OALC Newsletter

October 2019

# The headlines

**Sensible tip of the month -** page 2 – respect and salaries

**Oxfordshire CC** – page 3 - Armed Forces Covenant Training

**Growth Board –** page 3- Survey on way forward & workshop 18th November

**Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network** – page 7- meeting

**Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plan Alliance** page 7

**Councillor grants** – page 9 SODC & OCC

**Carers Allowance for Cllrs –** page 11-12 evidence please

**Accessible Website Regulations** – page 15, come to the training and get started on improving the council website

**Tree Charter Day** – page 18 30th November, plan your tree planting

**Clerks Manual** – page 18 new edition out

**Employment Briefing –** page 19 dealing with problem councillors

**Finance Briefing** – page 22 the need to register for VAT

**OALC Training programme for 2020, conferences and other training opportunities** – page 23

**Vacancies** – page 25

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**Training Programme 2019 book here -**<https://www.oalc.org.uk/events>

* **Planning** 21stNovember am, West Oxfordshire DC **FULL but we have another scheduled for 24th February.**
* **NEW Website Accessibility –** 22nd January am, Oxford
* **Parish Meetings -** 30th January am 2020, West Oxfordshire DC
* **Preparing for Audit** – 5th February am 2020, Begbroke Science Park
* **Understanding Internal Audit** - – 5th February pm 2020, Begbroke Science Park
* **Charity law** – 12th February 2020, full day, Didcot

**Vacancies this month**

* North Newington PC – Clerk
* Whitchurch on Thames –

Clerk/RFO

* Highmoor Parish Council – Clerk/RFO
* Tiddington with Albury PC - Clerk
* Hanborough PC - Clerk

## OALC



Thank you to all of you that sent messages to Jan Gosset (in the foreground) before she retired on 10th October. She very much appreciated the kind words and acknowledgment of the assistance which she had given over the past 22 years to town and parish councils, clerks and councillors. Thank you also to those who sent donations to a leaving present. Jan was given a cheque which she will use towards an addition to her collection of Staffordshire ‘flat back’ pottery houses when she sees a suitable one at auction.

Lucy Dalby (in the background) has now taken on the role of Assistant County Officer, her working days will usually be all day Monday, Tuesday afternoon and Thursday afternoon.

## Sensible tip of the MONTH – Respect

This is an advertisement I saw on a community website last week -

*‘Cleaner wanted 3 hours a week. Two rental properties need communal areas cleaning - £12 an hour’*

How much do you pay your clerk? What skills and experience do they have?

You probably expect them to know about – law, governance, health and safety, finance, audit, VAT, insurance, trees, footpaths, highways, GDPR, transparency, possibly burials and allotments too. And so much more.

The shocking thing is that the lowest grade for a Clerk is £9.77 per hour. Cleaners do an important job, I am not denigrating them at all, but so do Clerks. A town or parish council is a local authority dealing with tax payer’s money. I would argue that the skill set required to be a Clerk is more complex than that of a cleaner and therefore should be suitably remunerated.

No wonder there is a shortage of decent clerks! Please make sure your Clerk is suitably remunerated; yes, it is public money and should be wisely spent but this is 2019. Your council needs a professional, knowledgeable and competent Clerk to guide and advise it and keep it up to date with all the new legislation.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SCP** | 1st April 2018 | 1st April 2019 | | | Old SCP | **Scale ranges based on new SCP** |
| £ per annum | New SCP | £ per annum | £ per hour \* |
| **15** | £17,972 | **5** | £18,795 | £9.77 | 15 | **LC1 (5-6) (below substantive range)** |
| **16** | £18,319 | **6** | £19,171 | £9.96 | 16/17 |
| **17** | £18,672 |
| **18** | £18,870 | **7** | £19,554 | £10.16 | 18 | **LC1 (7-12) (substantive benchmark range)** |
| **19** | £19,446 | **8** | £19,945 | £10.37 | 19 |
| **20** | £19,819 | **9** | £20,344 | £10.57 | 20 |
|  |  | **10** | £20,751 | £10.79 |  |
| **21** | £20,541 | **11** | £21,166 | £11.00 | 21 |
| **22** | £21,074 | **12** | £21,589 | £11.22 | 22 |
|  |  | **13** | £22,021 | £11.45 |  | **LC1 (13-17) (above substantive range)** |
| **23** | £21,693 | **14** | £22,462 | £11.67 | 23 |
| **24** | £22,401 | **15** | £22,911 | £11.91 | 24 |
|  |  | **16** | £23,369 | £12.15 |  |
| **25** | £23,111 | **17** | £23,836 | £12.39 | 25 |

\*Hourly rate

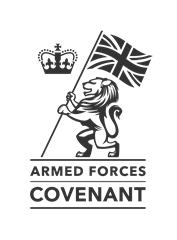
As per the national agreement, hourly rates are calculated by dividing annual salary by 52 weeks and then by 37 hours

More information on current pay scales is in the Members Area of our website

## Oxfordshire County Council



**Do you have contact with the public in your role, manage a team that does, or are you a Councillor representing your community?**

**This could be the training for you…….**

The armed forces and their families are a significant part of Oxfordshire’s communities and we want to make sure they are recognised and supported. We are hosting an event on the **11th November, Council Chamber, County Hall 9am – 3.30pm** to raise awareness of the issues faced by armed forces personnel and their families today, and give practical advice on how best to help ensure they are not disadvantaged in any way by their service. Throughout the day, we will pause to remember the fallen with a wreath laying ceremony at 11am.

We want to ensure serving personnel in Oxfordshire and their families have a positive experience and make the most of their time in the county. This training will help staff and Councillors to understand the differences which can occur with a life in the services, how to ask if someone has served, offer support and signpost people to the services best placed to meet their needs. This is part of our commitment to our armed forces and ensuring that we understand the communities we serve so that everyone in Oxfordshire feels included.

There are three different training sessions on offer on the 11th November; each tailored to your role. They are:

* **Elected Councillor Armed Forces Champion Training**. This is aimed at Councillors, particularly those working with armed forces as well as Lead (Covenant) Officers. It is also aimed at the military community, including: Task Force Commanders, Community Engagement Officers, ex-service personnel, regimental associations and service charities.
* **Service Champion Training**. This training is aimed at officer level/team leaders within key service sectors such as welfare, health, housing, social care, criminal justice and education; or case workers and those working within communities such as libraries, service charities, police and community wardens, and fire and rescue professionals. The course is CPD accredited.
* **Front line staff Training**. This training is for those who have direct access to the public such as; library staff, receptionists, customer or call centre staff, community wardens, police officers, welfare officers, health practitioners.

We are looking to get the word out to all interested parties that serve the public. It is a great opportunity to ensure we honour those we have lost by responding well to current and future needs in our armed forces community. Book via this link:

[https://www.eventbrite.com/e/forces-connect-armed-forces-covenant-awareness-training-workshop-tickets-75857896009](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/forces-connect-armed-forces-covenant-awareness-training-workshop-tickets-75857896009?aff=utm_source%3Deb_email%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_campaign%3Dnew_event_email&utm_term=eventurl_text)

AGENDA

* 8.45-9.00: Arrival and refreshments
* 9.00-9.15: Welcome and brief of Oxfordshire civilian and military leaders – delegates choose from the following courses:
  + 9.15-10.45: Elected Councillor Armed Forces Champion training also for Covenant Officers and Councillors interested in a future Champion role.
  + 9.15-10.45: Service Champion Training (CPD) 1st half of 4 hour course for service leads and officer-level customer facing staff.
* 10.45-11.05: Remembrance Service - Wreath laying in Common Hall. All are invited.
* 11.10-12.40: Service Champion Training (continues after lunch)
* 11.10-12.40: Elected Councillor Armed Forces Champion Training (course finishes at 1240)
* 12.40-13.30 Networking lunch (Councillors depart after lunch)
* 13.30 – Afternoon Session commences:
  + 13.30-15.30: Service Champion Training 2nd half of course.
  + 13.30-14.30 Frontline Staff Training for Contact Centre and Frontline Staff
* 15.30: Close

Simon Furlong, OCC Corporate Director of Communities & CDC Executive Director of Place and Growth, OCCCivilian / Military Partnership Champion, Oxfordshire County Council /Cherwell District Council  Tel: 07831 173540

## BRIEFING: Oxfordshire agencies preparing for Brexit – Update we will not be leaving on 31st October

**Key messages for briefing the public**

* Agencies across Oxfordshire have been working together to prepare for the UK leaving the EU on 31 October.
* Short-term risks to public safety and normal daily life have been assessed by emergency planners in Oxfordshire and remain ‘low’. Nevertheless, councils are working together to ensure plans are in place to support our communities and businesses through this period of change.
* The emergency services, councils, businesses and voluntary organisations that make up the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (LRF) have been working since last summer to prepare for the impact of a no-deal EU Exit.
* LRFs have been advised to plan locally for a range of possible risks and threats, known as “reasonable worst-case scenarios”. Separately from Brexit preparations, the LRF regularly plans, tests and exercises its emergency plans and response to the locally identified community risks so that all agencies can respond quickly if needed.
* As part of the work done on emergency planning through the LRF, there are already plans in place to cover foreseeable types of short-term disruption to public services that are delivered by local partners in Oxfordshire.
* Councils have been asked to help to ensure that individuals and businesses know where to find information and advice to prepare for Brexit. Links to the government’s information are being publicised and residents are encouraged to consider the advice.
* The government has also asked us to monitor potential impacts of Brexit on local businesses. We recognise concerns expressed by local employers. Oxfordshire councils stand ready to provide any practical support within their powers to local businesses. This could include identifying specific Oxfordshire impacts and relaying those to the government.
* Public bodies continue to work closely together. Potential risks are being monitored and information shared, and where necessary plans updated.

**Brexit information and advice**

Leaving the EU means a number of changes that will affect businesses and individual citizens. The government information below explains how to prepare and the steps you may need to take.

* [Individuals can find out how to prepare for Brexit here](https://www.gov.uk/prepare-eu-exit)
* [Business can find out how to prepare for Brexit here](https://www.gov.uk/business-uk-leaving-eu)
* [European Union citizens living in the UK can find out more guidance here](https://www.gov.uk/staying-uk-eu-citizen)
* [Business readiness events](https://registration.livegroup.co.uk/brexitbusinessreadinessevents/)
* [NHS guidance on the supply of medicines](https://www.england.nhs.uk/eu-exit/medicines/medicines-faq/#q4)
* [Department for Education guidance for schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-exit-no-deal-preparations-for-schools-in-england/eu-exit-no-deal-preparations-for-schools-in-england)

Oxfordshire County Council can help EU nationals living here to apply for the [EU settlement scheme](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/births-deaths-and-ceremonies/other-registration-services/european-settlement-scheme), including an identity checking service. Find out more [here](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/births-deaths-and-ceremonies/other-registration-services/european-settlement-scheme).

Feedback on community issues and concerns should be sent [emergencyplanning@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:emergencyplanning@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

# Local News

## Oxfordshire Growth Board meeting

More information on the Growth Board here: <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/> and minutes of previous meetings here <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/meetings/>

The Oxfordshire Growth Board resolved at its meeting on 24 September 2019 to undertake a review of its role and functions. We have produced a survey to canvas your views which will help inform recommendations for how the Board will work in the future. We are asking for feedback on all aspects of the Growth Board, from how it is perceived, its priorities and membership, to the communication methods and meeting format. We would really like to hear from a cross section of people to help inform this work.

**Please access the survey by** [**clicking here**](https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/oxfordshire-growth-board-review/)

**If you want to provide more detailed feedback and take part in a workshop session on 18 November (6:30pm at Oxford Town Hall) with other members of the public and local stakeholders, you can register through the** [**oxfordshire.growthboard@southandvale.gov.uk**](mailto:oxfordshire.growthboard@southandvale.gov.uk) **email address.** Where you represent a group or organisation, we would kindly request that you send one representative only to ensure we receive diverse representation.

You can read the full report concerning the review [here](http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/documents/s17362/Growth%20Board%20Review.pdf). This is what the Growth Board is and does:

The Oxfordshire Growth Board was established in 2014 as a partnership between the six councils of Oxfordshire working together with partner organisations from across the county and further afield.

It exists to help Oxfordshire’s leaders and partners work together for the benefit of the county’s residents by building consensus on strategic issues such as supporting good economic growth, strategic service planning and placemaking.

The board has no direct decision-making powers in relation to planning and development, which is carried out by the elected councillors at the district and city councils.

It is organised as a joint committee and is made up of the Leaders from each of the district councils, the city council and the county council. The Leaders can vote at board meetings – votes are based on decisions they are able to make on behalf of their councils. Sometimes agreements reached at the Growth Board on key strategic issues are taken back to be voted on by councillors at the relevant councils to ensure the views of the public are taken into account.

There are also representatives from other organisations who sit on the board and are able to contribute to any discussion, but do not have a vote. The organisations represented in this capacity are the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the NHS, the Environment Agency, Oxford’s Universities and Homes England.

The board meets in public six times a year and its work is reviewed by a Scrutiny Panel comprised of county, district and city councillors from across Oxfordshire. The panel can make recommendations, which the board will consider and respond to at each of its meetings.

There are also three groups of councillors from each of the Oxfordshire councils known as advisory sub-groups who meet to update, support and advise the board on Infrastructure, Affordable Housing, and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 respectively. These sub-groups are aligned to the work taking place at all the councils on the £215m Housing and Growth Deal agreed with the government in 2018

## Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network

 Your parish council should have received the email, below, on 4th October sent via the County Council from the new Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network, administered by Healthwatch -

“*The Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network brings together local organisations – whatever their community of interest. It could be housing, health, faith, a residents’ association, village or Parish Council, Patient Participation Groups, neighbourhood support, caring, self-help group and luncheon clubs.*

*We have direct access to the most senior decision makers in health and social care services.*

*We want your organisation to join us to:*

* *Have your say*
* *Join the conversation*
* *Be heard*

*The first network meeting will discuss:*

*“What are the challenges to staying healthy for your community?”*

***Monday 18th November 2019 at The Kassam Stadium Conference Centre, Oxford***

***10:00 – 15:00***

[***Register here***](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-oxfordshire-wellbeing-network-tickets-74406278181)

*The Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network welcomes all groups from all communities. You can join the conversation by:*

* *Writing to Healthwatch Oxfordshire, Old Dairy, High Cogges OX29 6UN*
* *Email us at* [*hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk*](mailto:hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk)
* *Completing a* [***brief survey***](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/3MVAY/)
* *Attending a network meeting*

 Your voice on health and social care

## Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance - Launch of a new champion for neighbourhood planning in Oxfordshire

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are a powerful and democratic planning tool with roots in the Localism Act (2010), which gave local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.

There are 33 made NDPs in Oxfordshire, representing 123,000 people. Many thousands more are involved with the 30 other NDPs currently in the pipeline.



The Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance (ONPA) was formally launched on 17th October to represent the views and aims of NDP groups across Oxfordshire. The ONPA will promote and raise the profile of neighbourhood and community planning in Oxfordshire, share best practice and monitor how effectively NDP policies are being applied across the county.

At a recent meeting with Bev Hindle, Oxfordshire Growth Board Director, ONPA representatives pressed the case for Neighbourhood Development Plans to be a key part of the process for drawing up the important next stage in planning for the County - the Oxfordshire 2050 strategic plan.

Despite the fact that NDP policies – based on independently-researched evidence, rigorously examined by experts and ultimately put to a public vote – should be applied alongside, and with equal weight to, the policies in the Local Plans of every local planning authority in Oxfordshire, take-up is still patchy.

Martin Lipson, ONPA chair, said:

*‘Some local authorities in Oxfordshire work jointly with NDP groups to reflect the intentions of their policies when making planning decisions, but other authorities evidently don’t.*

*‘It is part of ONPA’s remit to encourage local planners to use every tool at their disposal. NDPs represent the aims and aspirations of local communities at a level of detail and local knowledge that adds significantly to the quality of planning decisions.’*

According to ONPA neighbourhood planning also has little say in how Oxfordshire will change in the years ahead, in spite of the fact that NDPs are part of the statutory planning system. For example, the Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP) for the county up to 2050 – currently being drafted – has so far had no input from NDP groups. ONPA considers that this lack of involvement means that at present the JSSP cannot form a legitimate part of the county’s democratic planning process.

Contact ONPA by e mail [info@onpa.uk](mailto:info@onpa.uk) or via their web site at [www.onpa.uk](http://www.onpa.uk)

## Code of conduct training only for town and Parish councils in south oxfordshire and vale

Invitations have been sent to all South and Vale Parish Council Chairmen and Clerks to attend ‘Parish Council Code of Conduct Training’ sessions.

The sessions will be led by Elizabeth Howlett, Solicitor. Councillors are able to attend other council’s sessions if more convenient. Please see sessions below:

Vale – Beacon

Tuesday 19th November 2019 (Session 2.00pm-3.30pm)

Thursday 21st November 2019 (Session 5.00pm-6.30pm

South - Didcot Civic Hall

Wednesday 6th November 2019 (Session 2.00pm-3.30pm)

South – 135 Eastern Drive, Milton Park

Thursday 7th November 2019 (Session 5.00pm-6.30pm)

This training is FREE and is being put on by South and Vale District Councils, please book through them.

## Oxfordshire CC Priority Fund

[**County Councillors Priority Fund**](https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/councillor-priority-fund)**,** each councillor has a £15,000 grant each year for projects in their areas. This fund closes in March 2020 so councils should apply asap to their County Councillor. There are a few County Councillors that haven’t yet spent all their allocation. So check if your councillor has any money left. **The latest that applications can be submitted is 31 January 2020.**

## Councillor grant scheme - SODC

If there's a community project in your area that's in need of a funding boost you could appeal to your local district councillor. All 36 district councillors in South Oxfordshire have a budget of £5,000 as part of the councillor grants scheme to help fund projects in their ward areas. This is available to local 'not for profit' organisations (including parish councils) whose work benefits local residents.

The funding is ideal for projects which are relatively low cost (between £500 and £5,000) and expected to be completed within a year. Examples of previous funding include an outdoor gym, defibrillators, a senior citizen Christmas lunch and new mowers for sports pitches.

To make an application, groups should get in touch with their local councillor and submit online via our website. For more information visit [southoxon.gov.uk/grants](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/community-advice-and-support/grants-and-community-loans).

# National News

## Neighbourhood planning research

The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government has recently appointed the University of Reading to undertake independent research to evaluate the impact of neighbourhood planning. The research will examine a wide range of issues including the impact of plans on housing supply and other development, how plans are used in decision-making, and their wider benefits for communities. The research team will be engaging with a wide range of stakeholders including local planning authorities and we would greatly appreciate if those authorities asked to participate would share their views and experience.

## Climate change

1. The Local Government Association (LGA) has issued a [*Councillor workbook: acting on climate change*](https://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-workbook-acting-climate-change). The workbook is a learning aid for councillors on the roles, opportunities and drivers for council-led action on the changing climate, both to reduce local carbon emissions and to build resilience to extreme weather. It sets out the benefits for local people and places – lower bills, opportunities to generate income, and how to avoid some of the damage costs from weather events.

The workbook also includes a number of features designed to help you think about the role that you and your council can play in creating a low carbon, climate-resilient community. It includes key facts, case studies and questions to help prompt your thinking on key areas.

It is aimed at principal councils but at the moment there is little guidance available for town and parish councils. The link is here: <https://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-workbook-acting-climate-change>

1. What powers has a parish councils to assist in Climate Change?

* The Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006, Sec 20 allows parish councils to encourage or promote any of the following:

1. Microgeneration within their area
2. The use within their area of electricity generated, or heat produced, by microgeneration
3. Efficiency in the use, by persons in their area, of electricity, heat, gas, fuel and other descriptions or sources of energy
4. Reductions in the amounts of such energy, or sources of energy, used by persons in their area
5. Production in their areas of :
6. Biomass, or
7. Any fuel derived from biomass;
8. Use in their area of, or of electricity generated, or heat produced, from biomass or any such fuel.

Any money spent is part of the councils Sec. 137 fund

* If the parish council provides car parks it could provide electric charging points for cars as incidental to its function under Sec 111, Local Government Act. It could offer differential fees for electric cars.
* The parish council can provide allotments and encourage their use, perhaps dividing them into smaller more useable sized plots
* Encourage car sharing schemes – Sec 26 Local Government and Rating Act 1997
* Plant trees, maintain ponds – Public Health Act 1936 sec 260
* Provide indoor/outdoor recreation facilities – Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

## Please, please, please read this and help OALC make a good case for getting Carers Allowance for councillors in england

In England, by a quirk of legislation, there is no provision for town and parish councillors to be reimbursed for costs incurred by them for the care of dependent children or adults, either by informal or formal carers. This can deter those with caring responsibilities from standing for election. This potentially affects all genders – husbands, wives, partners looking after children or elderly parents for example.

A number of councils (Bloxham, Watlington, Benson & Caversfield) have raised the question with us as to whether councillors can be reimbursed for childcare costs to enable them to attend evening council meetings. Cherwell District Council, Democratic Services has also raised this with us when their own Independent Remuneration Panel reviewed the levels of allowances. The Oxfordshire Monitoring Officers have also discussed this anomaly at one of their quarterly meetings. But currently the answer is no, councils in England cannot reimburse these costs. We have been pushing NALC for some years to make progress with this.

**Background**

In Wales the provision to reimburse councillors does exist. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales was appointed in January 2008. The Panel is independent of central and local government and was established on a permanent basis initially to determine the range and levels of allowances payable by county and county borough councils to their councillors.

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 provided that there was to continue to be a panel of persons known as the Independent Remuneration Panel and extended its remit to include community councils, National Park authorities and fire and rescue authorities.

The current level of reimbursement in Wales is up to a maximum of £403 per month.

Councillors in principal councils in England can receive this allowance.

NALC has a longstanding policy position that parish councillors should have the same rights as principal authority councillors and be able to claim the Dependant Carers’ allowance.

The formal NALC position is that it seeks amendment of the *Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations* 2003 so that the provisions of paragraph 7 apply equally to local councils as to principal authorities. This position was adopted by NALC in 2011.This is clearly an issue for parish councils across the country which needs remedying if councils are to be democratic and representative of their community.

NALC wrote to the Department for Communities and Local Government in September 2012 and again in August 2016 pushing for this amendment. In August 2016 DCLG wrote back to NALC asking for evidence of costings and case study evidence which would assist the Minister in considering the matter seriously. NALC carried out a survey of councils in 2017 seeking that evidence.

As NALC do not appear to be making much headway with MHCLG at the moment, Weymouth Town Council is attempting a different route which is making an application under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (SCA), more information about the process is [here](https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/other/sustainable-communities-act) on the NALC website.

A critical part of the SCA submission is the supportive evidence and consultation.

|  |
| --- |
| We need from you examples where the lack of the ability to pay a carers allowance has inhibited people from standing as a councillor or has affected existing councillors in their capacity to fulfil their role.  A short case study, no more than a paragraph is what we are looking for. No need for very personal details but the salient points which illustrate the problem, summarized in a few pithy sentences.  Please can we have your response by 28th November. Please send your examples and case studies to [info@oalc.org.uk](mailto:info@oalc.org.uk) |

## VE day celebration 8th May 2020

Next to plan for is VE 75th anniversary 8th May 2020 (now a bank holiday) <https://www.veday75.org/programme/>

We have sent out information to all member councils from the Pageant Master about the proposed events and timings for Friday 8th May 2020. Oxfordshire County Council will be using those timings for their own events.

The County Council would like to know if your council is planning to join in with the suggested events on any of the days Friday 8th – Sunday 10th May. Please let them know so that events across the county can be coordinated.

## Don’t forget unrecorded rights of way will BE EXTINGUISHED on 1 January 2026

In January 2026, unrecorded rights of way that existed before 1949 will be extinguished.

According to the Ramblers well over 140,000 miles of public paths criss-cross England and Wales. This network has evolved over centuries with many paths dating back to medieval times - or earlier! These paths link villages, hamlets, roads and towns – they describe how generations before us travelled to the pub, field or shops and reflect the changing patterns of human interaction with the landscape. To this day, millions of people across our towns, cities and countryside, use this fantastic network. However, miles and miles of our public paths are unrecorded and if they are not put on the map by 1 January 2026, they will be lost forever.

The Ramblers have a guide which you can [download](https://www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/dont-lose-your-way-2026.aspx) to finding lost rights of way.

## NALC Smaller Councils Committee – your chance to participate at national level



Nominations are now open for candidates to NALC’s Smaller Councils Committee for 2020/1. The committee oversees NALC's work programme for smaller local councils (with an electorate under 6,000), including sharing good practice, preparing advice and guidance and identifying issues relevant to smaller local councils. There are three vacancies which are open to both councillors and clerks of smaller councils who are in membership of their county association and NALC. The deadline for nominations is **Friday 8 November 2019**, more information and the link to the nomination form can be found [here](https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/1312-nalc-opens-nominations-to-its-smaller-councils-committee).

## National Design Guide – September 2019

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. This design guide, [the National Design Guide](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835212/National_Design_Guide.pdf), illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government’s collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

## NALC Election survey update

NALC has been pleased with the responses so far to their election survey and have decided to keep it open until 20th December. So if your council or you as a councillor have experience of the May 2019 elections, please feel free to complete the survey

[**Complete the local council survey**](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GC5TVYF)

[**Complete the councillor survey**](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GHKRX5J)

Here are some headline results from the councillor survey so far:

* 25% of councillors elected at the 2019 elections are new
* 89% became a councillor to serve their community
* 59% are male; 38% female
* 57% think that more information around the election would make it easier to stand

Here are some headline results from the council survey:

* 95% of councils state that the election is between 0-10% of their budget
* 71% of principal authorities provide briefing documents; 51% provide officer support; 38% provide training and 22% provide joint briefing events
* 70% of councils agree with an online voting pilot for local elections
* 62% of councils would like to see simplified forms

## Neighbourhood planning and health and wellbeing

NALC together with *All Things Neighbourhood Planning* has put together a briefing on how health and wellbeing issues can be addressed in Neighbourhood Plans with concrete examples of such things as tackling pollution, encouraging healthy eating, and improving access to open space etc. The briefing is in the Members Area of the OALC website or it can be accessed via this link [here](https://www.neighbourhood-planning.co.uk/2019/09/community-health-nalc.html)

## No referendum principles (precept capping) for one more year

The Government has previously announced a programme of reforms to the local government finance system. These reforms include:

• increasing the proportion of business rates retained by the sector, to ensure local authorities have more control over the money they raise and incentives to grow and reinvest in their local economies;

• introducing reforms to the business rates retention system, to increase stability and certainty;

• and reviewing the funding formula that determines funding allocations through the annual local government finance settlement, based on a fairer and more up-to-date assessment of councils’ relative needs and resources.

Such fundamental reforms require time and local authorities are concerned about the need for certainty and stability to enable budget planning. Reflecting on this, the government propose to implement a ‘roll forward’ settlement for 2020-21 which will provide stability for the majority of funding sources for local government. In 2020 the Government plans to carry out a multi-year Spending Review, which will lay the groundwork for reforms.

Importantly for town and parish councils the Government has announced that it does not propose to set ‘referendum principles’ for town and parish councils in England for 2020/21. However, the Government ‘*remains concerned about the pressure placed on taxpayers from thousands of town and parish councils across England’* and expects them to exercise ‘*even greater restraint’* for 2020/21. The Government will keep the matter under ‘*active review’* for future years.

The details are [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-finance-settlement-2020-to-2021-technical-consultation) at Local Government Financial Settlement 2020 to 2021: technical consultation, summary para 3.2.1

## Public Bodies (Abolition of Public Works Loan Commissioners) Order 2019

LexisNexis Butterworth’s News 15/10/2019

For those that have a fondness for bodies with old fashioned names there is sad news.

The government recently consulted on changes to the Public Works Loan Board’s governance arrangements and subsequently announced that the PWLB as a statutory body (including the statutory role of the Commissioners) will be abolished and its functions will be transferred to HM Treasury.

Town and parish councils still have to seek permission to borrow money but it will be the Debt Management Office, HM Treasury that will now deal with applications rather than PWLB.

**Public Works Loan Board interest rate increase**  
  
Last week the Treasury made a surprise announcement of a whole percentage point increase in the rate of borrowing from the [Public Works Loan Board](https://www.dmo.gov.uk/responsibilities/local-authority-lending-pwlb/about-pwlb/) for new loans.

Borrowing from the loan facility has increased in recent years due to record low rates on offer.

NALC is following this up with government, NALC would like to hear from you about the impact on local councils, both in the short and long term – please email NALC at [**policycomms@nalc.gov.uk**](mailto:policycomms@nalc.gov.uk)

## Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission has updated their 'Tree Felling - getting permission' booklet which can be found on their website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-felling-licence-when-you-need-to-apply> It is a really clear explanation of how and when to apply for a felling licence, with lots of links to further guidance.

It particularly draws attention to the section on hedgerow protection, since their Woodland Officers have been following up a lot of reports in relation to hedgerow work. Trees outside woodlands, including those in hedgerows, are covered by the same legislation and subject to the same volume thresholds and exemptions. It covers the regulations around the felling of trees in hedgerows.

They have also recently produced new guidance on the management of ash trees affected by ash dieback. Their website is a useful resource <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forestry-commission>

## requirement for Accessible websites for parish councils by next year – **september 2020**

**\*\*\*New training 22nd January. Limited (20) places available. Please book through the website.** <https://www.oalc.org.uk/events> **\*\*\***

Last year the government introduced Regulations for public sector bodies’ websites, which is applicable to town and parish councils. For websites published before 23 September 2018, they will need to be compliant by 23 September 2020. The Government Digital Service recently published guidance for smaller organisations doing a basic accessibility check, NALC has also created a PowerPoint presentation which provides a summary of the regulations and some actions to help local councils with preparations – [**read more and access these resources in the NALC news story**](https://nalc.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=16886b5d6c31eade2f9a50027&id=dfeb394049&e=2593660dc7)

**This is a summary of the PowerPoint presentation -**

**Background**

* The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 came into force on the 23rd September 2018. Click [here](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/952/contents/made) to view the legislation.
* This regulation impacts public sector bodies including: central government and local government organisations. Local councils are considered to be included as part of this.
* The regulations support other legal obligations, particularly the Equality Act 2010 – reasonable adjustments.

**Why this is important**

* According to disability charities, there are over 13 million people with a disability in the UK. This equates to around 1 in 5 of the UK population. Source: Scope. Click [here](https://www.scope.org.uk/media/disability-facts-figures/)
* GOV.UK claims that 4 in 10 local council homepages failed the basic tests for accessibility. Source: GOV.UK. Click [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps)
* Accessibility is about ensuring that everyone can have access to public life in the easiest way possible, including online access.

**Brief Summary of the Regulations**

* **Accessibility Requirement** – Regulation 6: Public sector bodies must comply with the accessibility requirement. This means making their website or mobile application perceivable, operable, understandable and robust.
* **Disproportionate Burden** – Regulation 7: a public sector body does not have to comply with the accessibility requirement if doing so would impose a disproportionate burden on the public sector body. However this is not an excuse not to comply.
* **Accessibility Statement** – Regulation 8 : Public sector body must provide an accessibility statement in accordance with the model accessibility statement, and keep that statement under regular review
* **Standards** – Regulation 9: websites should meet the international web accessibility standard or its European equivalent
* **Monitoring** – Regulation 10: The Minister for the Cabinet Office must monitor the compliance by public sector bodies of their websites and mobile applications with the accessibility requirement.
* **Enforcement** – Regulation 11: The Equality and Human Rights Commission\* are the enforcement body for the website accessibility requirements.

**Exceptions**

* Regulation 4 : The following content on websites and mobile applications do not have to comply with the website accessibility regulations:
  + Information (office files) published before 23rd September 2018, unless it is essential for the council’s services
  + Third party content
  + Audio, Video
  + Heritage documents

**Timescales**

* Existing websites – 23rd September 2020
* New websites created on or after 23rd September 2018 – 23rd September 2019
* All mobile apps – 23rd June 2021

**Actions – this is the important bit**

Here are some suggestions of actions you can begin to take to help you meet the website accessibility requirements.

1. Contact your web provider to ensure compliance and if you need an accessibility statement.
2. Look at the government guidance [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/doing-a-basic-accessibility-check-if-you-cant-do-a-detailed-one) to conduct a basic accessibility check.
3. Make sure there is a budget in place for any costs that may arise.
4. Start preparing early, to avoid unnecessary panic.

There is a sample accessibility statement for you to adapt for your council in the Members Area of our website or [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sample-accessibility-statement/sample-accessibility-statement-for-a-fictional-public-sector-website)

## A new green standard for new build homes

On 1st October the Housing Secretary, Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP announced -

* A new green standard for all new build homes – the Future Homes Standard will see polluting fossil fuel heating systems such as gas boilers banned from new homes by 2025 and replaced with the latest generation of clean technology – such as air source heat pumps and cutting-edge solar panels.
* Ministers will consult on a new blueprint to overhaul the planning system in order to create a simpler, fairer system that works for everyone – from home owners to small and medium businesses, local communities to housing developers.
* The government also announced plans for a new national design code that will ensure developers build beautiful, well designed homes that people are proud to live in.

More information here <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/housing-secretary-unveils-green-housing-revolution>

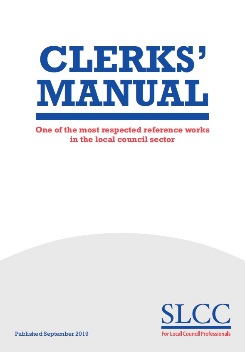
## Tree Charter day– 30th november 2019

A date for your diaries!

As you may know, NALC is a partner in the Woodland Trust’s Tree Charter project. This year’s Tree Charter Day will be held on 30 November with a **planned mass planting.** Planting trees is good for addressing the Climate Emergency. You can find out more about how to get involved in the Tree Charter on the project page on the NALC website [here,](https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/treecharter) and watch the video too on the Woodland Trust website [here](https://campaigns.woodlandtrust.org.uk/page/46713/data/1?locale=en-GB)

Jonathan Owen, CEO of NALC would like to encourage you to sign the Tree Charter [here,](https://sign.treecharter.uk/page/6023/petition/1?locale=en-GB) and to let NALC know at [policycomms@nalc.gov.uk](mailto:policycomms@nalc.gov.uk) about any tree and woods related activity or projects so they can share and celebrate it.

## New edition of The Clerks Manual

A fully updated edition of The Clerks’ Manual is now available from SLCC.

The law in this country is ever-changing and the 2019 edition of The Clerks’ Manual has been brought firmly into the digital era, without losing the wealth of knowledge which it has always included. The Manual covers English and Welsh law and has over 80 different categories from Accounting and Audit through to Websites, Newsletters and Council Publicity

Non-members price £67.50 Members price: £47.50

Order from the SLCC website [here](https://www.slcc.co.uk/product/1079/)

# Employment Briefing

Employment law is complex and specialized so while OALC can assist with general employment queries we retain the services of Chris Moses, Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd. to provide expert advice to our member councils. Chris holds a Master’s Degree in Employment Law and is a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, he has over twenty years front line HR experience. In addition he has over fifteen years’ experience of helping town and parish councils comply with their legal obligations as employers. 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 member councils.

This month –

Dealing with problem Councillors following the *Ledbury* judgement (*Harvey v Ledbury Town Council [2018] EWHC 1151*)

Any complaints regarding the conduct of Councillors towards Council staff are the responsibility of the Council to address. If a Councillor takes it upon themselves to act in an unacceptable manner towards employees of the Council, and the member of staff complains, the Council as a whole is liable for that behaviour.

Consequently if an Employee complains that they have been on the receiving end of threats, insults, hostility or unacceptable conduct by an Elected Member, it is the responsibility of the Council to address the matter.

Failure to do so can expose a Council to claims at an Employment Tribunal for Constructive Dismissal and / or Harassment and Discrimination. Depending on the nature of the unacceptable conduct, an Employee may also have grounds to claim personal injury as a result of stress and depression.

However following the *Ledbury* ruling a Council cannot conduct its own formal grievance proceedings if the complaint refers to a named Councillor. According to the Supreme Court judgement:

“*to run a Grievance Procedure process in tandem with, or as an alternative to the Code of Conduct process envisaged by the 2011 Act …. cannot be the case, because to do so would be contrary to the intention of Parliament*” para 103 of Cockerill LJ’s ruling in Ledbury

‘(The Grievance Hearing) *was in effect a disciplinary process* (against the Councillor)’. para 173 of Cockerill LJ’s ruling in Ledbury

In light of this decision, the employee’s complaint should be treated as a Code of Conduct issue. Therefore Councils should arrange for a referral to the Monitoring Officer to be conducted without unreasonable delay after a grievance is received. However, this does not absolve the Council from its responsibility to address the problem. If the outcome of the complaint to the Monitoring Officer is unacceptable to the employee, their next course of action could be to take the Council to the Employment Tribunal.

This potentially puts the Council at risk of a very uncertain outcome, which is out of their hands. However, there are steps that a Council can take to move the balance in their favour.

In a recent harassment claim against Leeds City Council, the Judge found that the Authority had taken all reasonable steps within its capabilities to prevent such acts by its Employees. As a result, the Judge dropped the claim against the Council, but proceeded against the Supervisor who committed the harassment. Clearly if a Council has done its best to prevent problems, it has a defence. Such steps would involve:

1. Having a simple and accessible Dispute Resolution Procedure to help staff have their concerns heard and appropriate action taken.
2. Setting up a Panel of Councillors (2-3) to conduct an informal investigation into Employee grievances, and support them in submitting a Code of Conduct complaint if appropriate.
3. Have a simple and accessible anti-harassment policy and procedure that staff can use to raise their concerns.
4. Ensure Standing Orders are clear about confidentiality, and prevent Members from posting personal data about Employees on Social Media.
5. Implement a stress management policy and procedure to help Employees.
6. Conduct a Stress Risk Assessment, based on the Health and Safety Executive’s six point assessment tool.
7. Ensure staff appraisals are conducted regularly and that resultant action plans are implemented.
8. Have an Internet & Social Media policy and procedure to address abusive behaviour on the internet.
9. Provide a Mediation option for staff to address their complaints.
10. Have a conduct protocol which could include:

* *Where Councillors have concerns about individual employees, or employees have concerns relating to Councillors, these should be pursued with the Town/Parish Clerk and/or Chair of the Council, only.*
* *Any formal disciplinary action will only be initiated by the Clerk or the Full Council /appropriate committee with delegated powers. No individual Elected Member has the ability to unilaterally initiate formal disciplinary action.*
* *Employees are employed by the Council as a whole, and are directed by the Full Council, committees and working groups alone, not by individual Councillors.*
* *No Employee shall take action upon the instruction of an individual Councillor.*
* *If an Employee has a grievance or wishes to comment on Council policy so far as it affects him or her as an Employee, he or she will take the matter up with his or her immediate line Manager.*
* *Councillors should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of Employees at meetings held in public.*
* *Councillors and should not abuse officers in public or through the press, or seek to undermine their position by abuse, rudeness or ridicule.*
* *In meetings, individual Chairs should be aware of discussions which may become abusive towards an Employee and must protect that Employee*

**What to do if the Employee’s health is affected by the conduct of an Elected Member.**

It’s not uncommon for staff to be affected by stress, anxiety and depression when on the receiving end of ongoing confrontational behaviour. Depression can become a disability if it affects the Employee’s day to day ability to do their job for a period of twelve months or more. Consequently, the Council could be on the receiving end of a claim for Disability Discrimination and / or Personnel Injury, if it fails to effectively manage the problem.

Faced with such a scenario, a Council would be well advised to:

1. Conduct an informal investigatory meeting with the Employee to find out what has caused the problem, what support they need, can adjustments be made to overcome it, and if they will give their consent to attend a medical assessment.
2. Arrange for an Occupational Health / GP assessment to confirm the diagnosis, the cause of the problem, and to advise on what the Council needs to do to protect the Employee.
3. Conduct a Stress Risk Assessment based on HSE Guidelines.

If work is seen as the cause of the problem, the Council has a legal obligation to ensure, ‘*so far as reasonably practicable’*, the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work of the Employee (s2 HASAWA 1974). Failure to comply can result in claims for Personal Injury.

A Council has a statutory obligation to remove or reduce the risk to health, where reasonably practical. If a named Councillor is identified as the cause of the problem, the Council cannot sack the Elected Member, but can investigate the effects of their conduct on the health of Employee. It can also report the results of the medical Assessment to the Monitoring Officer, and discuss how the Council can limit contact between a Councillor and Employee(s), to reduce or remove unacceptable risks to health.

**Does an Employee’s Complaint / Grievance about Internet Posts Constitute a Protected Disclosure?**

There is a definite increase in the use of Social Media by parish groups and Elected Members, and it is not uncommon for specific criticisms to be made about a Clerk’s performance, or the amount of money that Employees are paid.

If a Councillor has exposed such sensitive personal data, without the Employee’s consent, they can be in breach of Data Protection legislation. Consequently they have committed a criminal offence. In complaining about such conduct, an Employee could claim that they are doing so in the public interest, by drawing attention to illegal conduct by a Councillor. This means that they can claim Whistle Blower protection.

Any subsequent action against that Employee could result in them being able to claim Unfair / Constructive Dismissal at an Employment Tribunal, even without two years continuous Employment, as a result of a breach of their statutory rights under Whistle Blower protection legislation.

Further information and advice for councils can be found by visiting [www.personneladviceandsolutions.co.uk/factsheets](http://www.personneladviceandsolutions.co.uk/factsheets)

# Financial Briefing

**OALC also 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](mailto: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 -

**The need to register for VAT**

Unlike businesses, the VAT registration threshold of £85,000 does not apply to local authorities. Under section 42 of the VAT Act 1994 a council that makes any taxable supplies of goods or services in return for payment is liable to be registered for VAT, regardless of the value of the supplies.

In practice HMRC only enforce this where the VAT due on sales by a council is at least £1,000 a year, although a council that makes any taxable supplies can choose to register for VAT.

Where a council that has taxable sales is not VAT registered, it cannot charge VAT on those sales, but it is not entitled to recover VAT on associated costs.

There are a number of areas that catch councils out, where they may be making taxable supplies of goods or services without realising it.

* Bar and café sales
* Advertising and sponsorship
* Casual sports bookings
* Event admission
* Car parking
* Boat moorings

Where a council fails to register at the correct time, VAT will still be due on sales from that date. In some cases, a council’s liability for VAT on its income can go back several years. A council that received £60,000 of income from café sales in a year would owe £10,000 in VAT on those sales, even though it wasn’t registered and didn’t charge VAT to customers. They may also be liable to penalties and interest.

Being registered for VAT requires a council to charge VAT (at the appropriate rate) on all taxable supplies that it makes, but also allows it to reclaim VAT incurred on costs relating to all taxable business activities it undertakes. Registration may be beneficial where a council incurs a lot of cost to provide a service for a modest fee.

VAT registration has no effect on any VAT exempt business activities a council undertakes (such as room hire, leases or markets) nor does it change a council’s entitlement to reclaim VAT incurred in relation to its non-business activities.

Registration should be done online here <https://www.gov.uk/vat-registration>

# Training and Development

## OALC Training programme

Please book your places via the website <https://www.oalc.org.uk/events>

The last event in 2019 (Planning) is fully booked so we have organized an additional planning session in February 2020.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| date | subject | Half/full day | trainer | location |
| Thursday 21st November  FULLY BOOKED | Planning – How local councils fit into the planning system and effective responses to planning applications | Half/ morning | Phil Shaw | West Oxfordshire District Council, Witney, OX28 1NB |

Training 2020

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| date | subject | Half/full day | trainer | location |
| Wednesday 22nd January | New Training Website Accessibility | Half/morning  10-12.30 | [cid:image001.png@01CDF997.FC56B050](http://www.oxeyes.org.uk/website/) | Oxfordshire Association for the Blind  Bradbury Lodge,  Gordon Woodward Way  Oxford, OX1 4XL  (near Redbridge Park & Ride) |
| Thursday 30th January | Parish Meetings | Half/morning  10-12.30 | Frances  Webster, solicitor  Wellers Hedleys | West Oxfordshire District Council Offices, Witney OX28 1NB |
| Wednesday 5th February | Preparing for End of Year Audit  Understanding Internal Audit | Half /morning  10-12.30  Half /afternoon  2-4.30 | Steve Parkinson | Blenheim Room, Begbroke Science Park, Woodstock Room, Begbroke OX5 1PF |
| Wednesday 12th February | Charity Law | Full day | Roger Taylor | Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot OX11 7JN |
| Monday 24th February | Extra Session  Planning – How local councils fit into the planning system and effective responses to planning applications | Half/ morning | Phil Shaw | West Oxfordshire District Council, Witney, OX28 1NB |
| Wednesday 18th March | Roles and Responsibilities for new councillors and clerks | Full day | Elizabeth Howlett | Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot OX11 7JN |

## Other training and conference opportunities

**Fire Warden/Marshal Training Level 2**

Did you know that breaches of fire safety laws can result in unlimited fines and even imprisonment?

The QA Level 2 Award in Fire Safety (QCF) is a regulated and nationally recognised qualification that has been specifically designed for anyone who has a specific responsibility for fire safety in the workplace, such as designated fire wardens/fire marshals.

