

# OALC NEWSLETTER

## OCTOBER 2022



NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT  
STRATEGY FOR PARISH  
& TOWN COUNCILS

### Training Programme 2022

#### THE HEADLINES

**OALC** – Chair's sessions, change in working hours, training excuses, new training via Breakthrough, Coronation, elections & bank holiday

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

See page 27 onwards for more information about local, national and online training opportunities.

#### LOCAL NEWS – pages 7-13

- OCC - emergency planning, SCRAP, foster carers
- Cherwell DC – electoral role, peer challenge & precept dates
- Community Information Network
- Wild Oxfordshire
- ToE funding

#### VACANCIES – page 31

- Claydon w Clattercote PC – Clerk/RFO
- Littlemore PC – Clerk/RFO
- South Stoke PC – Clerk/RFO

#### NATIONAL NEWS - pages 14-30

- NALC Points of Light
- Rialtus
- Planning
- Salary negotiations
- Audit
- Charities Act
- Village Halls Jubilee fund – no news
- And lots more...

#### CLIMATE ACTION page 21

**Consultation**- West Oxfordshire DC

**Employment briefing** EU law revocation



1. **Don't forget the regular Chair's session**

All Chairs, new and experienced, are very welcome to join the zoom session

This one hour session for is an opportunity for you to raise issues, discuss, share or even just listen. The sessions are intended to improve communication and help resolve any issues you may be experiencing in your council. There is no fixed agenda but OALC will highlight current important matters, both national and local, which we think you should know about. We will hold the sessions alternatively during the day and in the evening so those who are working can join too.

**OALC virtual monthly Chairs Q&A session – seventh session was on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 6.30pm**

13 Chairs joined from:

- **Cherwell DC** – Adderbury, Launton, South Newington, Fritwell
- **West Oxfordshire DC** – Filkins & Broughton Poggs, Wootton (Woodstock), Crawley, Brize Norton
- **South Oxfordshire DC** –Stoke Row, East Hagbourne, Kidmore End, Chinnor
- **Vale of White Horse DC** – Cumnor

CL outlined two current topics:

- **Budgeting** – it's that time of year so flagging up some issues the council needs to take into consideration. The current economic uncertainty makes forecasting expenditure for next year extremely difficult – all costs are rising – utilities, wages, and insurance. Include elections on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023, followed by Coronation on 6<sup>th</sup> May lots of difficult judgements to make in forming the budget for next year, from which the precept request to your district council is then made.
- **Operation London Bridge**, seeking feedback on how communities managed on the death of Queen Elizabeth II and the period of national mourning
- Announcement of date of Coronation 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023

The topics raised by Chairs were:

- CIL – whether to take it or leave with district council, if it is taken what are the implications, 5 year time limit – if not spent it has to go back, how can funds be invested, £85,000 limit of protection of council funds in bank accounts.

- Encouragement of OCC to use CIL/Sec 106 funds on works they may previously have funded – eg footpaths etc.
- Following fraud by an Oxfordshire Clerk need for all councillors to understand council financial controls, for second and third pair of critical eyes on transactions, need for a proper professional Internal Auditor and to change them every 3-5 years.
- Quiet Lanes/[20's plenty scheme](#) by OCC, differing views - criticism of OCC apparently ignoring rural areas but Wootton praised the CC scheme. Most welcomed it and shared their experiences. OCC currently accepting applications for Tranche 3 for delivery within 2024/25.

### **OALC Chair's Q & A Zoom sessions 2022**

We will ask you to observe good online meeting etiquette – keep your camera on, be on mute except when speaking and display your name and council. Please do not pass this link on. Only Chairs of member councils will be allowed to join the session. Any problems which concern personal details will be taken offline.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2483078242?pwd=ZU9Fb2l2ZzdlampQN3BRT3ZMZnl2UT09>

Meeting ID: 248 307 8242      Passcode: oalclic

<b>November</b>	Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> 2.30pm	
<b>December</b>	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> 6.30pm	

### **OALC TIPS – THESE ARE ALL IMPORTANT PLEASE DO NOT SKIP OVER THEM**

#### **1. A change of working hours at OALC.**

This month has seen a change in working hours in the OALC office which you need to be aware of.

Lucy Dalby is now working 33 hours per week which is 4.5 days finishing at lunchtime on Friday. Christine has reduced down to three days per week – Monday to Wednesday as step one in a phased retirement.

So please ring Lucy on 0751 936 7709 or send an email to [info@oalc.org.uk](mailto:info@oalc.org.uk)

If you specifically want to speak to Christine please ring 0774 694 3076 on Monday – Wednesday

#### **2. Training – so many reasons why councillors don't turn up to our training sessions...**

We have heard every excuse/reason in the book why councillors fail to turn up when they have a place booked on one of our courses –

- **We didn't get the email** – there is an initial acknowledgement when the booking is made sent to the booker – the Clerk; we then send a reminder one week before the event to the attendees email address and another one the day before, again to the attendees email address – **no excuses for not turning up**
- **We forgot – really not good enough!**
- **I was ill** – okay we are all human, emergencies do arise but why not get someone else from your council to come instead especially if the place is paid for?
- **I had to take the dog to the Vet** – emergencies do arise but why not get someone else from your council to come instead. Tell the Clerk you can't come and get them to ring around to see if someone else can come.
- Many of our courses are virtual so **no matter where you are you can attend** – we have been joined from beautiful holiday locations, beside a canal by the lock keeper and councillors from their cars and at conferences.
- **I have to be at work** – did you know that councillors are allowed time off work for duties associated with their elected office <https://www.gov.uk/time-off-work-public-duties> you may learn new skills that could contribute to your working life, your employer might be pleased that you are doing training that they aren't paying for!
- **My car is booked for an MOT** – so why did you book the MOT when you knew you had training?
- **The pet snake escaped**, it is somewhere in the house we have to find it! Okay we get the problem!
- I have to attend my **children's school event**, family does come first but see above, get someone else to come instead
- **Laptop broken, no Wi-Fi, power cut** – we all have tech issues but contact the Clerk don't waste public money

#### **5 reasons why you should turn up!**

- You are wasting public money if you don't turn up
- You are taking a place someone else really wants – we usually have a waiting list, our courses are popular
- You are costing OALC money if you cancel and haven't paid
- Training is one of our two sources of income
- Less income from training may mean OALC subscriptions have to go up.

### **OALC NEW APPROACH TO TRAINING**

We are pleased to announce that OALC has partnered with [Breakthrough Communications](#), who offer a wide range of online training sessions designed for local council clerks, officers and councillors.

The world of training has changed due to covid. All our training before March 2020 was face to face. After then it all went online. Now we are offering both virtual and face to face.

We are currently planning next year's training programme and have decided to offer our member councils access to additional online courses via Breakthrough Communications. When we run courses we usually have twenty places we need to fill, sometimes that is hard work particularly if the subject is

a little specialized. However, if the course is open to a much wider audience by virtue of it being on line then you have the opportunity to attend a greater range of courses, some of which are quite niche. Other attendees will come from different parts of the country but you will all be from town and parish councils.

**Sessions must be booked direct with Breakthrough, not us.** For course details and to make bookings please visit this link - [County Association Training Events - Breakthrough Communications \(breakthroughcomms.co.uk\)](https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk)

Available course titles include:

### **Council Communications and Community Engagement - 6 courses**

1. Communicating with your community Part 1: Creating a communications strategy
2. Communicating with your community Part 2: Creating a communications strategy
3. How to recruit and retain more diverse pool of local councillors
4. How councils can more effectively engage with young people in their communities
5. Dealing with local and regional media
6. Crisis communications for local councils

### **Social Media and Digital Communications - 3 courses**

1. Social media for councils: Getting started using Facebook, creating an effective social media strategy and getting the fundamentals right
2. Social media for councils: Advanced strategies and tactics across multiple platforms
3. Councillors: Social media skills

### **Data Protection and Freedom of Information - 5 courses**

1. Data Protection for councils Part 1: Foundations and theory
2. Data protection for councils Part 2: Accountability and lawfulness
3. Data protection for councils Part 3: Dealing with data subject rights and information security
4. Freedom of information for councils
5. Councillors: Data protection training

### **Interpersonal Skills - 2 courses**

1. Dealing with difficult people and conversations
2. Councillors: Chairing meetings effectively

Councils will be invoiced by OALC at £30 plus VAT per delegate, per course.

Each course lasts 2 hours, is delivered via Zoom and is available on multiple dates.

One week's notice of cancellation required.

## CORONATION, ELECTIONS AND BANK HOLIDAYS 2023

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 is a normal bank holiday, discussions are ongoing about whether there might be another bank holiday associated with the coronation although we hope this doesn't happen because it would undoubtedly cause problems with vote counting after the local elections.

Elections are scheduled in England for Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023

The coronation of King Charles II will be on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

So who will preside over the coronation celebrations in your village if you have elections??

As councillors remain councillors until four days after the election (LGA1972, ss 16(3) and 35(2)) your existing Mayor/Chair will still be mayor on the day of the Coronation. Councillors will be in place until Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May.

[National Association of Civic Officers](#) writes:

*Many of you are asking about an official photograph of the King and what to do with pictures of the late Queen. We will work with Royal Images to get information to our members on when the new pictures can be purchased. You will certainly need one if you host Citizenship Ceremonies, though a period of grace has necessarily been granted. Pictures of the late Queen can still be displayed in council buildings, though black ribbons should now be removed and it cannot be used at a Citizenship Ceremony.*

## OXFORDSHIRE HISTORY CENTRE – BOOKS OF CONDOLENCE DO YOU HAVE ONE?

We have been speaking to Oxfordshire History Centre to determine what their policy is on accepting books of condolence for their archive. Mark Priddey, History Centre Manager (Archives) has written –

*“that at this stage it would be helpful to know how many councils have books of condolence (and how many). For example, Banbury Town Council have 5 at the Town Hall, but issued others to the parish church. Once I have a better idea of how many the county has in total, I can then determine what we could offer in terms of long-term storage.”*

So, the message from me to each council is:

- *How many books do you have?*
- *Are they full?*
- *What format are they (i.e. loose-leaf or already bound)?*
- *Would you want to deposit them at the History Centre (either on their own or as part of a collection of council archives at some point)?*
- *We are unable to accept additional tributes.*

*Ideally, yes, the books of condolence would be retained by each council/parish rather than transferred to the Oxfordshire History Centre, as I think they will be more meaningful if locally accessible, and we may be inundated!*

If you want to let us know about your books of condolence we will pass the information on to the History Centre.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST – PAYROLL AND INTERNAL AUDIT BY THE SAME COMPANY

We understand that there may be some payroll companies which are also offering to do internal audits.

Please be aware that, as per the advice in *Governance and Accountability for smaller Authorities* (now called The Practitioners Guide) (<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/publications#practitioners-guide> on page 24, section 4.6), the Internal Auditor should be totally independent of the Council and any suppliers.

We would suggest that a company which is doing both the payroll and internal audit for a Council could not be considered independent and therefore a conflict of interest could arise.

We realise the importance of both payroll and internal audit, but both appointments should be considered carefully and separately

More internal auditors are registering with the Internal Audit Forum Directory as the site builds <https://internalauditforum.org.uk/internal-audit-directory/> and we would strongly support only using Internal Auditors from the IAF Directory.

## LOCAL NEWS



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

If your council wants to keep informed about what the County Council is up to, register on their website here - <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>

### **1. Emergency Planning for this coming winter – your council needs an up to date resilience plan**

We had an excellent training session on 10<sup>th</sup> October from James Crozier, Emergency Planning Team, OCC.

Approximately 70 out of 249 parish councils in Oxfordshire have a community resilience plan. That leaves an awful lot of communities without one.

In the first week in October there was a major water main burst <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-63184633> at Heyford Hill which impacted the eastern by pass around Oxford, schools, home and farms were affected.

This clearly illustrates the need for a plan. Councils may think – we aren't low lying so we won't be affected by flooding, we aren't near a motorway so we don't need one **BUT** all communities have water/gas/electricity/sewerage. A plan helps the emergency services know who to contact if a reception centre needs to be set up, if there is a car park where emergency bottled water supplies can be delivered to. There are so many reasons why your council needs a plan.



The County Council provides a template <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/fire-and-public-safety/emergency-planning/community-resilience>

Simple community emergency plans are designed to achieve the following:

- Identification of safe places to use as a refuge for people displaced from their homes in the short term (hours) and how to open them at short notice at any time. These are known as 'Survivor Reception

Centre's' by emergency services and it would help if this terminology could be used in your plan.

- Identification of people that can and are willing to help in an emergency.
- Identification of equipment that might be useful for self-help in an emergency.
- Identification of vulnerable or potentially vulnerable people in the community.
- A list of useful contacts for use in a crisis.

Don't be daunted, keep it simple and update it every year.

## **2. Let's S.C.R.A.P Fly-tipping Campaign**

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of items. Many incidents of fly-tipping can be prevented by following the [S.C.R.A.P code](#). S.C.R.A.P stands for:

S – Suspect, C – Check, R – Refuse, A – Ask, P – Paperwork

Everyone has a legal duty of care to ensure their household or business waste is disposed of correctly and we each have a role to play in preventing fly-tipping.

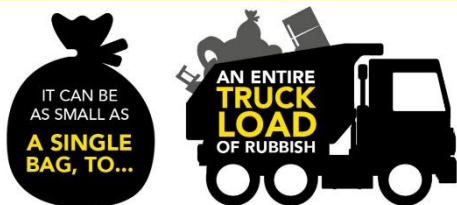
The rubbish you've passed onto someone else is still your legal responsibility until it's correctly disposed of. This means you can be prosecuted even if your waste is fly-tipped by someone else who's dealing with it on your behalf.

For example, if you hire an unlicensed individual or company and they were to fly-tip that waste, you could end up paying a fine or being taken to court.





## FLY TIPPING IS THE ILLEGAL DUMPING OF ITEMS



Let's S.C.R.A.P. fly tipping  
[oxfordshire.gov.uk/flytipping](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk/flytipping)



### What are some alternatives?

We have a handy search tool in Oxfordshire called the [Waste Wizard](#) which provides different ideas and places for an item you may no longer need.

Different choices it will provide include:

- Passing them on to be reused, by selling or giving items away for free through charity shops or online exchange sites.
- Using your local district council kerbside collection service (including bulky item collection).
- Taking large household items to a [household waste recycling centre](#) (charges apply for certain [DIY type items](#))

More information can be found at: S.C.R.A.P Fly-tipping: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/flytipping](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/flytipping)  
Waste Wizard search tool: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard)

### **3. We are in real need of more foster carers in Oxfordshire in order to keep children close to their family, friends and schools**

Love - that's what fostering is all about. As Oxfordshire foster carer, Sue, says: 'these kids don't want money, they don't want things - they just want love and attention, and they want your time'.

Oxfordshire County Council's fostering team is looking for people with big hearts to become foster carers. So, if you've got love to give, they'd love to hear from you!

Find out more – <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/fostering>

Or watch these YouTube clips - <https://youtu.be/40ezzGDU0Vw>

<https://youtu.be/fq5ki01X8iA>

## CHERWELL DC

### Electoral Roll

Following the Annual Canvass, the full electoral register will be published on 1 December 2022. To receive a copy and subsequent monthly updates for your parish council you must complete and return a signed register request form. The form must be completed annually and was previously sent to clerks for the new register.

If you have misplaced the form, please email [elections@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:elections@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) to request a new form. Completed forms should also be returned to [elections@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:elections@cherwell-dc.gov.uk). If you are a clerk to multiple parishes, you must complete and return a separate form for each parish council.

In order to satisfy audit requirements, the Electoral Register and monthly updates will only be sent to parish clerks where a completed request form has been received by the Democratic and Elections Team.

### Peer Challenge

Cherwell District Council has commissioned a Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC), which is due to take place the week commencing the 28<sup>th</sup> November.

In case anyone has missed it, Town & Parish Councils have been invited to participate in the Peer Challenge on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 11:30hrs to 12:30hrs at Bodicote House. It is your chance to tell the review panel about how CDC works with you, including what you think we do well and what you think needs to be improved.

Thank you to everyone who has responded so far. Bookings have now closed [parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### Precept setting reminder

The Council is aiming to circulate the Parish tax base figures in the first week of December. These figures will be provisional and they are not finally confirmed until approval by the Executive Committee on 9 January 2023. However, we do not expect them to change, so precept requests can be made on the basis of them.

If you intend to set a precept, please reserve a slot in your Parish Council agenda. Your precept request should be submitted to the Council's finance team, by Friday 13 January 2023. All precepts will be approved by Council on 27 February 2023.

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION NETWORK



The Community Information Network is pleased to share their new **Community Links Booklet**. In this edition CIN have included some information about keeping well this winter, keeping active, eating well with some of our winter recipes and some energy saving tips that we hope you will find helpful.

These booklets are **free**, if your council would like to **receive a paper copy or copies** please contact their admin team on [network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk) or 01235 849434 and they will arrange to get them to you.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/our-services/community-information-network/>

#### WHAT IS WILD OXFORDSHIRE AND WHAT DOES IT DO?



Wild Oxfordshire is an Oxfordshire-based charity made up of knowledgeable and experienced scientists, practitioners and communication specialists inspiring and empowering people to work together effectively for nature's recovery across Oxfordshire.

They facilitate partnerships and collaborations within the conservation sector to work for more effective change, avoiding duplication and conflict. These large-scale partnerships include the Oxfordshire Nature Partnership and the Evenlode Catchment Partnership.

They also run smaller practical projects where they identify any unmet needs, which as a small charity they can respond to quickly. Look at their Action for Nature pages to see the projects they are currently working on. Additionally, their long term Community Ecology work aims to inspire and empower community groups and parish councils to create more natural neighbourhoods, giving tailored, expert advice on habitat management and creation.

And you can book a place via [Eventbrite](#) for their Annual Local Environment Groups Conference 'Helping Oxfordshire's Hedgerows' on Saturday 5th November in Watlington.

More information on their website here <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/>

#### FUNDING AVAILABLE FROM THE TRUST FOR OXFORDSHIRE'S ENVIRONMENT



If you don't already know us, TOE is Oxfordshire's independent funder. For over ten years, TOE has successfully attracted funds to enable us to distribute over £2.4 million to some 400 projects. These projects have made a real difference enhancing biodiversity

and improving people's access to nature.

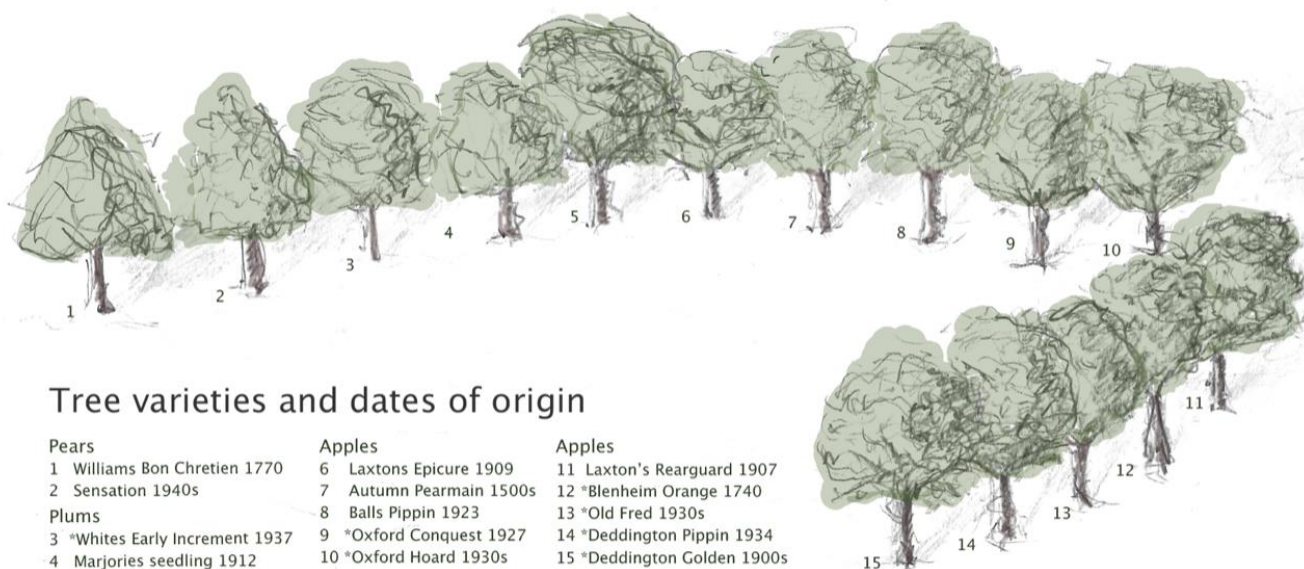
Typically, TOE's Local Environment Fund awards grants for the cost of practical work. Deddington Parish Council has recently claimed its grant of over £2,000 for a new community orchard at Welford's Piece in Clifton. Volunteers from the Deddington Environment Network planted 15 heritage fruit trees, the majority being varieties local to the area including the Deddington Pippin and Deddington Golden. The new trees have been under planted with bulbs for spring colour and a rain gauge helps the volunteers know when additional watering is needed, essential after care during the five year establishment phase following planting.

