

OALC NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020



NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT
STRATEGY FOR PARISH
& TOWN COUNCILS



Training Programme 2020

<https://www.oalc.org.uk/events>

All our training sessions for the rest of this year and next year will be delivered on line.

See page 28 for details of new courses for November and December and next years programme. There are only 20

places per course so they fill up quickly

ONE PLACE AVAILABLE ON Saturday 7th Nov Roles & Responsibilities training due to a cancellation. First person to get to the website secures the place.

VACANCIES – none at the moment

THE HEADLINES

Latest Corona Advice **READ THIS** - page 2- 5

OALC useful tips– page 5 VAT and step by step guide to recruiting

LOCAL NEWS - page 7

- **Oxfordshire Growth Board Strategic Vision**
- **Chilterns AONB**
- **Wild Oxfordshire free webinars**

NATIONAL NEWS - page 10

- **Public Sector decarbonisation scheme**
- **Trustees week 2-6th November**
- **Remembrance events**
- **ACRE Village Hall survey results**
- **Planning for the Future, White Paper**
- **And plenty more articles of interest**

CONSULTATION – page 20

- **Committee for Standards in Public Life**

Financial briefing – budgeting in challenging times

Employment briefing – 1. Workers advised to self-isolate 2.

Workers who insist on staying at home 3. CJRS job retention bonus 4.

Revised job support scheme - page 22

TRAINING – page 25-31

LATEST CORONA VIRUS ADVICE - ALL THE UPDATED ADVICE IS BELOW

PLEASE read this section and check the latest [central government guidance](#) as it is constantly evolving. The headings may look familiar but there are links to all the latest updates.

1. Oxfordshire is currently in Tier 1: Medium in the government's three tier Covid risk system. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-levels-what-you-need-to-know>

Except **Oxford City which will officially move to Tier 2: 'high' COVID alert level on Saturday 31st October** meaning that the city's residents will need to abide by tier 2 rules. More information on the County Council website here <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxford-city-officially-moved-to-high-covid-alert-level-as-cases-continue-to-rise/>

Key differences in England alert system

TIER 1: MEDIUM

Follow the rule of six if meeting indoors or outdoors

Pubs and restaurants to shut at 10pm

TIER 2: HIGH

No household mixing indoors

Rule of six will apply outdoors

Pubs and restaurants to shut at 10pm

TIER 3: VERY HIGH Further measures may be agreed locally

No household mixing indoors or outdoors in hospitality venues or private gardens

Rule of six applies in outdoor public spaces like parks

Pubs and bars not serving meals will be closed

Guidance against travelling in and out of the area



Local COVID alert level: medium means:

- you must not socialise in groups larger than 6, indoors or outdoors (other than where a legal exemption applies)
- businesses and venues can continue to operate, in a COVID-secure manner, other than those that remain closed in law

- certain businesses are required to ensure customers only consume food and drink while seated, and must close between 10pm and 5am
- businesses and venues selling food for consumption off the premises can continue to do so after 10pm as long as this is through delivery service, click-and-collect or drive-through
- schools, colleges and universities remain open
- places of worship remain open, subject to the [rule of 6](#)
- weddings and funerals can go ahead with restrictions on numbers of attendees
- exercise classes and [organised sport](#) can continue to take place outdoors, or indoors if the [rule of 6](#) is followed; there are exceptions for supervised activities for under-18s, and disability sport

You must: [wear a face covering in those areas where this is mandated](#)

You should continue to:

- follow social distancing rules
- work from home where you can effectively do so
- when travelling, plan ahead or avoid busy times and routes; walk or cycle if you can

[Find out more about the measures that apply in medium alert level areas](#)

2. Some parish councils despite advice to the contrary are still holding physical meetings **NALC and SLCC strongly advise local councils to continue to meet remotely.** As restrictions continue and localized outbreaks arise we can only stress very strongly that holding public meetings is not advisable. Regulations are in place to allow virtual meetings so please use the technology.

Councils may argue that they are able to put in place social distancing and mitigate all identified risks. I hope that this is the case and the council can show the risk assessment, and the steps taken. Your council meetings are public so you are not able to gauge in advance how many people may turn up. The argument runs that no-one ever turns up normally so it's not a problem. The parish council is a local authority and should act responsibly within the law.

We have been asked about **hybrid meetings**, for example allowing the council to meet physically but restricting the public to joining virtually or allowing 'healthy' councillors to attend but more vulnerable ones to join virtually.

At the moment two groups of experienced and knowledgeable people - Lawyers in Local Government and the Association of Democratic Services Officers have concluded that hybrid meetings are unlawful because they do not meet the exemptions set out in the relevant Regulations - Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392 and The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020.

Further guidance related to COVID-19 can be found on the NALC website - <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/coronavirus> and [SLCC websites](#).

3. The Regulations on virtual meetings – [The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels \(Coronavirus\) \(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings\) \(England and](#)

[Wales\) Regulations 2020 \(No.392\)](#) came into force on 4th April 2020 and were updated in August to cover Parish Meetings. All member councils have received NALC briefing L01-20 explaining what the Regulations mean in practical terms. The Regulations apply to town and parish council meetings until 7th May 2021.

4. Updated health protection regulations

The [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No. 2\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 4\) Regulations 2020](#) came in to force on 14 September. They amend the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2020 so that people may not participate in social gatherings, in any place, in groups of more than six, unless they are members of the same household, two linked households or exceptions apply. NALC's view is that although the Principal Regulations continue to permit local councils to hold meetings (now as an exemption to the six-person gatherings limit) in COVID-19 secure premises, we recommend councils continue to meet remotely.

5. NHS Test and Trace



On 18th September regulations came into force making it a legal requirement for venues to log details of visitors, customers, and staff. Local Council venues and buildings that allow public access or bookings must:

- [Have a system in place to request and record contact details of their customers, visitors and staff](#)
- Register for an [official NHS QR code](#) and display the official NHS QR poster from 24 September 2020.

The NHS has provided more [information on the QR code and posters](#) for organisations, as well as [further](#)

[information on the NHS COVID-19 app](#).

Collecting contact details and maintaining records for NHS Test and Trace is a legal requirement and failure to comply is punishable by a fine.

6. Community Halls and sports

From Thursday 24 September, it is a **legal requirement** for all community halls (along with a wide variety of other venues) to display the official NHS Test & Trace QR poster. Venue-specific QR Codes can be generated via the [NHS Website](#).

On **13th October** the government issued updated guidance - [Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities](#). The guidance includes revised advice on applying the 'Rule of Six', dependent on which tier and what types of activity are acceptable in a community/village hall. Advice and support is available from [Community First Oxfordshire](#)

On **26th October** the government issued updated [Guidance on the phased return of outdoor sport and recreation](#). The guidance includes revised advice for a number of named sports and activities. Local support and advice is available from [Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association](#)

7. Elections, referendums, by-elections and Casual Vacancies

Due to the coronavirus, the Government postponed all elections scheduled to take place on 7 May 2020. The Government has now confirmed that in England no by-elections or Neighbourhood Plan

Referendums will take place until 6 May 2021. The Police and Crime Commissioner election, County Council all out elections and postponed district and parish council elections will take place next year.

If your council has a Casual Vacancy the process for filling it remains exactly the same **EXCEPT** if an election is called for by 10 electors, if that happens then the election will not be held until May 2021.

