

### **Councillor report: Liz Leffman May 2023**

**Recent activity in Charlbury:** I am pleased to be able to report that AT LAST I have had confirmation that something will be done about resurfacing the stretch of road from Fiveways to North Lodge. The road will be inspected within the next month, a decision will be made as to what work is required, and the work will then be scheduled. Once I know when the work is likely to take place, I will let the council know.

I have also been in touch with the Estates team about Ticknell Piece and have forwarded a reply to Lisa. Essentially, OCC are happy to collaborate with the Town Council over community use of the field but want to retain flexibility on how the site might be used in the future.

I have also been in touch with the Estates team about OCC land on Nine Acres Lane, because there are rumours that Cottsway want to incorporate this into their plans for Evenlode Close. There has been no discussion about this with OCC, but the Estates team would be interested in discussing how the Shed, which sits on OCC land, could be made more efficient and sustainable and have suggested that this could be part of the discussion with Cottsway, who could perhaps provide a new or refurbished building on this site through S106. I am not sure what stage the Cottsway proposals are at, but I am happy to take this up with planners if the Town Council agrees that it presents a good opportunity.

**Councillor priority fund:** Applications to the councillor priority fund have reopened. The application process has slightly changed, requiring an online application and an email/letter of support of the councillor. Eligible organisations include, registered charities, not for profit companies, community or voluntary groups, and parish councils/meetings. Grants cannot be made to individuals, profit making organisations and private limited companies. Projects seeking funding must be deliverable by March 2025.

**Electric Vehicle Chargers:** OCC is set to receive £3.6 million to rollout EV charging points across the county. The priority will be to provide charging points in rural areas and where off-street home charging is not possible. Community organisations (eg, the Town Council) may be able to take ownership of the charging points to provide them as a community asset and deliver a revenue stream. Further details will follow.

**Air Quality Strategy:** An OCC air quality strategy (long term) and 'route map' (short term) has been developed. While monitoring of air quality is a district responsibility, the Environment Act 2021 places a responsibility on the County Council to support districts and reduce air pollution. An information campaign will follow, which will include information on indoor pollution and log burning fires.

**Social care:** OCC runs a 'shared lives' carer scheme whereby approved Oxfordshire residents, with space in their own home, care for a person with learning difficulties, mental health problems or other needs that make independent living difficult. Carers can offer to provide one-off respite care, or longer-term care and everything in between. The scheme has been running successfully since 2020. More information for anyone interested can be found [here](#). A scheme to match older residents with a spare room with younger people looking for alternative accommodation called Homeshare also runs as a way to provide older people with additional support / company. Both schemes are examples of the 'Oxfordshire Way' to allow people to live independently in their communities.

**Verge cutting and 'no mow May':** Oxfordshire County Council is again supporting 'no mow May' and encouraging participation. Due to the amount of verge cutting required, OCC has an updated

maintenance schedule to prioritise biodiversity. However, OCC is not able to put away its mowers for a full month and still meet its schedule of work, meaning some areas will be cut in May. Verges that need to be cut to maintain public safety will be cut back multiple times if necessary.

**Hydrogen powered fire engines:** Oxfordshire is taking part in a pioneering project to develop hydrogen powered fire engines.