The Parish Council told us “We could not have created the orchard without funding from TOE. Planting the heritage orchard has served to bring people together during a difficult time (covid) and has created a haven for both people and wildlife.”

There are case studies about other projects on our website [www.trustforoxfordshire.org.uk/main-fund](http://www.trustforoxfordshire.org.uk/main-fund) from where our detailed guidance and application form can be downloaded.

## THE HERITAGE COMMUNITY ORCHARD, CLIFTON

Fruit trees planted by local volunteers in 2021



### Tree varieties and dates of origin

#### Pears

- 1 Williams Bon Chretien 1770
- 2 Sensation 1940s

#### Plums

- 3 \*Whites Early Increment 1937
- 4 Marjories seedling 1912

#### Medlar

- 5 Nottingham 1790s

#### Apples

- 6 Laxtons Epicure 1909
- 7 Autumn Pearmain 1500s
- 8 Balls Pippin 1923
- 9 \*Oxford Conquest 1927
- 10 \*Oxford Hoard 1930s

#### Apples

- 11 Laxton's Rearguard 1907
- 12 \*Blenheim Orange 1740
- 13 \*Old Fred 1930s
- 14 \*Deddington Pippin 1934
- 15 \*Deddington Golden 1900s

\* Local or Oxfordshire variety

The orchard is a joint project between the Deddington Environment Network and Deddington Parish Council, supported by the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment, and Grondon Waste Management Ltd through the Landfill Communities Fund

GRUNDON

toe

Trust for  
Oxfordshire  
Environment



Deddington  
Environment  
Network

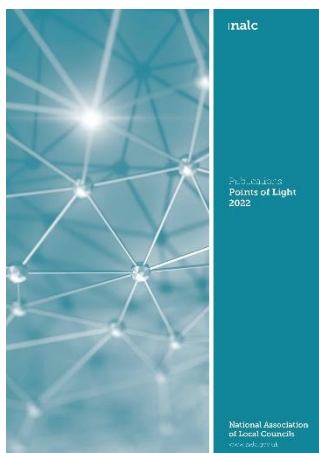


So, if your Council, or a community group in your parish, is planning a project, email [admin@trustforoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:admin@trustforoxfordshire.org.uk) to arrange a chat about the grants available for not-for-profit organisations (including parish and town councils), and check that your idea meets our funding criteria.

**Grants are awarded quarterly and the next deadline is midday on 9 January 2023**

NATIONAL NEWS

POINTS OF LIGHT 2022



Each year NALC produces a small publication called Points of Light. It is full of inspiring case studies of projects done by town and parish councils to support their communities.

Each case study features a summary of the project with electorate, precept and expenditure figures of the local councils involved.

The case studies have been compiled to promote good practice and raise awareness of the work local councils are undertaking. Facilitating summer activity sessions for local children, running an award winning sports and community facility, carrying out town centre improvements, funding a community agent post and supporting a cost of living day are just some of the examples of activity contained in this edition.

Research for Points of Light came from a range of sources, including direct submissions by local councils, entries to NALC's Star Council Awards and local news stories.

NALC hopes this guide inspires all local councils to take that extra step to support their community. The studies are divided under these headings -

- Art, culture and heritage
- Civic pride
- Community transport
- Cost of living
- Libraries
- Loneliness
- Markets
- Parks and open spaces
- Playgrounds
- Sports and leisure
- Young people and youth service

The booklet is here - [Microsoft Word - points-of-light-2022-rd.docx \(nalc.gov.uk\)](#)

Unfortunately there don't seem to be any Oxfordshire councils in Points of Light this year. And I probably know why. At OALC we only generally hear from our member councils when something goes wrong or you have a problem and need our advice or help. We next to never hear about the things that go well, which is a shame for us.

### **OALC WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOUR GOOD NEWS AND POSITIVE STORIES – EACH MONTH WE WILL FEATURE ONE OF YOUR PROJECTS**

Please send us a short (300 words) summary of a project your council has done/is doing with photos, perhaps before and after? Explain -

- why did the council embark on it
- what are the costs, how was it funded, what powers were used – GPC or which legislation?
- how long did it take?
- Pro's and con's
- What are the lessons learnt, what would you do better/different if you were starting from scratch ie what can other councils learn from your project.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR CASE STUDY TO US AT [info@oalc.org.uk](mailto:info@oalc.org.uk)**

**WE WILL PUBLISH ONE CASE STUDY EACH MONTH**

## SALE OF RIALTUS ACCOUNTING



On 11<sup>th</sup> October I assume that those councils which use the services of Rialtus accounting packages will have received an email from Caroline Buckland, the former Managing Director of the company saying that they had sold the company to Harris Computer Systems <http://www.harriscomputer.com>. The email was accompanied by a Q&A sheet which hopefully answered your questions about continuity of service, continued support to existing Rialtus products etc.

## PLANNING NEWS

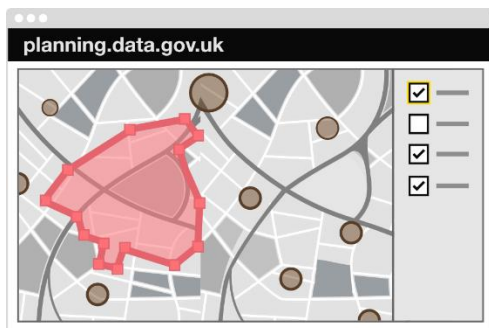
### **New GOV.UK Digital Land planning data platform**

The DLUHC Digital Planning Team has launched a new Digital Land [planning data platform](#) on GOV.UK to help make land and housing data easier to find, understand, use and trust. The new platform collects planning and housing data from local planning authorities (LPAs) and transforms it into a consistent state across England. Anyone can view, download and analyse the data on the platform.

The platform is designed for LPAs and related organisations within the planning sector, with the aim of supporting the modernisation of how data is used in planning.

As part of this aspect of the digital planning work, DLUHC are also working with a set of LPAs to collect data from them according to draft data standards. These standards aim to provide the basis to organise data so that it can then be shared effectively. Data standards make it possible for platforms like [planning.data.gov.uk](http://planning.data.gov.uk) to collect data from a wide range of sources, and automatically produce correct and consistent outputs.





This new platform will enable more user-friendly services to be created which will support communities and developers to interact with local plans and planning application processes, as well as helping improve ways of working for planning officers. In turn, this should lead to a more streamlined, certain and interactive service that benefits all stakeholders. The platform is still in development, you can find out more about it here.

## Investment Zones

You will have seen the Growth Plan [announcement on 23 September](#) which referred to the creation of Investment Zones to stimulate growth. This was followed by [further policy detail](#) on 24 September.