8. Check your district council website and the County Council's too
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/coronavirus-covid-19>
9. **Reopening your own offices** (if you have one!). Please follow the government guidance on safe working updated **23rd October** - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres> and **latest advice updated on 13th October on use of council buildings** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings>
10. **Charities**, as many councillors are charity trustees you may find this government advice for the charity sector helpful **updated 29th September** - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector?utm_source=833eb9e6-213d-4b07-a327-d894223d0126&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily
11. Government advice on **accessing open spaces updated 12th October**
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-on-accessing-green-spaces-safely?utm_source=7e48c2c5-d07b-4c05-944d-f042d073c1da&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily
12. On **Friday 23 October**, the Government released updated guidance for **arranging or attending a funeral during the coronavirus pandemic**. This reflects the recent changes to the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Self-Isolation\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#), which allow for COVID-19 positive people (whether symptomatic or asymptomatic) to leave their self-isolation for specific purposes, including to attend the funeral of a close family member. The updated guidance strongly recommends that people with symptoms of COVID-19, and those required to self-isolate, should not attend and are encouraged to participate virtually in the first instance. If they do attend in-person, there are several minimum safety requirements that mourners must adhere to, including: maintaining social distancing; wearing surgical-grade Type IIR face mask, properly fitted; and advising other mourners that they are in the self-isolation period. Any other mourner who comes into contact with them may need to self-isolate following the ceremony.

OALC - HELPFUL HINT – VAT

VAT is a hugely complex area, with business and non-business activities, different rates of VAT etc. (we will have VAT training in 2021) that is why we retain the services of an expert to advise our member councils. However, parish councils need to remember that to reclaim VAT on non-business activity, a council must:

- Place the order

- Receive the supply
- Receive a tax invoice addressed to it
- Pay from its own funds (including funds awarded to it)

AND A SENSIBLE TIP ABOUT RECRUITMENT

If you know that your Clerk is intending to retire, move house or abandon clerking for a much more lucrative career then the council needs to budget for the change. With the assistance of Jane Olds, Clerk and our HR consultant, Chris Moses we have drawn up a 26 point checklist for councils to walk you through the recruitment process. When you recruit OALC can help with a raft of information - salary scales, model contract, advertising the job etc. just ask us.

UTILITY FAILURE PRIORITY SERVICE

During the spring lockdown, support groups and Good Neighbour groups identified and assisted elderly and vulnerable people in their communities. Such groups are now in a position to proactively help the elderly and vulnerable prepare for the coming winter, so that their needs will be prioritised in the event of disruptions to electricity, water or gas supplies.

Once a person is on the Priority Service Register, the utility company will provide additional support during a disruption of supply. Depending on the utility and provider, extra assistance may include: Hot drinks and food; Charging points; Generators; Delivery of bottled water to the home; Temporary heating and cooking appliances.

A separate registration must be made with each utility provider, so a little help from a neighbour can make all the difference.

Further information is in the Oxfordshire County Council Utility Failure Leaflet here -

https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/fireandpublicsafety/emergency/Utility_Failure_Complete.pdf

DEVOLUTION – OXFORDSHIRE AND THE WHITE PAPER WE ARE STILL WAITING

Nothing to report yet. We think the White Paper may now not appear until next year. But we hope that if/when the White Paper does get published that the principal authorities, at district and county level in Oxfordshire will involve town and parish councils in the discussions.

There has been a deafening silence so far.

On Thursday 8th October the [Devolution All-Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) launched a new inquiry examining](#) how Whitehall can change to deliver devolution in England.

The purpose of the inquiry is:

English devolution is key to delivering on the government's ambitions to 'level up' the country. Unless local leaders can determine policy and control local budgets, their ambitions will continue to be limited. The UK's prosperity depends on local factors including housing, skills provision, the ability to fund services, land use and transport connections as well as the availability of public goods and services. Devolving and decentralising power and enabling local people to make decisions in these areas will create the conditions for sustainable growth, better public services and a stronger society.

The English devolution agenda has most recently focused on the creation of combined authorities, formed by two or more local authorities, in many cases led by a directly elected metro mayor. Various powers and budgets have been transferred to combined authorities from Whitehall, based on 'devolution deals' negotiated between local leaders and central government. The first combined authority, in Greater Manchester, was established in 2011, and nine more have since been created, covering 10 areas of England. Eight of these are led by metro mayors and have concluded devolution deals with the centre.

This inquiry will consider how central and local government can work together more effectively, and how reforms in Whitehall could strengthen the principle of devolution and improve outcomes for local communities and businesses.

Speaking about the launch, Chair of the APPG, Andrew Lewer MP (Conservative, Northampton South) emphasised that the APPG is keen to hear from councils across the country, think tanks, trade associations, businesses, local government representatives and many more, to understand what needs to change at a national level to enhance English devolution.

The inquiry will be accepting written evidence until 8 January 2021, and the [APPG's website](#) has more information including the full [terms of reference](#).

LOCAL NEWS

OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD – THIS IS IMPORTANT A NEW STRATEGIC VISION



On 30th October the Growth Board will be considering a Draft Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire's long term sustainable development and recommend endorsement of the ARC Economic Prospectus.

The Growth Board documents can be found on the Vale of White Horse DC website - <http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=2820&x=1>

The Vision is agenda item 4
<http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/documents/b6932/Growth%20Board%20Supplementary%20Agenda%20-%20Oxfordshire%20Vision%20Friday%2030-Oct-2020%2014.00%20Oxfordshire%20Growth.pdf?T=9>

The ARC Economic Prospectus report is here
<http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/documents/g2819/Public%20reports%20pack%20Wednesday%2021-Oct-2020%2018.30%20Oxfordshire%20Growth%20Board%20Scrutiny%20Panel.pdf?T=10>

Responses to the consultation on the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan, Regulation 18 document clearly indicated that the Plan as proposed didn't find universal favour with the communities of Oxfordshire. That has been interpreted by the Growth Board as there being an appetite for an approach that:

- Is more ambitious, radical, innovative and creative
- Is more Oxfordshire specific and reflective of local people's views
- prioritises climate change, and
- focusses on social, economic and environmental well-being, and not solely on a narrow definition of growth.

At its meeting on 30th October it is recommended that the Oxfordshire Growth Board discusses and agrees the content of the Draft Strategic Vision, to form the basis of a programme of public engagement, and return for the endorsement of the Board by March 2021.

Purpose & Status of the Draft Strategic Vision

The Strategic Vision has been prepared for the Oxfordshire Growth Board. Delivering the Vision will require long-term collective commitment and investment by the partners that make up the Growth Board but also, crucially, by a wider set of strategic stakeholders and partnerships. The Strategic Vision will establish a common and shared ambition – **but it is not intended to replace or set the specific vision for any individual communities or partner organisations.**

The Vision should be read as a statement of intent by the partnership that has prepared it. Of particular significance is the Government's announcement in March 2020 of its backing for a spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. **Oxfordshire will look to influence any framework for the Arc based on this Strategic Vision.**

While it is similarly looking to 2050 and intended to support the development of the Oxfordshire Plan indirectly, **it is not part of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 itself.** That plan will deliver parts of the Vision, but as a statutory planning document, OP2050 cannot address all aspects involved in delivering this Vision. Local plans, infrastructure plans, economic strategies and associated plans and programmes will also have important roles to play.

The Vision has a specific role and a clearly defined non-statutory status. It explicitly does not deal with the quantum of housing or economic growth for Oxfordshire, nor direct where it should go. Those are matters more appropriately dealt with through other plans and strategies (eg. Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Local Industrial Strategy, Local Plans). But the Vision can play an important role in seeking to drive improvements to environmental, social and economic well-being which may be reflected in emerging plans, strategies and programmes.

The Strategic Vision defines a set of outcomes, which if successful, will have been achieved by 2050. The Vision defines what it means by 'good growth', with an approach based on improvements in quality and circumstances for individuals and society. The officers and members behind the Growth Board have also developed a set of Guiding Principles (or inter-related ground rules) which together articulate how Oxfordshire will change as a place over the next 30 years.

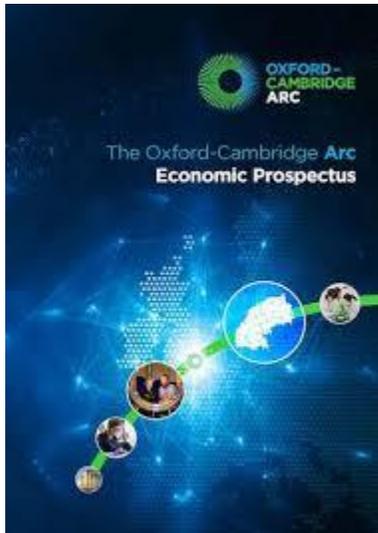
Engagement and Next Steps

The Vision's relevance and use could go well beyond the Oxfordshire Plan. The Growth Board suggest that the Vision should be seen and agreed on its own merit, separate from the statutory Plan process – first through endorsement by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, strengthened and improved through public engagement and then, depending on support generated, potentially agreed by individual organisations across and beyond the Growth Board. The Board believe having a 'whole system' agreed vision would go a long way to align its work, infrastructure programmes and even, potentially, services in the future.

Timing is important. The Government announced backing for a spatial framework for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. **If the Strategic Vision is to play a role in supporting the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, it will need to be agreed no later than Spring 2021 (ahead of the pre-election purdah period which traditionally begins six weeks before the May election date). It is proposed to engage widely, starting in mid-November and ending just before Christmas.**

The Growth Board will use the Oxfordshire Open Thought digital engagement platform again. The Board will then refine the Vision taking account of engagement and further work. It may seek legal advice following engagement but prior to agreement of the Vision, to ensure the language of the Vision is helpful to, rather than in conflict with, the emerging next stage of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

It is intended to seek Growth Board endorsement at its meeting scheduled for March 2021.



The Arc Economic Prospectus was submitted on 30 September 2020 to the Secretary of State for the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), to Arc-supporting departments as well as all Arc MPs and Arc Leadership Group Leaders and Chairs. It is understood this will help to inform discussions within Whitehall now that departmental submissions have been made to Treasury ahead of the Comprehensive Spending Review (– anticipated to be in November or December of this year).

CHILTERNNS AONB - SIGN UP FOR THEIR ENEWSLETTER

The Chilterns AONB does important work where landscapes, chalk streams and its unique environment is concerned but one article from their website caught my eye – the story of Nellie Davis, a Chilterns Straw plaiter, do read it <https://www.chilternsaonb.org/news/451/19/The-Story-of-Nellie-Davis-A-Chilterns-Straw-Plaiter-By-Vanessa-Worship.html>

Go to the front page of the Chilterns AONB website and sign up for their newsletter <https://www.chilternsaonb.org/>

WILD OXFORDSHIRE'S VIRTUAL COMMUNITY GROUPS CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 2020 BOOK NOW



Three, free webinars aimed at environmental community groups and those interested in improving nature in their community, parish or village.

For more information and to register go to Wild Oxfordshire's website <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/community-groups-conference-2020/>

- 11th November - Neighbourhood Planning for Nature
- 18th November - Thames Water Blitz and Letcombe Brook Project
- 25th November - Oxfordshire's Nature Recovery Network

NATIONAL NEWS

PUBLIC SECTOR DECARBONISATION SCHEME



The Greater South East Energy Hub would like to draw your attention to the Government's recently launched **Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme**. This is a funding scheme that provides grants for the capital cost of energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects for **public sector buildings (non-domestic only)**. Public-sector bodies such as local authorities and schools can

apply for a grant to finance up to 100% of the capital costs of projects that meet the scheme criteria.

The Rural Community Energy Fund is a £10 million programme that supports rural communities in England to develop renewable energy projects with community benefit. It is being delivered by the five Energy Hubs across England on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

The aims of the Fund are to:

- Support rural communities by helping them to maximise the income-generating potential of renewable energy and put this income to work in their local area
- Increase the uptake of community and locally-owned renewable energy to support the Government's targets for renewable energy and carbon reduction
- Enable communities to access the economic and social benefits associated with renewable energy schemes through the promotion of rural growth, job creation and volunteering opportunities.

The Fund offers support to eligible organisations in two stages:

Feasibility Grant - Intended for projects that are at an early phase of exploring the possibility of a renewable energy project, and which meet the Fund's eligibility criteria. This stage offers grants for any amount up to a maximum of **£40,000** to cover the professional costs of developing a feasibility report in a standard format.

Development Grant - Intended for projects that demonstrate a good chance of securing planning permission and being implemented. The Energy Hub will consider further development funding for any amount up to **£100,000** to cover more detailed investigation into the key areas of technology selection. This includes the cost of securing a site (such as legal fees), environmental impact assessments, submitting planning and permitting applications and developing a business plan.

The scheme is being administered by [Salix Finance](#). Click the links for further details of the [grant scheme](#), [eligibility](#), [eligible technologies](#) and [full guidance notes](#). Projects should aim to be completed by 31 March 2021 if possible, or by 30 September 2021 latest if not. Salix Finance will prioritise assessment and approval of funding for projects that have an early completion date. There are four forthcoming application deadlines, **26th October, 9th November, 23rd November, and 11th January**.

For further information, support or guidance relating to the Grant Scheme, **please contact the dedicated Salix team at grants@salixfinance.co.uk**. Please see also the attached presentation which has further details about the Scheme.

www.energyhub.org.uk

FIREWORKS



This year will be different, how many times have we said this since March? And I doubt there will be many, if any, firework displays this year but please be aware of the Firework Code which is on the RoSPA website here <https://www.rospace.com/home-safety/Advice/Fireworks-Safety> The ten top safety tips apply in the back garden as well as on a larger scale.

Did you know?

- It is against the law to carry fireworks in public if you're under 18
- Fireworks must not be sold to anyone who is under 18
- It is an offence to let fireworks off during night hours (11pm to 7am), except on Bonfire Night (midnight), Diwali, New Year's Eve, and Chinese New Year (1am)
- It is an offence under the Explosives Act 1875 to tamper with or modify fireworks

TRUSTEES WEEK 2ND – 6TH NOVEMBER

Many parish councillors are trustees of local charities. The first week of November is Trustees week

Trustees play a vital role, volunteering their time and working together to make important decisions about the charity's work.

Trustees' Week is an annual event to showcase the great work that trustees do and highlight opportunities for people from all walks of life to get involved and make a difference. [Research](#) in 2017 found that:

- 71% of charity chairs are men and 68% of charity treasurers are men
- the average age of trustees is 55-64 years; over half (51%) are retired
- 75% of trustees have household incomes above the national median
- 60% of trustees have a professional qualification; 30% have post-graduate qualifications
- 71% of trustees are recruited through an informal process
- in 80% of charities trustees play both a governance role and an executive role – they have no staff or volunteers from whom they can seek support
- 70% of trustees are involved in charities with an incomes of less than £100k a year
- trustees report lacking relevant legal, digital, fundraising, marketing and campaigning skills at board level
- trustees are concerned about their skills in dealing with fraud and external cyber-attack
- trustees seek support and advice from one another - 80% of all respondents regard this as their most important internal source of advice and support, with only 6% seeking guidance or training from an external provider
- on average, trustees donate almost 5 hours a week to their trustee roles

There are approximately 167,000 charities in England and Wales, and some 850,000 trustees in England and Wales.

There are many young trustees too with some 86,000 trustee positions held by 16-34 year olds

OCVA has a useful page with information and signposted links to Trustee information - <https://ocva.org.uk/information-for-trustees/>

CLIMATE EMERGENCY



NALC has launched its own climate change survey to find out how many councils have declared a climate emergency and if they have what measures they are taking to support that declaration.

This survey is a product of the NALC climate change Task and Finish Group and will be running to 29 January 2021. The 21 question survey is here - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HVNZMR6>

REMEMBER FROM HOME – REMEMBRANCE EVENTS

All councils were sent in mid October the government advice concerning Remembrance events <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-preparations-for-remembrance-sunday/local-authority-preparations-for-remembrance-sunday>

Please see the Lord Lieutenants video message here https://twitter.com/oalc_info?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

People are being encouraged to take part in a two-minute silence from your own doorstep at 11am on Sunday, November 8, and to watch the commemorations online or on the television. This is to avoid large numbers of people congregating at war memorials.

OPEN SPACES AND DEFINITIVE MAPS



The Open Spaces Society has its offices in Henley, Oxfordshire. It is Britain's oldest national conservation body, founded in 1865. Go to their website to find out more - <https://www.oss.org.uk/category/latest-news>

- It campaigns for stronger protection and opportunities for everyone to enjoy commons, greens and paths.
- It defends open spaces against loss and pressures from development.
- The Society assists local communities so that they can safeguard their green spaces for future generations to enjoy.

Two items in their October newsletter have relevance to parish councils -

1. New information sheet:- The role of local councils in preparation of definitive maps

The Society has published a new information sheet about the role of the local council in preparing the draft definitive map and statement under Part IV of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Case officer, Hugh Craddock would welcome any further documented examples which could also be included.

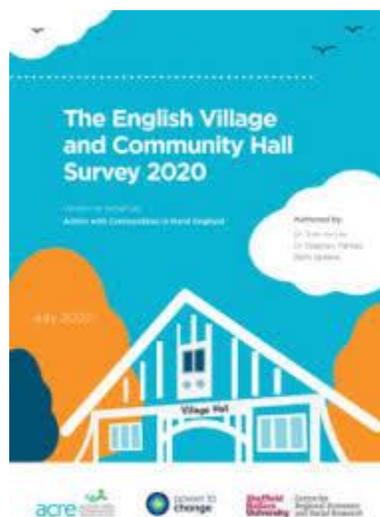
Read the fact sheet here https://www.oss.org.uk/need-to-know-more/information-hub/parish-role-in-preparing-the-definitive-map/?mc_cid=955276ffed&mc_eid=5794480d35

2. 83% children say that nature makes them 'very happy'

Natural England commissioned research to understand the perspective of children and young people relating to nature during Covid-19. The Natural England results demonstrate the positive role that spending time outdoors in nature has in supporting children's well-being, with eight in ten (83%) of children interviewed agreeing that being in nature made them happy.

The Natural England report is here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-people-and-nature-survey-for-england-child-data-wave-1-experimental-statistics/the-people-and-nature-survey-for-england-childrens-survey-experimental-statistics?mc_cid=955276ffed&mc_eid=5794480d35

ACRE VILLAGE HALL SURVEY RESULTS



The ten-year National Village Hall Surveys provide a snapshot of the state of England's varied and essential village and community halls, their funding, use and changes over time. Never has a snapshot been more of a historical record than in 2020: This survey records the state of village and community halls immediately before COVID-19 forced the first ever mass closure in their long history.

https://acre.org.uk/news/2020-10-13-extent-of-rural-economic-and-social-benefits-from-village-and-community-halls-revealed?mc_cid=1d4957edaf&mc_eid=49ca3a26cd

Report Highlights

This represents

21% OF ALL KNOWN HALLS IN ENGLAND

2,109

Halls responded to the survey

60%

said village halls are the **only meeting place** for their community.

Halls are of **historic and architectural** value:

7% are listed

35% of halls are in a **conservation area**

16% don't have a car park

Access to WiFi and broadband has **dramatically increased in the last ten years.**

At least **10,000**

individuals are **utilising halls to earn their living** demonstrating the importance and value of rural halls.

Car parking is critical to **ensuring access** and maximising value especially for residents that don't live nearby.

70%

of respondents had **undertaken improvement works** in their hall in the last five years estimated to be in the region of:

£46m-£96m

91%

of halls are not registered for VAT creating large sums of irrecoverable VAT **a burden for hall committees.**

60%

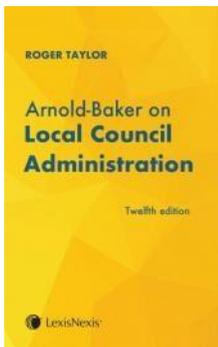
of halls are making progress in adopting energy saving measures.

Halls are adopting modern and low carbon heating technologies but there is **scope for more investment** in renewable energy.

Village Hall

CHARLES ARNOLD-BAKER LOCAL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION – NEW EDITION

The 12th edition of the Charles Arnold-Baker publication is now available to order from the publishers.



What's different about this edition?

According to the publishers LexisNexis, the comprehensive and authoritative guide to local government law has been extensively revised for its 12th edition, providing the definitive guide for everyone working in this specialist area.

The new edition has been updated to include:

- Disqualification criteria for councillors and mayors
- Further amendments to the Local Elections Rules
- New ICO guidance on GDPR for local councils

It also has a new author, Roger Taylor, who is a leading authority in this complex area.

The book is offered at the reduced price of £119.99, a 20% reduction from £149.99; if ordered before 4th December, Lexis Nexis will include free postage. Please order by contacting: connor.holgate@lexisnexis.co.uk.

We do understand this is an eye watering amount of money to pay for a reference book considering the last edition is only two years old.

POWER FOR PEOPLE – UPDATE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE 14TH OCTOBER



At its last Executive Committee OALC gave its support to the campaign and Bill being promoted by Power for People <https://powerforpeople.org.uk/the-local-electricity-bill/>. The Local Electricity Bill was successfully introduced, unopposed on 10th June in Parliament. Should it now pass into law, it will allow consumers to purchase energy from local groups, and not just nationally licensed utilities. As such, the new 'Right to Local Supply' for energy will allow communities to sell locally generated electricity directly to local households and businesses.

How the Local Electricity Bill Could Benefit Oxfordshire's Communities. Power for the People writes -

Power for People is calling for the Local Electricity Bill to be made law. This would give community-scale renewable energy projects a massive boost by empowering community energy companies to sell their energy directly to local residents or businesses.

More community-scale renewable energy projects would mean residents in Oxfordshire could buy electricity from a local energy company – this could be a community owned company or a local co-operative – and the electricity would be generated by local infrastructure, like a hydro-power unit in a local river or solar panels on community facilities like churches, schools and community clubs etc. Local communities would enjoy direct economic benefits and local skilled jobs would be supported too.

Think of all the households and businesses in Oxfordshire who spend money on their electricity bills. Where is that money going? It's going out of Oxfordshire to national or multinational utility companies, rather than to the local economy. If a Town or Parish council, or other community group, wanted they could set up a co-operative or community company, perhaps in collaboration with other neighbouring Town or Parish Councils, and supply locally generated clean electricity to local residents or businesses.

When the local energy generation units weren't generating any or enough electricity to match demand, then customers would receive electricity via the national grid, as is done at the moment. Any profits could be used for community projects and new local skilled jobs would be supported.

Localised electricity is more efficient than nationally supplied electricity as less is lost as heat whilst travelling along the wires of the grid. The closer the user is to the point of generation, the less wastage. At the moment, the system is very wasteful because electricity must travel long distances and ultimately it is customers who pay for this. The more community scale distributed renewable generation, the less electricity wasted, ultimately resulting in lower prices.

Yesterday evening (14th October) saw a major achievement for the campaign for the Local Electricity Bill as Ben Lake MP, one of the Bill's cross-party co-sponsors, led an extremely well-attended House of Commons Adjournment Debate on it.

Due to active lobbying dozens of MPs were there and over a dozen made positive contributions. Such numbers are unprecedented for an Adjournment Debate and this led the Deputy Speaker, Nigel Evans, to say towards the end, "The number of interventions might be a record. Congratulations."

This remarkable turnout clearly made an impression on the Minister too, who said, "I have never seen an Adjournment debate with so many interventions." He was also positive and showed an openness for further discussions, saying, "The prospects are considerable. We could see innovation and growth. We could see cost reductions and, most fundamentally, carbon reductions. I think that with a co-operative spirit, we can get very far." But, as we expected, he made several points on why the government do not, at present, support the Bill. Power for People will be producing a briefing fully addressing each of these points – they can all be debunked.

The full debate can be read here: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2020-10-14/debates/59B578EA-04B7-42F9-8149-2D55CBADEADE/ElectricityGenerationLocalSuppliers>.

<https://powerforpeople.org.uk/the-local-electricity-bill/>

NALC



Chris Pincher MP, Minister of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has written to the National Association of Local Councils Chairman, Cllr Sue Baxter on neighbourhood planning and the government's reforms to the planning

system.

Key points of the letter included:

- Praise for parish and town councils on how they have played an essential role in the success of neighbourhood planning, especially during the pandemic.
- Restating the government's commitment to neighbourhood planning and the recent provision of additional funding.
- Asking for NALC's involvement in the further development of planning reforms.

NALC has been engaging closely with the government on all these issues, and next week will be submitting a response to the Planning for the future white paper consultation.

Read the letter here <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/news-stories/3351-cllr-baxter-letter/file>

On **10th November**, the second #CouncilsCan Day, organised by the Local Government Association, will take place on Twitter to highlight the local government heroes of the pandemic. The Chief Executive of NALC, Jonathan Owen is really keen that our part of the local government family get involved and share the amazing work you have also been doing to support your communities.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE WHITE PAPER

On 8th October MPs [debated planning reform and house building targets](#), in which MPs called on the Government to delay its proposed changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need, until the House has had the opportunity to hold a debate and have a meaningful vote on their introduction. During the debate Mrs Theresa May, MP spoke... *“We need to reform the planning system. We need to ensure that that planning system sees the right number of homes being built in the right places. But we will not do that by removing local democracy, cutting the number of affordable homes that are built and building over rural areas.”*

The Local Government Association Vice-President and Shadow Housing Minister, Mike Amesbury MP, referenced [research from the LGA briefing that 30,000 affordable homes would have gone unbuilt over the past five years](#) if the Government proposal to scrap section 106 agreements for developments of under 40 or 50 homes had been implemented. The Housing Minister, Christopher Pincher MP, said that the Government would “reflect carefully on what we have heard”.

NALC’s response to proposed planning changes, PR10-20 is in the Members Area of our website.

OALC has written to all Oxfordshire MP’s expressing concern about the wide ranging reforms in the Planning for the Future White Paper. Many of the proposals appear to diminish local democratic input, sidelining local knowledge in favour of centralization, crude zoning and planning by template. All of the county associations in the south east (SERCAF) agreed and sent a joint submission to Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State, MHCLG (see below). Even local authorities in London have joined together to write to Robert Jenrick MP calling the reforms ‘unworkable’.

- *SERCAF welcomes the proposed investment in planning services across the Country but would urge that this investment is in the form of additional financial support or absolute grant aid and not in the form of loans or increased abilities to raise local taxation.*
- *SERCAF also welcomes the intention to support local democratic decision making but is concerned that the proposals will actually lesson local democratic influence by removing the ability of town and parish councils to play a full role in helping to determine planning applications and the development of local plans. Full consideration should be given to making Town and Parish Councils full statutory consultees on planning applications within their areas and to requiring them to take part in the examination of local plans.*
- *SERCAF would like to see more details about what the ‘single, simplified statutory sustainable development test’ would comprise given that the planning system is based around the promotion of sustainable development.*
- *The National Planning Policy Framework will require amendment if it is to become the primary source of development management policies. A timetable for this amendment would be welcomed.*

- *SERCAF is concerned that the proposal to move the development plan system towards a system based on zoning is too blunt an instrument to deal with areas that are complex in nature. Three broad zones will not be sufficient to deal with some areas that contain National Parks, AONBs, Green Belt, Conservation Areas SSSIs and so on. A more sophisticated series of zones must be determined that are capable of dealing with the intricacies of the areas within which we live.*
- *SERCAF is concerned that the future role of Neighbourhood Plans has not been addressed and would ask how Neighbourhood Plans are intended to contribute towards planning decision making and creation of the development plan. Neighbourhood Plans currently represent the closest level of democratic decision making rooted in the community and this aspect of the planning system and the value that it brings should not be lost.*
- *SERCAF is aware that both primary and secondary legislation will be required to enact many of the proposals in the White Paper but is concerned that there is no indicative timetable of when this might be achieved. Any additional primary and secondary legislation must be subject to full consultation.*
- *SERCAF is concerned about the lack of detail pertaining to climate adaptation and achieving carbon neutral status. The planning system is ideally placed to help achieve these initiatives if properly considered.*
- *SERCAF is concerned that the current proposals will not address the ever-pressing need for affordable housing and that the White Paper will actually mean that less affordable housing is provided. Town and Parish Councils have a role to play in the provision of affordable housing and SERCAF would like to see this reflected in changes to the planning system. Given appropriate resources Neighbourhood Plans could be used to determine where affordable housing should be provided.*
- *The proposed removal of the Duty to Cooperate gives rise to great concerns as this removes the requirement for local planning authorities to cooperate on strategic and cross boundary matters. SERCAF welcomes the proposals to investigate the need for a strategic level of planning especially with regards to housing numbers and would wish to play a full part in that debate.*
- *SERCAF is also concerned about the proposed changes to the methodology for calculating local housing need that may result in some areas facing a massive increase in the level of provision that must be made with the local plan. A fuller debate on how housing numbers should be calculated must follow on from determining how best to deal with strategic and cross boundary issues.*
- *SERCAF is concerned about the proposal to remove the need for sustainability appraisals without sufficient detail about how the need to appraise plans and applications will be replaced. This will require additional primary and secondary legislation in order to be enacted and a timetable must be outlined for this.*
- *SERCAF would like to see further details of how abandoning the five-year housing land supply requirement but maintaining the Housing Delivery Test would work in tandem with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.*
- *SERCAF would support any proposals that would serve to increase local involvement in decision making but would like to see more details of how increasing digitisation would support a new civic engagement process for local plans and decision-making regarding planning applications.*
- *SERCAF is extremely concerned about the proposals for the replacement of Section 106 Legal Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy with a single, nationally set infrastructure levy. Whilst the extension of any such new levy to capture increases in land values from changes of use is to be welcomed SERCAF is concerned that the ability to properly calculate final sales values will result in a lower level of income than forecast. SERCAF is extremely concerned to note the lack of detail about how the new Infrastructure Levy might be used to defray the costs of dealing with more local impacts in the way that the Community Infrastructure Levy currently allows town and parish councils to invest in matters that are of importance to the local community.*

- *SERCAF is extremely concerned about the proposals to streamline community consultation at the planning application stage with engagement front loaded at the development plan stage, whilst at the same time potentially limiting the ability of town and parish councils to properly represent the views of the local community most impacted on by development.*

SERCAF welcomes the focus on the planning system but would urge caution about any proposals that serve to lessen democratic accountability and the ability of town and parish councils to properly represent their communities. More details are required on almost all elements of change that are being proposed.

