



A NEWSLETTER
PRODUCED BY
WANTAGE
TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN NEWS

The Mayor's Christmas message

Welcome to the Christmas edition of Wantage Town News. I can't believe it's nearly Christmas. We will be putting up the trees, wrapping up presents and getting ready to spend time with our families.

I'm really looking forward to Dickensian evening on the 1st December. It's an occasion where we can get together as a community and get into the festive spirit!

I love the atmosphere, the food, entertainment and of course the animals that we have in the square. It is wonderful to see the shops and businesses entering into the spirit as well. Wantage looks so lovely with



all the lights and the tree in place. Will you join me in dressing up as a Dickensian character perhaps? I look forward to seeing you and enjoying the evening.

There will be church services scheduled around Christmas for those that want to sing some carols and enjoy the nativity readings. It's a busy time for families with children, but so exciting!

I have the honour of leading the Mayor's Carols this year and am really looking forward to listening to a selection of our local schools and music groups that will be performing. It is an enjoyable evening.

I would like us all to remember anyone that we think might be alone this Christmas and if we can involve them in our celebrations and thoughts it would be lovely.

Lastly, I want to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Angela Dunford, Town Mayor of Wantage

TOWN CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Dickensian Evening

Wantage Market Place,
Friday 1 December 6-9pm

Mayor's Carol Concert

Parish Church,
Wednesday 6 December 7pm

Wantage Local Artisan Christmas Market

Wantage Market Place,
Sunday 10 December 10am-3pm

Christmas Carols around the Christmas Tree

Wantage Market Place,
Sunday 24 December 6.30-7pm
with Wantage Silver Band




FREE
Christmas Parking
Saturdays 9, 16 & 23 December
For Portway (The Beacon),
Limborough Road &
Undercroft (Mill Street)
Car Parks

Volunteers needed!

Would you like to be more involved in what is happening in Wantage? Planned events for 2024 in the Market Place require volunteers to help organise and run the events. This is a great opportunity for those wanting to give something back to the community. Contact Andrea Yates, Town Centre Manager, email: andrea.yates@wantagecouncil.gov.uk or Jim Mitchell, Town Project Coordinator, email: jim.mitchell@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Introducing the Committees

Wantage Town Council is organised into seven committees which are headed by the following people:

Leisure and Amenities

Chair: Jenny Hannaby
Email: jenny.hannaby@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Planning

Chair: Erik Johnson
Email: erik.johnson@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Promotion, Communication and Events

Chair: Tony Gilhome
Email: tony.gilhome@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Policy, Management and Finance

Chair: Andrew Crawford

Email: andrew.crawford@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Climate Emergency Sub-Committee

Chair: Victoria Wright
Email: victoria.wright@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Health Sub-Committee

Chair: Jenny Hannaby
Email: jenny.hannaby@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Staffing Sub-Committee

Chair: Angela Dunford
Email: mayor@wantagecouncil.gov.uk



AlfredFest



This event on Saturday, 28 October was a great success with many local residents dressing up for the occasion.

In addition to a great hog-roast provided by King Alfred's Head, there were also

guided tours of Alfred's Lost Palace and a specially written drama spectacle 'King Alfred and the Burnt Cakes'.

Next year's AlfredFest will be on Saturday, 26 October in the Market Place.



Steps towards Market Place Pedestrianisation

There has been much in the local press recently about the pedestrianisation of the west end of the Market Place. Let's clarify the two issues that have not been resolved.

Deliveries: including HGV trucks to businesses around the west end. Existing rules state that HGVs must be able to enter and leave an area in a forward manner. This may be ok for a modern purpose built town or development but not possible for a centuries old medieval town such as Wantage without demolishing

buildings which is obviously not possible. So we are waiting for Oxford County Council to decide if a dispensation can be given.

The taxi rank: taxi licences and parking places are issued by the Vale District Council but the land belongs to the County Council.

Again we are waiting for common sense and realism to prevail and create a workable solution to allow the permanent pedestrianisation, and for both deliveries to businesses and for taxis to operate safely.

WANTAGE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL NEWS

Consultation has now taken place with residents having had an opportunity to give their views on what future services should be available there.

'We need to find a solution that meets the growing needs of the community' says Jenny Hannaby, chair of Wantage Town Council Health Sub-Committee.

The OX12 postal area population is set to rise by 55% between 2011 and 2031.

Feedback was considered vital before the NHS works up the detail of what improvements can be made and a report brought back to the OCC HOSC (Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee).



New Loos!

Refurbishment work on the Portway Car Park toilets plus a changing place facility is scheduled to finish in mid-December.

This is a District Council-owned facility but Wantage Town Council has funded part of the cost.