Planning deregulation will play a part in the delivery of the zones, alongside fiscal incentives to drive investment. An expression of interest has now been issued to enable areas to put themselves forward for investment Zone status.

## OXFORDSHIRE CC HAS RULED ITSELF OUT FROM INVESTMENT ZONES

On 12<sup>th</sup> October the Leader of Oxfordshire CC wrote to the Sec. of State, Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities to explain that the county would not be involved in this initiative -

Liz Leffman explained:

*“We consider that the de-regularisation of planning controls and reductions in environmental protection, which appear to be a condition of any investment zone, are incompatible with our net zero carbon aspirations and our commitment to protect and enhance biodiversity and environmental quality, as stated in our vision.”*

The rest of the explanation is here - <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/investment-zones/>

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY NEGOTIATIONS

The National Employers on 15<sup>th</sup> July agreed unanimously to make the following one-year (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023), final offer to the unions representing the main local government NJC workforce:

- with effect from 1 April 2022, an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay points 1 and above
- with effect from 1 April 2022, an increase of 4.04 per cent on all allowances (*as listed in the 2021 NJC pay agreement circular dated 28 February 2022*)
- with effect from 1 April 2023, an increase of one day to all employees' annual leave entitlement
- with effect from 1 April 2023, the deletion of pay point 1 from the NJC pay spine.

## UPDATE -

The LGA has advised NALC that the Trade Union Side will be meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November to discuss the results of their respective consultations and to decide whether to formally accept the employers' offer. Therefore, if a pay deal is agreed upon, the National Joint Council pay circular will not be issued before 1st November.

NALC will circulate the revised pay scales for our sector following that.

#### AUDIT – WHICH COMPANY WILL BE SUPPLYING AUDIT SERVICES FOR 2022-2027?

The SAAA deadline for councils to indicate they wish to **opt out** from the External Audit Contract 2022- 2027 was **Friday 28 October 2022**.

The SAAA have suggested that town and parish councils who have not expressed the desire to opt out of the Contract will be contacted in **November 2022** to give them details of which External Auditor will be providing external audit services in Oxfordshire for the next five years.

#### CHARITIES ACT 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charities-act-2022-guidance-for-charities#other-provisions>

This link is about changes being introduced by the Charities Act 2022, which will amend the Charities Act 2011.

The changes are expected to come into force in autumn 2022, spring 2023 and autumn 2023.

An overview of the full changes can be found here - [Charities Act 2022: implementation plan](#). This includes:

- changes to how charities sell, lease or transfer land (due to come into effect in spring 2023)
- greater flexibility to make use of 'permanent endowment' – this is money or property originally meant to be held by a charity forever (due to come into effect in spring 2023); and
- changes to how charities can amend their governing documents (due to come into effect in autumn 2023)

The page provides short summaries of the changes planned to come into force in autumn 2022.

#### VILLAGE HALLS PLATINUM JUBILEE FUND – STILL NO NEWS

Still no news on the £3m fund announced for the Queens Platinum Jubilee, but if your hall is interested ACRE recommends you register your interest via a form on their website here -

<https://acre.org.uk/village-hall-grants/>



## NALC LEGAL UPDATE – OCTOBER 2022 SOME OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SOLICITORS AT NALC

### **Councillor qualification – running a B&B?**

We were asked about a scenario where a candidate wished to be co-opted onto a council and was basing their qualifying condition on sec.79 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the fact they operated a B&B in the parish. They did not live in the area. Sec.79 (1) (c) of the 1972 Act states the principal or only place of work in the area in the relevant 12-month period as a qualifying condition. Essentially it is a fact specific point as to whether the condition can be met. In the case in question, we did not deem the person being present at the B&B for roughly 12 days a month to be sufficient.

### **Councils and church property?**

We recently considered a question about a council's powers to purchase a clock located in a church tower. The church no longer wished to maintain it and wanted to transfer ownership to the council.

The limitation in sections 6 and 8 the Local Government Act 1894 is in respect of doing or funding work on property relating to the affairs of the church. Our longstanding view on the limitation is set out in Legal Briefing L01-18 (which is in the Members Area of OALC website). Our advice in respect of the clock was that the limitation did not stop the clock ownership being transferred to the council and it would no longer be a church asset.

On a similar theme, we were asked if a council could provide financial assistance to the local church being used as a “warm hub” by contributing to the church's anticipated higher heating bills. Our answer was yes. A grant towards the cost of electricity does not involve work on property so it is not caught by the 1894 Act. The council could use section 137 of the 1972 Act in the circumstances, or, for eligible councils, the general power of competence would be applicable.

### **Power to make a grant to a company?**

The question has arisen as to whether a council can make grant to a company under section 137 of the 1972 Act. The salient point is whether a council believes a grant meets the section 137 criteria. The fact the intended recipient is a profit-making company would not in itself prevent a grant being made. Councils, of course, have to act reasonably in their decision making and consider whether a grant of public funds for a particular purpose is an appropriate use of public money.

## OALC LARGER COUNCILS MEETING 26<sup>TH</sup> OCT – STREAMING MEETINGS AND MORE

Cloudy IT did a presentation about streaming of council meetings as a tool for community engagement for our larger councils. If any other councils would like a copy of their presentation do get in contact with us at [info@oalc.org.uk](mailto:info@oalc.org.uk)

Cloudy IT is launching community engagement developing apps in conjunction with young people from the communities of our council partners. They have worked with a couple of councils on this now,

and have seen some success. More information can be found here. [Projects – Cloudy \(cloudyfoundation.org.uk\)](https://cloudyfoundation.org.uk/projects)

We also had a presentation from one of the NALC solicitors with some legal updates, Gary Barker covered these issues...( if you would like a copy of the presentation drop us an email)

- **[Local Government \(Disqualification\) Act 2022](#)** new legislation concerns sexual offences which is important for co-options and ongoing councillors.
- **The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020** which requires registration to use insecticides, fungicides and herbicides for professional use.
- **Co-option** – equal number of candidate and vacancies, in this case you must co-opt both candidates (Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 Rule 5(5).
- Validity of resignation by Councillor if the Chair receives a copy of the resignation **direct** from the councillor then the resignation is valid but otherwise it is not compliant.
- **Councils and Church Property** – if a clock in a church tower is transferred to the Parish Council then it is no longer church property and can be maintained by the council. If the church is setting up a warm hub then it is legitimate for the council to support this by contributing to the increase in the electricity bill but they could not repair the church door to prevent draughts as this would be *property* relating to the affairs of the church.
- **[Civility and Respect project](#)**. NALC receive many complaints about both councillors and clerks behaviour. In conjunction with SLCC, NALC are inviting parish councils to sign up to the pledge to demonstrate a commitment to stand up to poor behaviour. The lack of mandatory training was raised as an issue.

## LAND REGISTRY WANT COMPREHENSIVE REGISTRATION OF ALL LAND BY 2030

The Land Registry has an ambition for all land being registered by 2030 but in 2019 there was still 14% that had yet to be registered, read more here -

<https://hmlandregistry.blog.gov.uk/2019/05/30/registering-land-for-more-than-150-years/>

Simon Escreet, a local expert, offers a service to town and parish councils in tracing and documenting any land that the parish believes it may own.

He sets out some of the problems they have encountered when carrying out a parish council property portfolio audit -

1. We have encountered some Council's with missing documents for a particular site and some Council's with no deeds whatsoever. In both these cases an application can, be made to the land registry but it must be accompanied with a supporting statutory declaration.
2. We have encountered some sites still in the name of the development company which has been dissolved. Other sites are in the name of a charity whose sole trustee is the Parish Council. We can help resolve these anomalies.

3. Sports fields and associated buildings are in the main leased to clubs or management committees. Invariably the leases are expired and not renewed. Further quite often the signatories have retired or died.
4. Rent review dates have passed without the appropriate mechanism for review being triggered.
5. Larger Parish Councils have grounds maintenance responsibilities with their District Council, and it is striking to see how much open spaces and grass verges that are maintained by the Parish Council that they don't own. We can help resolve these ownership issues. We have access to the land registry portal and can ascertain the names of adjoining owners.
6. We are aware of one District Council that allowed land to be occupied by a squatter for over 12 years. They subsequently issued possession proceedings but lost the case. This is the worst-case scenario.

More information here <https://lprterrier.co.uk/#CompRegistration>

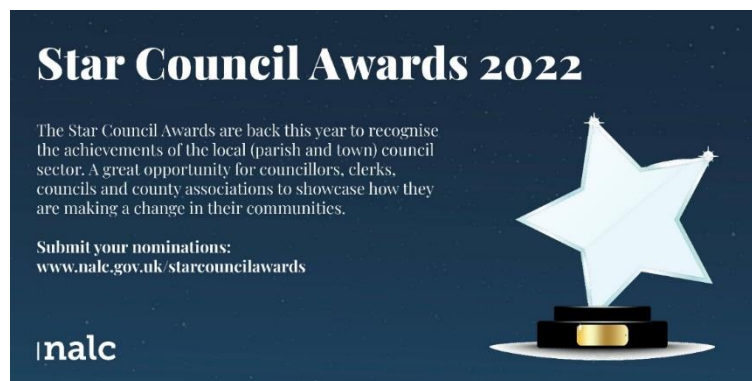
## DLUHC WELCOMES YET ANOTHER SECRETARY OF STATE

On 6th September, the Rt. Hon Simon Clarke MP was appointed as Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

On 25<sup>th</sup> October, the Rt Hon Michael Gove was appointed as Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities a role he held between 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

Here's hoping for some stability and that we won't be announcing another Secretary of State next month.

## NALC STAR COUNCIL AWARDS



The winners were announced at an online ceremony on 13<sup>th</sup> October, unfortunately Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan, Wallingford Town Council did not win the Councillor of the Year category but we are immensely proud that she was one of the five finalists in that category. A link to the ceremony is here -

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/2243-nalc-announces-the-star-council-awards-2022-winners>

NEXT (13<sup>TH</sup>) EDITION OF CHARLES ARNOLD-BAKER (WAS) DUE OUT IN OCTOBER – 20% DISCOUNT AVAILABLE

## Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has secured a 20% discount for member parish and town councils and county associations off the purchase price of the new 13th edition of Arnold-Baker on Local Council Administration.

The publication has long been established as the critical text for local councils in local government and public and administrative law. The new thirteenth edition includes:

- Complete updates with the most recent and up-to-date information regarding legislative and government departments
- New chapters on both finance and audit

The purchase price will be £164.99, reduced to £131.99 with a member discount. To purchase your copy, please contact Lewis Williams at [lewis.williams@lexisnexis.co.uk](mailto:lewis.williams@lexisnexis.co.uk) or on 01133 571 578.

### CIVILITY AND RESPECT PROJECT – HAS YOUR COUNCIL SIGNED YET?



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

### CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

The Civility and Respect Pledge is being introduced because **there is no place for bullying, harassment and intimidation within our sector.** The pledge is easy for councils to sign up to; it will enable councils to demonstrate that they are committed to standing up to poor behaviour across the sector and to driving through positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

We invite all councils to put the Civility and Respect Pledge as an agenda item on the next council agenda –

*'To pass a resolution to sign up to the civility and respect pledge'*

By signing the Pledge, your council is agreeing that the council will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles.

Sign here on the NALC website - [Civility and Respect Project \(nalc.gov.uk\)](http://nalc.gov.uk)

### Civility and Respect Project Training Courses

Training to support councillors, clerks, and other employees experiencing difficulties with bullying and harassment is planned and available, see below.

They are all virtual webinars. Please click on the links for more details:

**OALC IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR RUNNING ANY OF THESE WEBINARS, WE ARE SIGNPOSTING YOU TO THEM BUT WE ARE NOT TAKING BOOKINGS OR PAYMENT**

Course	Booking for Clerks & Staff	Booking for Councillors
Resilience and emotional intelligence; what it means in practice for clerks and council officers	<a href="https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/">https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/</a> <i>multiple dates available</i>	<a href="https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/">https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/</a> <i>multiple dates available</i>
Leadership in challenging situations dealing with challenging situations and working with others effectively	<a href="https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/">https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/</a> <i>multiple dates available</i>	<a href="https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/">https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/</a> <i>multiple dates available</i>
Respectful social media; how to deal with attacks and negative engagement	<a href="https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/">https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/</a> <i>multiple dates available</i>	<a href="https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/">https://breakthroughcomms.co.uk/civility-respect/</a> <i>multiple dates available</i>

## CLIMATE ACTION

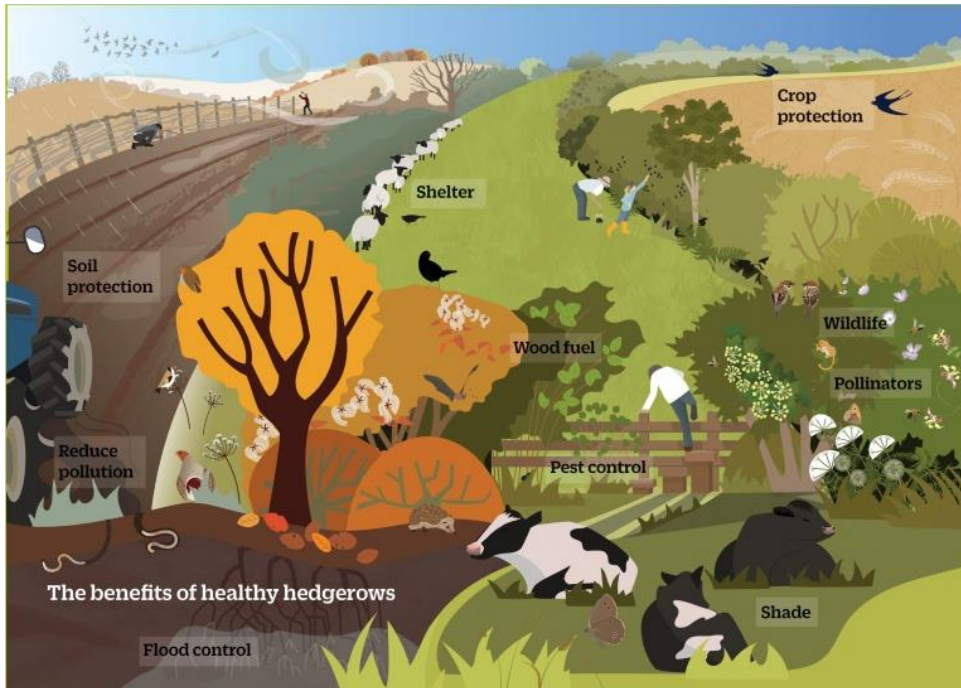
### FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY CLIMATE PROJECTS – VALE OF WHITE HORSE DC

Communities have another chance to apply for funding from our Climate Action Fund! From Monday 17 October you can apply to support grass roots projects which help to tackle climate change and raise awareness of the climate emergency.

Earlier this year, we awarded £50,000 funding to 13 projects across the district and next week the fund will open again for the new round of applications.

If you have a climate project you'd like to get off the ground, or which could benefit from some additional funding, please visit [whitehorsedc.gov.uk/grants](https://whitehorsedc.gov.uk/grants) for more details, including how to apply.

HEALTHY HEDGEROWS - SEE [WILD OXFORDSHIRE WEBSITE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION



Hedgerows are essential wildlife corridors. They link habitats such as woodlands, ponds and meadows giving food and shelter for pollinating insects, birds and mammals.

Hedgerows provide shade for cattle and sheep grazing in pasture, protect crops from wind and help to prevent soil erosion.

Hedgerows beside roads help to trap pollutants from passing traffic, and soak up flood water in streams and ditches.

Hedgerows store carbon and provide a renewable source of wood fuel.

The Climate Change Committee (CCC) advocates planting more hedgerows: [Net Zero: The UK's contribution to stopping global warming.](#) In 2007 the last hedgerow survey recorded 500,000 km of hedgerow in the UK. Environmental organisations called for planting and restoring hedgerows with a target of 40% increase by 2050 at the latest.

**What this means for Oxfordshire:**

**PLANTING 500 METRES OF HEDGEROW IN EACH PARISH EVERY YEAR FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS**

The Wild Oxfordshire Hedgerow Heroes Project from 2020 to 2022, funded by [CPRE](#), created inspiring and useful resources based on the success of volunteers planting 15 km of hedgerows in towns and villages across the county.



Download [CPRE Hedgerow Heroes Project](#) report, includes Oxfordshire Hedgerow Heroes

Read [Wild Oxfordshire Hedgerow Heroes](#) blog. Wild Oxfordshire Hedgerow Heroes include:

- [Kidlington Parish Council](#)
- [Watlington Climate Action Group](#)
- [Watlington Environment Group](#)
- [Eynsham and surrounding parishes Nature Recovery Network](#)
- [Wychwood Forest Trust](#)

There are many [funding opportunities](#) for planting hedgerows and other biodiversity enhancements.

## THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY UPDATE – MEMORIAL TREE PLANTING FOR HER MAJESTY



### THE PLATINUM JUBILEE 2022

March, the initiative will now be extended to include this full tree planting season, beginning in October 2022 and concluding in March 2023.

Press release 15<sup>th</sup> September

Following the death of Her Majesty The Queen, and the wishes of our Patron, His Majesty The King, The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative **will be extended to the end of March 2023** to give people the opportunity to plant trees in memoriam to honour Her Majesty.

As a nationwide initiative created to mark the Platinum Jubilee, The Queen's Green Canopy was due to conclude in December - the end of the Jubilee year. However, as the official tree planting season in the United Kingdom is from October to

The Queen's Green Canopy is proud to be creating a living legacy with over a million trees planted in Her Majesty's name across the nation during the first planting season, October 2021 to March 2022. The extension of the QGC initiative will build on this legacy and serve as a lasting tribute to Her Majesty's extraordinary service to her country and her people.

The interactive map created by The Queen's Green Canopy to showcase the planting projects across the United Kingdom will also continue to the end of March 2023, giving people an opportunity to be part of this special legacy.

Alongside the inspiring floral tributes being left outside Royal Palaces, people can also gift a tree in memoriam in honour of Her Majesty, with trees to be planted in schools and deprived urban areas across the United Kingdom.

For more information on how to get involved please visit [www.queensgreencanopy.org](http://www.queensgreencanopy.org)

To gift a tree in honour of Her Majesty please visit <https://shop.queensgreencanopy.org/>

## MORE TREES...

This autumn, International Tree Foundation is supporting Oxfordshire Trees Collaborate in a Garden Tree Giveaway.

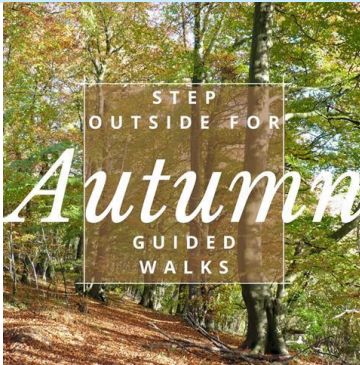
Oxfordshire Trees Collaborate is a partnership of community tree planting groups and supporting organisations working together to encourage appropriate tree planting in the county.

We have a variety of free saplings to give away for you to plant in your garden. In order to help you choose an appropriate tree, we have put together this simple garden tree guide. It offers practical considerations and planting guidelines as well as a seasonal photo guide to native species suitable for small, medium and large gardens (all of which are available through the giveaway but can also be purchased at low cost from local nurseries).

Orders have to be placed by 23 November **using** [this online form](#).

More information here - [Garden tree giveaway — International Tree Foundation](#)

## AONB'S AND CLIMATE CHANGE



### Cotswold National Landscape autumn guided walks

The Cotswold Voluntary Wardens offer a wide range of free guided walks across the Cotswolds. Including walks at the weekend for those who can't get out during the week.

Autumn highlights include woodland walks to take in the changing colours, a walk to the Rollright Stones, and walks with splendid Cotswold views! Highlights include:

- [A RAMBLE TO THE ROLLRIGHTS](#), starting at Chipping Norton Town Hall, Sun 20 Nov, 9.30am
- [Woods in Autumn: Cranham and Sheepscombe](#), Weds 23 Nov, starting at Cranham Common, 10am

PLUS: a new self-guided walking route has been published around Greystones Nature Reserve in Bourton-on-the-Water. Flat, stile free, and suitable for pushchairs and off road mobility scooters in good ground conditions (NB can be muddy after rain and in winter). [Click here for the new route](#).