Any proposals that serve to undermine the closest level of democracy to the community must be avoided at all costs and the opportunity for increasing participation must be taken in order to preserve the ability of the local community to influence how they can protect those elements that require protection and promote those areas where development will bring benefits to be shared by the community.

CIL AND POSTPONED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUMS - UPDATED GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE 25TH SEPTEMBER

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

Community Infrastructure Levy: The postponement of neighbourhood plan referendums due to COVID-19, may have an impact on the level of neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that some communities would have expected had referendums been allowed to go ahead.

Where a referendum has been postponed, the CIL charging authority are still required to pass 15% of the relevant CIL receipts to the parish council (rather than 25% as would have been the case had a successful referendum taken place). However, we encourage CIL charging authorities to work with the parish council or neighbourhood forum wherever possible, to consider whether an additional sum, equal to the shortfall in expected CIL receipts can be agreed.

This additional sum could be passed to the parish council to fund infrastructure or, in the absence of a parish council, used by the charging authority to fund infrastructure that is identified in the draft neighbourhood plan in the relevant area. This will be particularly important in smaller areas where further CIL generating development may be limited.

An appropriate starting point for when to consider an additional sum, could be 6 weeks from when the local planning authority issues a decision statement detailing its intention to send a neighbourhood plan to referendum (as set out under Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012), as this is when the referendum would normally have been expected to take place.

Charging authorities and parish councils should note that any additional CIL monies passed to parish councils (over and above the legal requirement of 15%) should only be used towards the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of the charging authority's area, in accordance with regulation 59(4) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. In addition, regulations 59D (in relation to the timing of payments) and 59E (in relation to the return of unspent monies), will not automatically apply to such additional monies. Charging authorities and parish councils should consider what arrangements, if any, to make in their place.

WHAT THREE WORDS

You may have received an email from Molly Macgregor about the what3words [website](#):

"I wanted to get in touch as you might have recently seen what3words in the news or some adverts on Channel 4. Over 80% of services in the UK now use what3words, so I thought this would be a good opportunity to encourage your community to download the what3words app on their phones in case they need to call 999.

You can find a full list of those services that accept what3words here:

<https://what3words.com/news/emergency/three-words-for-a-faster-emergency-response>. Your



community could also use what3words to report incidents with organisations like National Grid, Network Rail and the Environmental Agency: <https://what3words.com/report-incident-locations-efficiently>.

The app is totally free to download and use, you can download it on iOS or Android [here](#). I've attached a [PDF here](#) with some images and videos you could use for a social post or newsletter if interested.

I'd earlier mentioned the emergency use, but we've also seen a number of Parish Councils use what3words for reporting fly-tipping, sharing locations of assets like bins and defibrillators, or just for organising local events (e.g. to share the car park entrance).

Here are a couple of examples for you:

- Broughton and Milton Keynes Parish Council: https://twitter.com/broughtonmk_pc/status/1283822478461149184?s=21
- Pytchley Parish Council: <https://www.pytchleyparishcouncil.org.uk/news/2020/08/pytchley-defibrillator-location>

We're starting a list of Parish Councils on our website that are using what3words, so do let me know molly@w3w.email if you are using and would like to be on it!"

Find your what3words address on map.what3words.com

There is an article by the BBC here - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-49319760>

CONSULTATIONS

The Committee on Standards in Public Life has recently launched a new consultation as part of its review into the institutions, processes and structures in place to support high standards of conduct. The terms of reference of the review are to:

- review the evidence as to how well ethical standards are upheld in public life in the UK
- review the evidence on the strength of the UK's arrangements for regulating and promoting ethical standards
- review the adequacy and continuing relevance of the Seven Principles of Public Life,
- identify examples of best practice in the regulation of ethical standards

- identify examples of best practice in the promotion of cultures that celebrate and encourage high ethical standards.

The main consultation document is available [here](#). NALC will be responding to the consultation questions which are:

Question 1: Standards of Conduct in the UK

- A. How well do you think ethical standards - as enshrined by the Seven Principles of Public Life - are upheld in public life today?
- B. Do you believe that there have been any notable shifts in approaches or attitudes to ethical standards in public life in recent years?
- C. What do you see as the most significant threats to ethical standards in public life today?

Question 2: The Seven Principles of Public Life

- A. Do the Seven Principles of Public Life accurately describe the appropriate ethical responsibilities for those in public roles, including both political and non-political office-holders?
- B. Would you amend or replace any of the principles or their descriptors? If so, how?

Question 3: The UK's arrangements for regulating standards

- A. Are you confident that the UK's arrangements for regulating ethical standards are robust and effective?
- B. Are there any areas of public life where regulation on issues of ethical standards is not strong enough?

Question 4: Best practice in standards regulation

- A. What makes an effective standards regulator?
- B. Do the UK's standards regulators have the right powers and remit to act effectively?
- C. Should the independence of standards regulators be enhanced and protected, and if so, how?

Question 5: Creating ethical cultures

- A. How can the Seven Principles best be embedded within a public sector organisation's working culture?
- B. What are the most significant obstacles to embedding high ethical standards in a public sector organisation?

Please email your responses to this consultation to policycomms@nalc.gov.uk by 17.00 on 4th December 2020.



OALC offers its member councils the benefit of advice from Steve Parkinson, our Finance, Audit and VAT advisor. If you have any problems or queries concerning finance, VAT, accounting process or financial governance we will send them on to Steve so that you can benefit from his extensive experience. Please send us an email (info@oalc.org.uk) with a clear description of your problem with as much background information as possible. We will send it on to Steve and get back to you with his response.

As part of his work for us Steve writes a short article each month. We will put these articles in our Member's Area for reference as well. This month it is on

Budgeting for challenging times

A budget sets out a council's plans for the coming financial year, in terms of how much money activities will cost or generate. For many councils this is usually quite straight forward, with costs such as paying the staff, running the village hall, cutting the recreation ground grass and maintaining the war memorial being reasonably predictable.

However well your council thought it had planned for 2020, I suspect no-one anticipated the closure of village halls, sports facilities and play areas. Some councils have been severely affected by loss of income from room hire, sports pitch hire, car parking and tourism related activities.

Regardless of how you have been affected by the pandemic, the budget gives a starting point to build a plan to get through this. When budgeting, councils should include contingency sums to cope with the unexpected, but these may not be sufficient to cope with a drastic loss of income.

There is no point using an outdated plan that contains unrealistic assumptions of income or fails to recognise extra costs being incurred. Revise the current budget, to acknowledge loss of income and any extra costs. This will give a projection of the year end position and allow you to estimate the level of reserves remaining. In some cases, this might be a negative figure, indicating that the council will run out of reserves and needs to take urgent action.

It is also important to look at the council's cashflow, projecting when payments are likely to be made and when income might be received. The fact that the budget balances doesn't necessarily mean cash will be available on any particular day.

