindy Hop lessons. Dressed in tea dresses and military uniforms, attendees brought the streets to life, dancing the day away.



Families enjoyed traditional vintage fairground games, face painting, and the chance to picnic in true wartime style – with folding chairs, tables, and plenty of bunting on display.

“The atmosphere was incredible – like stepping back in time,” said one attendee.

With bunting still fluttering and memories of jazz melodies lingering, We would love your feedback - whether you attended or not.

Scan the QR code to complete a short form and share your thoughts.



HONOURING OUR LOCAL HEROES

As her term came to a close, Mayor Angela Dunford honoured key community members with the **Pride of Wantage and Freedom of the Town** awards, thanking them for their lasting contributions.

Sheila Terry and Ralph Cobham were recognised for their work on Betjeman Park, Evelyn Bracey for her dedication to Riding for the Disabled, and Bill Falkenau, former Town Clerk, received the Freedom of the Town for his long-standing service to Wantage Town Council.








BREWS AND BOOKS

The Brews and Books Café at the Beacon is now open! Run by volunteers from the Wantage Literary Festival, it offers coffee, tea, cakes, and savoury snacks in a friendly, book-loving setting.

Enjoy book swaps, join a book club, or take part in regular festival events.

Open Monday to Friday
9:45am to 1pm.



LETCOMBE BROOK PROJECT

The much-loved Letcombe Brooke flows from Letcombe Regis to East Hanney. It supports local wildlife and provides water for community use. To learn more about its conservation, and latest updates, visit www.letcombebroad.org.uk.



RESERVOIR UPDATE

Thames Water’s proposed South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO) near Abingdon could affect Wantage and nearby areas. After the summer 2024 consultation and 1,500+ responses, the independent review is complete. Updated proposals and next steps will be shared soon, with further chances for community feedback.

WANTAGE SUMMER ARTS FESTIVAL RETURNS!

Get ready for a vibrant celebration of creativity as the Wantage Summer Arts Festival returns with a packed programme of music, theatre, art, talks, and community events. There's something for everyone! Don't miss the chance to support local talent and enjoy the arts right on your doorstep.

Scan the QR code to see the full schedule and plan your visit!



Do you know where your closest defibrillators are?

Wantage has several **24/7 public defibrillators**, including the Market Place, Wantage Library, The Beacon, St John Vianney RC Church, Wantage Tennis Club, Charlton Park Garden Centre, and Sainsbury’s. Some additional units, such as those at Waitrose, Wantage CE Primary School, and Wantage Town Football Club, have varied or restricted access. **In an emergency, knowing where to find one could save a life.**

To locate your nearest defibrillator, visit www.defibfinder.uk.



NEW APPOINTMENTS

Shaun Cunningham – Councillor for Segsbury Ward



Shaun joins the council representing the Segsbury Ward. He is committed to listening to residents and working on the issues that matter most to the local community.



Phil Watts – Market Manager

Phil joins us as the new Market Manager, bringing experience and enthusiasm to support the smooth running and development of our local markets.



Louise Brown – Communications Officer

Louise is our new Communications Officer and will be leading on keeping residents informed through newsletters, social media, and local campaigns.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

We're delighted to share that the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan was officially approved in a recent local referendum.

We were unable to advertise the referendum in our last newsletter, as the details had not been confirmed at the time.

Key benefits of the Neighbourhood Plan:



Helps shape future development



Protects green spaces



A stronger community voice



Supports sustainable growth

Thank you to everyone who took part and supported the process!

YOUR FEEDBACK WELCOMED

We hope that you have enjoyed the articles in the Wantage Town Council Newsletter.

Feedback and suggestions are welcome to:

communications@wantagecouncil.gov.uk



Published by Wantage Town Council

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www.wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Delivered by Royal Mail with thanks from the Town Council

Wantage Town Council works in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of White Horse District Council to serve our community.

Each council has its own areas of responsibility, and we know it can sometimes be confusing to know who to contact.

We've included a quick breakdown of who does what, along with useful contact details.



WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL

- PUBLICATIONS, INCLUDING TOWN GUIDE
- FLORAL & CHRISTMAS DISPLAY
- MARKETS
- NOTICEBOARDS
- ALLOTMENTS
- BUS SHELTERS & STREET FURNITURE
- GRANTS
- CHAIN HILL CEMETERY
- PLANNING APPLICATION RECOMMENDATIONS
- ANNUAL EVENTS E.G ALFRED FEST

01235 763459
info@wantagecouncil.gov.uk
www.wantagecouncil.gov.uk

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

- EDUCATION & SCHOOLS
- TRANSPORT
- WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES
- SOCIAL SERVICES & YOUTH SERVICE
- FIRE SERVICE
- TRADING STANDARDS
- LIBRARIES, RECREATION, ARTS & MUSEUMS
- PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY
- HIGHWAYS, INCLUDING POTHOLES, TOURISM SIGNS, GRITTING
- REGISTRATION SERVICES - BIRTHS, DEATHS & CEREMONIES
- STRATEGIC PLANNING & SOME PLANNING APPLICATIONS (MAINLY MINERAL EXTRACTION AND WASTE DISPOSAL SITES)

01865 792422
customer.services@oxfordshire.gov.uk
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Vale of White Horse District Council

- CAR PARKS OWNED BY DISTRICT COUNCIL
- TAX
- THE BEACON
- ELECTORAL SERVICES
- COUNCIL TAX & GOVERNMENT BENEFITS
- ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (NOISE, PESTS)
- HOUSING SERVICES
- HELP & SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES
- RECYCLING, FOOD & WASTE COLLECTIONS
- PLAY AREAS
- RESTAURANT & TAKEAWAY INSPECTIONS
- SPORTS & LEISURE
- PLANNING SERVICES
- STREET CLEANING & FLY TIPPING
- TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE
- TOURIST INFORMATION
- LICENSING

01235 422422
enquiries@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk