

TOWN NEWS



A NEWSLETTER
PRODUCED BY
WANTAGE
TOWN COUNCIL

UPDATE FROM THE MAYOR



“ It has been an interesting few months since I became Mayor and I want to share some of that with you.

As Mayor I have been asked to participate in events in the town such as opening the Wantage Community Festival of Fun and the Wantage International Food and Drink Festival. I have relaunched the memory-care floor at Elmbrook care home, opened the garden fete at Stirlings care home and waved off the cyclists on the Betjeman Bike Ride from Betjeman Park to Uffington. You can find out about some of these and other events on the Mayor’s social media pages (search ‘Mayor of Wantage’)

My first Mayor’s Charity is Parkinsons.Me and I attended the launch of their Connections Café jointly held with St Katherine’s care home. In particular I was very pleased to meet Ewan Stutt, the founder of Parkinsons.Me. The Café is held on the first Friday of each month.

My second Mayor’s Charity has the overall aim of supporting young volunteers in Wantage. I have agreed to start with Sweatbox, Wantage’s Community youth centre supporting young people from 11-19. Amongst those who help it to run are a number of young people. What I hope to do is to work with Sweatbox to see how those young volunteers can be supported in what they do.

Finally by the time this is published the town will have held a commemoration on 2 September remembering all those who died in WW2 and marking 80 years since the final documents were signed ending the war in the Pacific and signifying the end of WW2.

-Cllr Dr Iain Cameron



Tell us what you think!.. and win £50

Wantage Town Council is inviting all residents to take part in our Community Survey for a chance to win a voucher worth up to £50.

Find out more on page 7!

STAY CONNECTED ALL YEAR ROUND!

We’ve introduced a brand new monthly e-newsletter to keep you updated between our quarterly issues.

It launched at the end of July, and it’s your go-to source for local news, events, council updates, and more.

Sign up here to receive it straight to your inbox!





PUBLIC FLOOD GROUP MEETING



The Public Flood Group meeting held on 22 July was a great success, with many local residents attending to share their experiences and ideas around local flooding. Your input is vital as we continue working toward a more flood-resilient Wantage.

The evening included informative talks, open discussions, and - of course - tea and cake!

If you weren't able to attend, but would like be added to the Flood Group mailing list, please contact: communications@wantagecouncil.gov.uk.



ELECTRIC BLANKET TESTING



Oxfordshire County Council is offering free electric blanket

safety checks this autumn with a session in Wantage on 10 October.

Booking is essential. To book, call 01865 519800 (option 4), email: duty.officer@oxfordshire.gov.uk, or book online.

KEEP FOOTPATHS ACCESSIBLE

As Autumn approaches, we're kindly asking residents to check that hedges and trees are trimmed back to your boundary.

Keeping pavements clear is especially important for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs. Thank you for helping keep our community accessible for everyone!

WILD WANTAGE

Earlier this year, Sustainable Wantage's Wild Wantage project carried out a baseline biodiversity survey to better understand the variety of wildlife in and around Wantage. Thanks to contributions from the local community, the project collected valuable data that will help shape future conservation and rewilding efforts.

The full survey results are available on their website.



WANTAGE MARKETS



Join us in the town centre every Wednesday and Saturday for the Wantage Market! 8am - 2pm.

From fresh produce and meats to baked goods - there's something for everyone.

Pop by, grab a bargain, and support our amazing local traders and businesses!

You can even find out which stalls will be there each week by following us on facebook!



SCAN ME ▶





WANTAGE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL



Since the last newsletter, Members of the Wantage Town Council Health Committee have visited Wantage Community Hospital for an informative tour, where they discussed and shared feedback on the upcoming refurbishment of the ground floor of Wantage Community Hospital.

A big thank you to Dorothy O'Dell and Sue Butt from Oxford Health for leading the visit and sharing valuable insights.

keep an eye on our website for regular updates as plans progress.

HISTORICAL FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY!

ALFRED FEST

SUNDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2025
WANTAGE MARKET PLACE
11 AM - 3PM



SCAN THE QR CODE TO FIND OUT MORE!

Highlights include:

- * GUIDED WALKING TOURS OF ALFRED'S PALACE SITE
- * PLENTY OF INTERESTING TALKS INCLUDING ONE BY COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY
- * ATTENDANCE BY SOME OF THE UK'S LEADING LIVING HISTORY GROUPS
- * MUSIC FROM WANTAGE SILVER BAND AND ELVENDALE
- * ARTISAN MARKET FEATURING LOCAL CRAFTS AND PRODUCE...
- ...PLUS MUCH MORE!!



JOIN US FOR ALFRED FEST, A FREE COMMUNITY EVENT CELEBRATING WANTAGE'S RICH HERITAGE AND HONOURING KING ALFRED THE GREAT, WHO WAS BORN RIGHT HERE IN WANTAGE!



Costume competition! Anglo-Saxon dress encouraged!

WITH THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:



Larkmead VETS
www.larkmead.co.uk
Didcot | Wantage | Great Western Park | Cholsey | Benson | Sutton Courtenay



HOUSE OF SPICE



GOLDEN SERVICES CARE

WITH THANKS TO OUR PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS:











everything for young people in Oxfordshire

Health and wellbeing support

Information on next steps

Activities and opportunities

Access to local services

Stay connected with Oxme

Find us online

Oxme.info is Oxfordshire's dedicated website for children and young people, packed with useful and trusted information to help them navigate life's next steps.

Whether they're exploring education, work, or training, looking for things to do, or needing support with health and wellbeing, Oxme.info brings everything together in one place.

It also provides access to local services and opportunities across the county.





WANTAGE MARKET PLACE IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Officers from Oxfordshire County Council recently visited Wantage and talked to residents, businesses, visitors, traders and disability advocates to find out what improvements were wanted in the Market Place. We also asked you to fill in a questionnaire to tell us what you thought was most important to keep, to remove and to improve.

There were more than 500 responses to the survey which closed at the end of July with broad support for our key objectives for the Wantage Market Place Improvements project.

Some highlights from the survey responses are on the opposite page.

West End

Following a cabinet member decision in July, the proposed traffic regulation order for the West End of Market Place was made permanent.

Plans to design a paved pedestrian space will be included in the wider project this year and will allow us to bid for funding. The design will consider the need for loading spaces, taxi ranks, and level pedestrian areas.

The new space will be safer and easier to use by those with mobility issues, families and businesses (including the market) wishing to trade outside.

Officers from county, district and town councils are now also exploring the best way to license the West End area for markets, street trading and events to make it as simple as possible for anyone in the community wishing to use the space.

Next steps for Wantage Market Place

The next stage for the wider improvement project is to hold a collaborative community workshop on Thursday 23 October at 6pm, to seek your input into the design process, and ensure that this reflects the needs and preferences of local residents and businesses.

This workshop will allow everyone to hear each other's views and experiences. Our newly appointed design consultants will learn what works well and what doesn't work for you, and they can refine your suggestions to find out what is possible and what improvements will have the greatest benefit for all who use Market Place. Feedback from both the workshop and the recent engagement will be used to develop design ideas which we will then feedback to you early next year.

If you would like to participate in the collaborative community design workshop, please register to attend. Please note that spaces are limited.

You can register to attend by visiting <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wantage-market-place-improvements-co-design-workshop-registration> or by scanning this QR code.

The closing date for registration is 5pm on Thursday 9 October 2025.





Wantage Market Place improvements

Oxfordshire



Wantage



566

survey responses



61%

Residents of Wantage

30%

Residents from nearby villages

9%

Other/businesses

You told us what you thought of our project objectives



77%

support

Ensuring everyone feels welcome



80%

support

Enhancing the environment



74%

support

Improving access to public transport



89%

support

Supporting our local businesses and economy

You told us that improvements could be made by:



Improving footway surfacing



More seating



Improving CCTV



More trees, plants and gardens



More space for outdoor dining and markets or events



Information on history and heritage



GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK 7-15 JUNE 2025

Thanks to grants from Wantage Town Council's Climate Emergency Committee, local groups and businesses were able to run a series of engaging sustainability events during Big Green Week.



Charlton Lodge

21 young carers from Sweatbox visited Charlton Lodge care home, engaging residents in garden activities and making bug hotels with support from Wild Wantage. They also planted flowers for the care home. Residents described it as "a great day," and the young carers enjoyed connecting with residents and appreciated learning how to support their local environment through hands-on activities.

Sustainable Wantage Activities

ECOZE Presentation:
Discussion on individual climate action and behaviour change.

Old Stables Green Space:
Volunteers planted perennials, enhanced pollinator habitats, and tidied outdoor spaces.

Upcycling & Creativity-Fitzwaryn School

Students learnt to sew and create unique upcycled items using fabrics, buttons, and clothing from The Makery. Highlights included:

- A Lion King-inspired outfit
- A tartan dress with a decorated t-shirt
- A bag made from old curtains

The sessions promoted creativity, skill-building, and sustainability.



VCI (Vale Community Impact) Green Initiatives

During Big Green Week, VCI ran:

- Green Living Packs for residents
- Digital Awareness Slides in the office
- Online Green Treasure Hunt on Facebook

These activities encouraged residents to explore practical ways to live sustainably.
Scavenger Hunt & Toy Swap

Participants scanned a QR code to take part in an online scavenger hunt exploring Wantage and sustainability. A sustainable hamper prize was awarded via a free draw, and a toy swap allowed attendees to exchange toys.

The Girl Guides also joined on a separate day and reported enjoying the activity. All participants received seed cards to plant, with extras donated to a local preschool. The event offered a fun way to learn about Wantage and promoted sustainable ideas from local groups.

Upcycling Workshop

A free workshop for all ages explored cardboard and mixed material upcycling. About 23 participants created hands-on sustainable projects.

THE GREAT
BIG GREEN
WEEK



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MP

“Over the summer, I have enjoyed visiting many local organisations and speaking to residents in some of the villages across our constituency.

Alongside summer surgeries, I visited places I have been meaning to for some time and see a wide range of the activities that take place in our local area.

I saw the scientific progress being made on Harwell Campus: from exciting startups like Astron Systems, Oxford Dynamics, and Space Solar, to local outposts of major organisations like the UK Space Agency.

I spent an eye-opening shift with Thames Valley Police, saw the work happening to renovate the Wantage Community Hospital, and met representatives from the NHS regional Integrated Care Board to push for progress on the new GP Surgery at Great Western Park, as key to further progress lies with the regional NHS. Be it championing greater support for community policing or new primary care capabilities to keep up with local housing growth, there is still much for me and others to do to support our public sector and address the pressures they face.

Still, there has been time to appreciate the best of our area in the summer sunshine. I was very grateful to drop in on Truck Festival, to hear about the fantastic ways they combine charity and welfare commitments with putting on a good time. I narrowly avoided a game of ‘sponge the MP’ at TRAIN’s Didcot Youthfest, where young people were connected with vital projects to support their wellbeing. There was even a moment to hone my farming skills with a combine harvester ride amongst the early August showers.

Parliament resumes in September, and I look forward to representing there with renewed energy, and to keep working on your behalf.

As always, if there is anything you feel I can help you with please do not hesitate to contact me and my team at olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk, or leaving a voice message 0207 219 7657.

Olly



- Olly Glover MP for Didcot and Wantage Constituency

Tell us what you think!



Wantage Town Council is inviting all residents to take part in our Community Survey - your opportunity to help shape the future of our town and win a £50 voucher!

From public spaces and local events to community services and long-term priorities, we’re seeking your views. Whether you’ve lived in Wantage for decades or have recently moved here, your feedback is important.