Successful candidates will gain an understanding of fire safety management at work and the specific roles and responsibilities related to fire safety in the workplace.

**Date: Wednesday 27th November 2019**

**Time:** 9.45 am arrival for tea, coffee and networking for a 10.00 am start. The course will finish by 2.00pm.

**Cost:** £80 per person for OCVA members  
£95 per person from a charitable organisation who are not OCVA members  
£110 per person from a non-charitable organisation

**Venue:** OCVA, Oxford Office Furniture Training Suite, The Old Court House  
Floyds Row, St Aldates, Oxford OX1 1SS

**For online booking, please** [**click here.**](https://civicrm.ocva.org.uk/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=61504&qid=3329849)If you have any further questions or need help with booking, please email [training@ocva.org.uk](https://civicrm.ocva.org.uk/sites/all/modules/civicrm/extern/url.php?u=61505&qid=3329849) or call 01865 251946.



Date for your diary - NALC Spring Conference 17th March 2020; Aviva Conference Centre, London will concentrate on the potential town and parish councils have to deliver support in the health and well-being arena.

There will be sessions on social prescribing, rural isolation and local councils working with health businesses.

# Vacancies

All vacancies can be found on the [Local News section](http://www.oalc.org.uk/localnews.htm) of the OALC website, scroll down to the very bottom of the page. We do not charge councils to advertise their jobs but we do expect all adverts to provide the basic information in the template we can provide.

|  |
| --- |
| **North Newington Parish Council**  **Parish Clerk**  **Location:** The new clerk will be required to work from home plus attend  monthly evening Parish Council meetings, usually the 1st Tuesday of each month,  excluding August.  **Hours:** The role is for approximately 3 hours per week and attracts a salary of  £9.743 per hour (LC1 SCP 19) starting point depending upon experience and  transferable skills  **Specific responsibilities:** The clerk provides administrative and clerical  support to the council and duties include managing the meetings of the council  including preparing the agenda, taking minutes, monitoring actions and  decisions, managing communications with councilors, other organisations and  the public.  To apply please send your CV with a covering note to the clerk at: [northnewingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:northnewingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com)  Or for further information or an informal chat please call the clerk, Elaine  Boswell on: 01295 738803 |

**Whitchurch on Thames Parish Clerk**

**Location:** Work from home  except for monthly Council meetings, the second Thursday of each month and periodic visits to the village as required including Village Hall and new Pavilion team meetings.

**Hours:** 8 hours per week, average of 35 hrs per month.

Salary is expected to be in the region of £300 to £500 per month, depending on previous experience, plus expenses.

The Parish Council seeks to employ a home-based, part-time parish clerk. The successful applicant will have to organise monthly parish council meetings, support parish councillors and maintain accounts including those of the village hall and new pavilion teams. A full list of responsibilities is available on request.

**Qualities**

* Previous Clerk experience preferred - Strong administrative skills - Experience with financial packages - Proficient with MS Word and Excel.
* Knowledge of and passion for parish council related local issues.
* Strong interpersonal skills to work with the team of councillors, stakeholders in the village, as well as representatives from the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and South Oxfordshire District Council.

**How to apply** Please email your CV and a covering letter to the Chair, Cllr. Jim Donahue, [cllrdonahue.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com](mailto:cllrdonahue.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com)

**Highmoor Parish Council Parish Clerk**

Location: The new clerk will be required to work from home plus attend 4 evening Parish Council meetings.

Hours: The role is for approximately 2 hours per week and attracts a salary of £16.00 per hour

Specific responsibilities: The clerk provides administrative and clerical support to the council and duties include managing the meetings of the council including preparing the agenda, taking minutes, monitoring actions and decisions, managing communications with councillors, other organisations and the public.

To apply please send your CV with a covering note to the clerk at:

[Jane@lindonpryce.demon.co.uk](mailto:Jane@lindonpryce.demon.co.uk)

Or for further information or an informal chat please call the clerk, Jane Pryce on: 01189 475915

**TIDDINGTON WITH ALBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

**PARISH CLERK VACANCY**

**Location:** The new clerk will be required to work from home plus attend monthly evening Parish Council meetings, usually on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in Tiddington Village Hall.

**Hours:** The role is for approximately 3 hours per week and attracts a salary based on the National Association of Local Councils 2019 scale range LC1 (13-17) Salary : £11.45 - £12.39 per hour.

**Responsibilities:** The clerk provides administrative and clerical support to the council and managing the financial aspects of the council. Duties include managing the meetings of the council including preparing the agenda, taking minutes, monitoring actions and decisions, managing communication with Councillors, other organisations and members of the public.

Administrative experience is essential and training is available for all aspects of the role. Candidates should be willing to undertake the CiLCA qualification if they do not already hold it.

The Parish Council are looking for a proactive team player to work with a supportive and friendly team. The successful candidate will be prepared to deal with a diverse range of issues in a ‘hands on’ manner and be able to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with a wide variety of people, have good numeracy skills and be computer literate.

Applicants do not have to have specific experience as a council clerk but must have several years’ experience in a similar role.

**How to apply:** Please send your CV with a covering note to:

[clerk@tiddingtonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@tiddingtonparishcouncil.org.uk)

*Or for further information or an informal chat please contact Val Baker / Tracey Smith on: 01844 339178*

**Hanborough Parish Council Clerk**

Our clerk is retiring at the end of the year and we are looking for a qualified (or willing to work towards qualification) and experienced Parish Clerk with excellent administrative and organisational skills to manage the Council. The successful candidate will need a strong level of personal commitment, an enthusiasm for community life, good communication skills and an ability to deal with a range of issues. This is an exciting opportunity to support and guide our enthusiastic and committed councillors, who are addressing the needs of a growing community.

It is a part-time position of 10 hours per week, partly working from home, but also attending/minuting monthly council meetings and occasional extra meetings/events. The Clerk will undertake the normal duties expected of a Parish Clerk and will job share with the Finance Officer who looks after finances, cemetery and allotments.

We are offering a salary range LC2 (24-28) £27,905 to £31,371 pro rata. Interested candidates should, in the first instance, contact the clerk for a full job specification.

**The closing date for applications is 25th November 2019**. We will review applications through November with a view to interview in the first week of December and start in January.

Jon Gammage, Clerk to Hanborough Parish Council

2 Magpie Alley, Shipton under Wychwood, Oxfordshire, OX7 6BS

phone: 07909 514884 [clerk@hanborough-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hanborough-pc.gov.uk)

Visit us at [www.hanborough-pc.gov.uk](http://www.hanborough-pc.gov.uk)