New Rail Station for Wantage and Grove?



The Volunteer Inn near to the site of the proposed station

A motion proposed by Cllr Jane Hanna and seconded by Cllr Jenny

Hannaby was recently passed unanimously at Oxfordshire County Council:

'The Council therefore calls on Cabinet to consider building on the 2018 Statement of Opinion by commissioning, before the end of this financial year, while funding resources remain available, a DfT-compliant Strategic Outline Business Case, and an initial assessment of financing options for a new rail station for Wantage and Grove'

This project development work would build on the example of the Strategic Outline Business Case for the new Oxford–Eynsham–Witney–Carterton 'Windrush Line' which has recently been completed successfully.

It would also fit with the ambitions of increased investment in an inclusive, integrated, county-wide active and sustainable travel network fit for the 21st century, to improve choice and reduce car journeys.

COMMUNITY BUS WORKING GROUP UPDATE



A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the Transport Needs Survey that was carried out for us during October by Community First Oxfordshire. The results of the survey will help us to plan the detailed route for a bus service.

Thanks also to Leaflet Delivery Team/ Redcore Marketing who delivered flyers and to Vale Community Impact, Wantage Library, the Mably Way GP practices, The Beacon and Hendred Stores who carried paper copies of the survey form for us.

We have taken the initial steps towards operations by setting up a Community Interest Company – Wantage and District Community Transport – and applying for a licence to run a bus service. Also in progress is our application for Wantage to receive the so-called Section 106 funding from the Kingsgrove development which is earmarked for a community bus.

Please do get in touch if you think you can help us as we move closer to operating a service and look out for updates in future newsletters.

lain.cameron@wantagecouncil.gov.uk



All of us are frustrated by the eastern relief road not being completed.

The facts are that both the eastern and western ends built by St Modwen the developers of the Crab Hill development are complete including the roundabouts – many will remember the traffic hold-ups associated with their construction!!!

The good news is that the contractors appointed by Oxford County Council are now building the centre section and completion and the opening of the relief road is expected by June next year.

That will then direct through traffic away from the town centre along Mably Way and Denchworth Road making the town centre a much better and pleasant place to live and work in!!

SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices)



Following complaints from members of the public about vehicle speeds in various places around the town, Wantage Town Council has installed Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) in the following locations: Charlton Road, Denchworth Road, Grove Road and Ormond Road. These units will alert drivers to the actual speed they are travelling and display a message if their speed is excessive. The Council expects that the SIDs will help it to improve road safety in the town.



WANTAGE BAND THE SNOWMAN LIVE



Saturday 2nd December
The Beacon, Wantage
3:30pm & 6pm

Sunday 3rd December
The Amey Theatre, Abingdon
1:30pm & 4pm

Tickets available from
www.ticketsource.co.uk/wantage-band

Adults £15
Students £12
Children £10
Family tickets available
Under 2s (on laps) FREE



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Twinning 'Open Evening'

Town twinning with Seesen in Germany and Mably in France is going strong but we are always happy to have new members. So we are having an 'Open Evening' with seasonal food and drinks from Germany and France on Wednesday 13 December at 8pm at the Wantage Cricket Club, Charlton Village Road OX12 7HD.

Entertainment from Horizon so no doubt there will be some singalongs too. All welcome and if you would like to join us please drop an email to greta.thornbory@btinternet.com or a message to 07778 518027.

Looking ahead to 2024 – Bigger and better Town Events for Wantage!

Plans are being discussed for town centre events in 2024. Overall this could mean a maximum of nine town centre road closures and a concentration on fewer but better promoted and better events. The major events planned are:

- * A large St Georges Day Artisan Market in April
- * An enlarged Food Festival in July
- * An expanded AlfredFest in October
- * A large Christmas Market in early December

Add to these the traditional Ray Collins Charitable Trust carnival in June, the Dickensian Evening in December, the two French markets in July and October (to be confirmed), the Fairs (possibly three to be confirmed) and of course the weekly Wednesday and Saturday markets.

It is hoped this overall package of events will give everyone, visitors and residents alike, something to enjoy and take part in.



Wantage Town Council works alongside Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of White Horse District Council. We hope you'll also find these contact details useful.



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clerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk
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01865 792422
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/contact-council
(for individual departments)



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

YOUR FEEDBACK WELCOMED

We hope that you have enjoyed the articles in the Wantage Town Council Newsletters. Feedback and suggestions are welcome to:

The Town Clerk
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Email: clerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Sheryl Sanders, Deputy Town Clerk
Email: deputyclerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Andrea Yates, Town Centre Manager
Email: andrea.yates@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Jim Mitchell, Town Project Coordinator
Email: jimmitchellpc@outlook.com

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