Where council funds have been set aside for future projects, it may need to assess how realistic it is whether the project will still take place and whether the council will actually need those funds simply to keep going this year.

Construction, maintenance work, equipment purchases, recruitment and non-essential activities may need to be deferred or reduced to retain cash, while energy, fuel consumption and similar costs should be monitored.

The hardest part to estimate will be income. Councils should take a prudent approach to estimating their income for both this and next year and consider the impact of another year of reduced income when determining the level of reserves and contingencies it might need for the coming year.

Disclaimer

This guidance is issued to assist in finding and understanding the relevant legislation and guidance. It is not a statement of law, nor does it account for individual circumstances. The Parkinson Partnership LLP accepts no liability for any loss arising from situations where users of this guidance note have not followed the law and HMRC guidance.

EMPLOYMENT BRIEFING

Personnel

Advice &

Solutions Ltd

Employment law is complex and specialized. OALC can assist with general employment queries but we retain the services of Chris Moses, Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd. to provide expert advice to our member councils. We have retained Chris for four hours per month available free of charge to member councils. OALC pay for this, because we believe it is an important and valuable service to our members.

October 2020

1. **Coronavirus: Workers who have been advised to Self-Isolate.**

[The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Self Isolation\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#) state that an employer, including town and parish councils, who is aware that either a worker or agency worker is required to self-isolate, must not knowingly allow the worker or agency worker to attend any place other than the designated place, during the isolation period, for any purpose related to the individual's employment. Failing to comply can result in a Council being fined £4000 for a first breach and £10,000 for a second and subsequent breaches.

Notification by workers of requirement to self-isolate

If a self-isolating worker:

- is aware of the requirement to self-isolate, and
- is due to work or undertake any other activities related to the workers' employment during the isolation period

they must notify their employer of the requirement to self-isolate. They must also provide the start and end dates of the isolation period, as soon as reasonably practicable, and before the worker is next due to start work within the isolation period.

2. **Workers who insist on staying at home due to health concerns.**

No matter what precautions a Council has taken to make the workplace safe, if an employee reasonably believes there is serious, imminent danger to health if they come into work, they have a right to stay at home (and cannot be subjected to a detriment or dismissed).

The legal position (Section 44 of the Employment Rights Act 1996), states that the employee should not be subject to a detriment if they stay at home due to genuine and imminent concerns for their health.

If a Council pays sick pay based on the NJC terms, the absent Employee would receive full pay for at least part of this absence from work.

However if they only pay Statutory Sick Pay, the employee would suffer a detriment, which is potentially in breach of the legal requirement not to impose a detriment on the employee. The answer to this question is unclear and will at some point be resolved by the Supreme Court. If a council paid

everyone who stayed at home due to their health concerns on full pay, they would be at risk of people abusing this arrangement. Therefore, contractual sick pay would be the more practical option.

An employer would be reasonable in asking for evidence to support the employee's claim that the workplace is unsafe. Obviously, those who were previously issued with a "shielding notice" to stay at home during the previous lockdown due to an underlying health problem, have good reason to believe that they might be at risk. Supporting evidence from the employee's Doctor could also be requested, plus an Occupational Health assessment conducted via Social Media or over the phone.

3. CJRS Job Retention Bonus

The Job Retention Bonus is available to Councils who had to make use of the Job Retention Grant between February and October of this year, in respect of each employee who:

- Has been on furlough at some point and
- Remains employed, and not under notice of Redundancy on 31 January 2021.

HMRC will make a payment of £1000 to a Council for each eligible employee. This is a bonus to the Council which does not have to be passed to the employee.

To receive the bonus, a Council must have paid a salary of at least £1560 to the employee between 6th November 2020 and 5th February 2021.

A claim for the bonus needs to be presented in a 6-week window between 15th February and 31st March 2021. The Treasury Direction does not specify how the claim is to be made, but further guidance is expected.

4. Revised Job Support Scheme

- Implementation period: 1st November 2020 to 1st May 2021. The current Job Retention Grant will end on the 31st October 2020.
- The Scheme applies to all workers including employees and agency workers.
- People on the scheme will have to sign an agreement. This needs to be retained by the employer as it will be needed in the event of an HMRC inspection to check on applications for the grant.
- The employee **must work at least 20% of their full / usual time hours of work for at least seven days.**
- The employer pays 100% of the normal rate of pay for the hours worked.
- The employer also has to pay 5% of the difference between the Employee's normal working hours and the reduced hours.
- The government's Job Support Scheme will ensure that the worker gets 67% of their Full / Usual Time hours; which will include what the employer has paid.
- **Example**
 - Employee's normal hours - 40 per week and earns £400 at £10 per hour.
 - They can now work as little as 8 hours per week (20%).
 - They would get paid £80.00 for those hours worked.
 - Of the unworked 32 hours, the employer has to pay 1.6 hours = £16.00.
 - The Government's Job Support Scheme will bring the employee's wages up to 2/3 of the £400 per week they were getting.
 - Employee's total earnings £268.00, which the employer paid £96, and the government Job Support Scheme paid £172.

- The Job Support Scheme is available to all workers who pay PAYE regardless of whether they have previously been on furlough leave.
- **THE EMPLOYEE MUST NOT BE ON A REDUNDANCY NOTICE.** The government will not contribute anything under the Job Support Scheme if an employee is working under notice of redundancy.

PROFILE

Chris Moses LLM Chartered FCIPD is Managing Director of Personnel Advice & Solutions Ltd. He is a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, and has a Master's Degree in Employment Law. If you have any questions regarding these issues please feel free to contact him on (01529) 305056 or email p.d.solutions@zen.co.uk

www.personneladviceandsolutions.co.uk

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR COUNCILLORS AND CLERKS

OALC encourage **ALL** councillors, particularly those that have been a councillor for many years, to go on relevant training to refresh their knowledge.



Legislation changes, as a public servant, you need to keep up to date with those changes which affect what your council can and should do. PLEASE PUT A FIGURE IN THE COUNCIL BUDGET FOR TRAINING to enable councillors and the clerk to attend at the very least one training session per annum.

There is training available in many forms although most is now on line.

1. Introduction to Local Council Administration. Suitable for Councillors and Clerks

ILCA

Introduction to Local Council Administration

The Essential Knowledge

The aim of this online course is to provide an introduction to the work of a local council, its councillors and the clerk. It can be studied in your own time but once registered needs to be completed within one year.

The course is in five sections (cost £99 +VAT)

- **The Core Roles** establishes your place in local government and the duties and responsibilities of the council as a corporate body, individual councillors, the chairman and the clerk. It examines the role of the clerk more closely including the clerk as a researcher, administrator and manager.
- **Law and Procedures** establishes the council's legal framework including duties, powers and other statutory requirements. It introduces agendas, minutes, meeting procedures, and the value of standing orders, delegation and committee structures.
- **Finance** introduces the role of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and proper financial practices, accounts, financial procedures and accounting regulations. You will consider budgeting, the precept, audits, insurance, income generation and the management of risk.

- **Management** establishes the role of the council and its officers in planning, managing, funding and reviewing projects, services, assets and facilities. It provides guidance on managing staff, contracts and the performance of the council as a whole.
- **Community** identifies community needs and plans. We introduce community representation, engagement, empowerment and support. With emphasis on stress partnership working, public relations and raising the council's profile in the community

More details on SLCC website <https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/ilca/>

2. Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) cost £410 for registration + £275 for mentoring.