The survey only takes a few minutes to complete, but your input could have a lasting impact on the decisions that shape our community.

To take part, please scan the QR code or visit our website: www.wantagecouncil.gov.uk

If you would prefer a paper copy, these are available to collect from: The Beacon, Portway, OX12 9BX



LOVE WANTAGE

High streets across Britain are constantly evolving, and Wantage is no exception to this trend. The market town has welcomed several new additions that demonstrate its resilient commercial spirit.

Wantage Continental Food has opened its doors on Mill Street, bringing international flavours to local shoppers. Meanwhile, Wantage House Dental Practice will be relocating from Newbury Street to Grove Street, positioning itself in a much more central location that's easily accessible for patients throughout the area.

Perhaps most notably, Colombian Coffee is preparing to open in the former Barclays bank building, breathing new life into this vacant building. This transformation from financial services to artisan coffee reflects the changing nature of modern high streets.

Wantage remains fortunate compared to many market towns, with relatively few empty units dotting its streets. However, this success depends entirely on community support.

The message is clear: shop local to keep these businesses thriving. It's a simple principle – use it or lose it. Every purchase made locally helps ensure Wantage's high street continues to flourish and encourages new businesses to set up here.

SCAN ME!

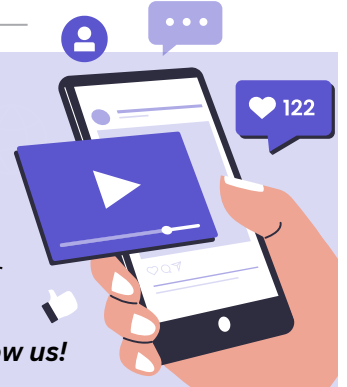


FOLLOW US!

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

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

Search @WantageTownCouncil to follow us!



NEW APPOINTMENTS

Alistair Arnold – Councillor for Segsbury Ward



We're pleased to welcome Cllr Alistair Arnold as the newest member of Wantage Town Council. We look forward to working with him as he begins his role supporting our community.

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. Here is a quick breakdown of who does what, along with useful contact details.



<p>WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PUBLICATIONS, INCLUDING TOWN GUIDE FLORAL & CHRISTMAS DISPLAY MARKETS NOTICEBOARDS ALLOTMENTS BUS SHELTERS & STREET FURNITURE GRANTS CHAIN HILL CEMETERY ANNUAL EVENTS E.G ALFRED FEST PLANNING APPLICATION RECOMMENDATIONS <p>01235 763459 info@wantagecouncil.gov.uk www.wantagecouncil.gov.uk</p>	<p>OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDUCATION & SCHOOLS TRANSPORT WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES SOCIAL SERVICES & YOUTH SERVICE FIRE SERVICE TRADING STANDARDS PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY LIBRARIES, RECREATION, ARTS & MUSEUMS HIGHWAYS, INCLUDING POTHOLES, TOURISM SIGNS, GRITTING REGISTRATION SERVICES – BIRTHS, DEATHS & CEREMONIES STRATEGIC PLANNING & SOME PLANNING APPLICATIONS (MAINLY MINERAL EXTRACTION AND WASTE DISPOSAL SITES) <p>01865 792422 customer.services@oxfordshire.gov.uk www.oxfordshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Vale of White Horse District Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAR PARKS OWNED BY DISTRICT COUNCIL TAX THE BEACON ELECTORAL SERVICES COUNCIL TAX & GOVERNMENT BENEFITS HELP & SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (NOISE, PESTS) HOUSING SERVICES PLAY AREAS RECYCLING, FOOD & WASTE COLLECTIONS RESTAURANT & TAKEAWAY INSPECTIONS SPORTS & LEISURE PLANNING SERVICES STREET CLEANING & FLY TIPPING LICENSING TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE TOURIST INFORMATION <p>01235 422422 enquiries@whitehorsedc.gov.uk www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk</p>
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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



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