OALC encourages all Clerks to consider taking the Certificate, we hope your council will support you by providing time to study and/or contributing to the costs. The Certificate is the official nationally recognized qualification for Clerks. Cilca builds on ILCA. The more knowledgeable your clerk the better advised the council is. Legislation changes, systems change – what held good 10 years ago may have changed out of all recognition now.

We run mentoring sessions each year to help students with their studying, the latest set of sessions started in October and will run through to March 2021

CONGRATULATIONS to Anne Ogilvie, Clerk to Spelsbury Parish Council on attaining the Certificate in Local Council Administration. Well done, Anne!

3. Community Governance Cost £6,300 for Level Four



Develop your career, support your council and strengthen your community

This advanced qualification looks at the way in which people and organisations work together and independently, **making decisions for the benefit of a local community**. The qualification is awarded by De Montfort University, and offers a Certificate of Higher Education (Level 4), Foundation Degree (Level 5) and Honours Degree (Level 6). The qualification begins in February 2021 and is a distance learning programme.

How will Community Governance (Level 4) benefit your council?

Ensure your council is operating according to the law. Your council can be more confident that it is operating according to the law with sound procedures and financial practices.

Innovative ideas to better support your community. Students bring new ideas back to your council to support its role in serving its communities and working with the planning system.

Tailored to your council. Students can specialise in subjects of particular concern to your council.

A qualification recognised in law. The advanced knowledge builds on the Certificate in Local

Council Administration (CiLCA), is recognised in law as a qualification for clerks and offers your council significant returns on its investment.

More details here <https://www.slcc.co.uk/site/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SLCC-Community-Governance-A5-2020.pdf>

4. NALC's Rebuilding Communities series of online events is taking place over the next 18 months. The series will bring together national influencers, policymakers and decision-makers, along with people from across the sector to share ideas and good practice on how to build back stronger and more resilient communities. To find out more about the series and the events visit www.nalc.gov.uk/rebuildingcommunities.

In conversation: Frome virtual study tour 17 November 2020 — 12.00 - 13.15
NALC member: £30 — Non-member: £40
[Register your place](#)

In conversation: Biggleswade virtual study tour 26 January 2021 — 12.00 - 13:15
NALC member: £30 — Non-member: £40
[Register your place](#)

OALC TRAINING PROGRAMME **PLEASE READ THIS AND TAKE NOTE**

OALC has moved all its training online via Zoom

Our training courses are now limited to 14- 20 participants, depending on the trainer. So they fill up quickly and as a consequences we often have waiting lists

We are finding that a few councils book places then DON'T PAY AND DON'T TURN UP DESPITE SEVERAL REMINDERS.

This is inconsiderate and unsustainable for OALC. Our training income has halved since the lockdown, we have made refunds of £2000+. We have replaced face to face training with online but we cannot accommodate as many people online. If our training income goes down our subscription for membership has to go up. No shows and no payment only compound our problem.

We have been reasonably relaxed and accommodating of parish councils in the past knowing that you only meet once per month but we have outstanding invoices from training that took place in June! This is not good enough or fair on OALC.

THE RULES

- If you book a place, please put the personal (council) email address of the participant in the booking form **NOT THE CLERKS EMAIL ADDRESS**. We need to be in contact with the participant, sometimes at the last minute
- If you book a place, pay the invoice promptly, within 28 days. **No excuses.**
- Please pay by BACS, lockdown has proved that online banking is simpler, easier and so much better for everyone
- We send the presentation and joining instructions to attendees one week before the event. **If the invoice hasn't been paid one week before the event we reserve the right to cancel the place and give it to someone on the waiting list**

- If you pay and don't show up that is your problem (except it is a waste of public money), if you book a place and don't pay that is our problem.

All courses can be booked online here <https://www.oalc.org.uk/events>

	subject	timing	trainer
Sat 7 th November	Roles and Responsibilities for new councillors and clerks ONE PLACE AVAILABLE DUE TO CANCELLATION, FIRST COME FIRST SERVED	10.30-12.30am with a gap resume at 2-3.30pm	Elizabeth Howlett, Solicitor
Tuesday 17 th November	Planning - How Local Councils Fit into the Planning System, Effective responses to planning applications LIMITED PLACES LEFT	10.00 -12	Phil Shaw, WODC
Wednesday 2 nd December	Refresher – Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations. And dealing with vexatious requests 11 places available	10.30-12.30	Elizabeth Howlett, Solicitor

Next year's programme for information January – May 2021

NOTE booking not yet available on our website

date	subject	Half/full day	trainer	description

Monday January 11 th 10.30 am	Using Facebook and social media to enhance your council's communications	Half day morning	Breakthrough Communications	Facebook provides parish councils with a unique opportunity to significantly enhance their communications - yet few are reaping the benefits. Discover how to build effective two-way conversations with your community, make use of time-saving tools and learn techniques to improve digital engagement, all within the constraints of existing Officer time and resources.
Wed January 27 th 3.30pm	Councillor Fundamentals	Half day afternoon	Kim Bedford	In this session we will set the scene of local government;- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities concerning the five main components of the council - Council, Councillor, Chairman, Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) • The importance of the law in meetings with an effective agenda and accurate minutes • Council delegation through committees; ways of managing your responsibilities; the place of Annual Meetings • Making a council plan for delivery of services to and for your community • Not forgetting - compliance through governance arrangements with full transparency
Tuesday February 9 th 10.30am	GDPR	Half day morning	Elizabeth Howlett	TBC

Tuesday February 23 rd 10am	Preparing for Year End for Clerks/RFOs	Half day morning	Steve Parkinson	This session introduces the Annual Return and the stages of the audit process, enabling you to complete all the relevant steps correctly. Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing the accounts • Debtors and creditors • Assets and borrowing • Internal audit • Reviewing internal control • The Annual Return • Electors rights • Publication requirements
Tuesday February 23 rd 1.30pm	Finance for Councillors	Half day afternoon	Steve Parkinson	This session gives councillors a greater understanding of their duties regarding the council's finances. Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities • setting a budget and precept • Financial control • Year end and accounts • Internal and external audit
Tuesday March 9 th 10 am	Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning	Half day morning	Neil Homer	
Tuesday March 23 rd 1pm	Finding new town and parish councillors	Half day afternoon	Breakthrough Communicati ons	How can you effectively find and encourage people to stand or be co-opted as councillors? In many areas it is increasingly hard to find people who are willing to put their names forward either at election time or to be co-opted. We show you effective ways Councils and Councillors can encourage more people to come forward, this interactive session explores practical ways to do just that.
Wed March 31 st & Wed April 14 th 9.30 am	Chairmanship	2 morning sessions	Kim Bedford	Managing and leading people is one of the most challenging situations we find ourselves in This two-part workshop explores the skills and knowledge needed to be an effective community leader

<p>Tuesday April 27th and Wednesday April 28th 9.15 am</p>	<p>Cemetery Management and Legal Compliance</p>	<p>2 morning sessions</p>	<p>ICCM</p>	<p>This course deals with common problems, issues and mistakes and the costs that can be realised by burial authorities. The course will tell you how to avoid these costs and create potential new income streams. The following subjects are not exhaustive therefore any problems and issues raised by delegates will be explored.</p> <p>During the online training, attendees can submit questions and comments using the Chat function.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO) - Admin Processes, Grave digging, Memorials, Exhumation overview - Granting and Exercising the EROB - Transferring the EROB
<p>Tuesday May 25th 10am</p>	<p>Village Greens</p>	<p>Half day morning</p>	<p>Wellers Hedleys</p>	<p>TBC</p>

VACANCIES

No Vacancies this month