Each of the three AONB's which cover some of Oxfordshire have their own Climate Strategies:

1. Cotswold National Landscape, adopted Feb 2022 - [CNL-Climate-Change-Strategy-Adopted-Feb-2022.pdf \(cotswoldsaonb.org.uk\)](#)
2. Chilterns AONB [Combating climate change - Chilterns AONB | Chilterns AONB](#)



3. North Wessex Downs AONB's Management Plan has a separate chapter on Biodiversity here - [Biodiversity - North Wessex Downs AONB](#)

## CONSULTATION

### HAVE YOU SEEN WEST OXFORDSHIRE'S NEW COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PAGE?

[On the page you can ...](#)

- See some different examples of what we mean by community infrastructure
- Tell us what you think is needed in your local area
- Play around with our allocation game and tell us what sort of things you would choose to prioritise
- Find out more about developer contributions and how the Council secures them for the benefit of local communities
- View some examples of different projects already delivered in your area and other schemes which are on the horizon

As part of this, a 4-week consultation is taking place on the Council's 'Developer Contributions' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) from 17 October – 14 November 2022 with a simple online questionnaire making it quick and easy for you to respond. Have a look around and let us know what you think - <https://communityinfrastructure.commonplace.is/>

## EMPLOYMENT BRIEFING



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 to provide specialist employment advice free of charge to our member councils. OALC pay for this, because we believe it is an important and valuable service to our members.

Chris writes this month about what employment law changes might result from stripping out EU legislation.-

### **The Future of UK Employment Law – The EU Law Revocation and Reform Bill and how it affects Town and Parish Councils**

The above proposed legislation has attracted a lot of headlines, as the Government plans to “strip away” EU legislation affecting employment in the UK. Speculation is that it will particularly target the;

- Working Time Regulations
- Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE)
- Part Time and Fixed Term Regulations
- Agency Workers Regulations 2020
- GDPR

The Bill is expected to become law on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, following which “all EU derived legislation will be revoked”. The Government’s intention is it will remove the primacy of EU law in the UK. EU Case Law will no longer apply and Courts will revert to previous UK Case Law. Furthermore the Government will be able to “assimilate current EU legislation into UK law”, so that it now becomes the instrument of UK legislators/Parliament, enabling them to amend and rewrite it.

The effect of assimilation will mean that individual ministers will have the power to change and amend law with very limited scrutiny by Members of Parliament.

However, the Bill has created a lot of speculation about which pieces of law will change. The following are currently at the top of the list:

1. **TUPE.** New draft legislation is intended to simplify the current consultation requirements, so that Councils do not need to conduct extensive consultation before a transfer date. Also, the legislation is expected to allow Councils to harmonise the terms and conditions of Employees who have been transferred. Currently such Employees contracts are protected, and cannot be changed to simply make them the same as other Council staff.
2. **Collective Redundancies** – new legislation could increase the current requirement to conduct a 30-day consultation process from 20 staff, up to a higher figure.
3. **The Working Time Regulations** – The automatic right to carry over unused leave from one year to another for Employees who have been on long term sick leave may go. Also, holiday pay could be based on contracted hours, rather than an Employee’s average weekly wage, which currently includes overtime. On Call and travelling time may not be taken into account when calculating working time for the purpose of determining when breaks need to be taken.
4. **Discrimination legislation.** It is unlikely that there will be any significant change to discrimination legislation, as the UK has been at the forefront of developing such legal protections. However, compensation for successful discrimination claims could be capped, rather than the current unlimited provision.
5. **Data Protection – GDPR.** The UK Government has strongly indicated that the requirements that the 2018 Data Protection Regulations created will be revoked.

- 6. Agency staff** - Councils who use Agency staff currently have to pay them the same rate of pay as their own staff, after they have been working for the Council for 12 weeks or more. It is also expected that this requirement will be revoked.

The date of the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 has been set as the deadline for these changes, however, there is also a provision to postpone any of the above changes until 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2026.

Taking into account the enormity of this task and the amount of legislation that would have to be written before that deadline, postponements seem almost inevitable.

#### 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](mailto:p.d.solutions@zen.co.uk)

#### NALC EVENTS

NALC puts on a monthly online training session and is looking for feedback from anyone who has attended one of these sessions. The survey closes on 4<sup>th</sup> November. The link to the survey is here -

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5BVSPZP> .

---

#### **Empowering Communities**

7th November 2022 — 10.00 – 16:00

Communities across the country need to be empowered. The government's levelling up white paper recognises the vital role local (parish and town) councils have in shaping those communities. There is a pressing need to create more councils, give them more powers to make a change and more funding to support those changes. The time for empowerment is now.

Joining one of the biggest one-day hybrid conferences in the local council sector will allow attendees to engage in a wide-ranging programme focusing on the hottest topics in the sector, such as civility and respect, climate change, community resilience, health, housing, levelling up, and representation. You will have opportunities to put your questions to speakers and panelists, visit the sector-specific exhibition, network with your peers, and share good practices.

Speakers: Jon Alexander (New Citizenship Project), Cllr Sara Butler (Mayor of Frome), Paul Hoey (Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd), Andrew Maliphant (The Community Works) and Miriam Turner (Friends of the Earth)

**\* Due to strike action on 7 November by the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, our [Empowering Communities](#) hybrid conference will now be held online only\***

**The good news is the event will still go ahead (you can still book your places [here](#)).** There is a brilliant line-up of speakers on the big issues facing communities, from health and well-being to housing, civility in public life to levelling up, and diversity to resilience.

Buy virtual tickets here [EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES \(VIRTUAL TICKETS ONLY\) Tickets, Mon 7 Nov 2022 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](#)

### **Local councils and community outreach**

14 December 2022 — 12.00 – 13:15

In the last two decades, there have been numerous attempts to reconcile public service delivery locally with the needs of citizens. However, this has not always been achieved. The landscape of public service delivery remains complex, coordinated through a mixture of public, private, and voluntary organizations.

In the same time frame, the local (parish and town) council sector has grown, with around 300 new local councils. Local councils are integral to vibrant and thriving communities with a wide range of powers but limited duties. Increasingly principal authorities are devolving services to local councils, but harnessing this potential is difficult due to financial, logistical, and power barriers.

Join us to learn more about how local councils can overcome these obstacles, engage in meaningful community outreach, and improve local service delivery.

Tickets here [LOCAL COUNCILS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH Tickets, Wed 14 Dec 2022 at 12:00 | Eventbrite](#)

### **ILCA, FILCA AND CILCA**

**ILCA**

Introduction to Local Council Administration

**The Essential Knowledge**

What is ILCA?

The Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) is the online partner to FILCA. The aim of the online study course is to provide an introduction to the work of a local council, its councillors and the clerk. The online programme can be studied in your own time whilst you find your feet in your new role. The course is in five sections, each like FILCA, should take 2 hours and the cost is £120 +VAT.

More information here - <https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/ilca/>



What is FILCA?

OALC's Finance Officer Karen Wheeler has successfully completed this new online finance course and writes about how it went. I'm pleased to say Karen did pass!

We would recommend all those with RFO in their job title or councillors with an interest in local council finance to consider this course. The online course costs £120 +VAT. More information here - <https://www.slcc.co.uk/qualification/filca/>

*"A comprehensive course made up of 5 modules allowing you to take them over a period of time to suit you e.g. 1 a month. Each module can be done in just an hour or 2 but, there is a lot of content and to get the full benefit of the course content you may wish to read in more detail and review the reference material provided. You can also pause the modules so if you only have half an hour you can make a start and revisit when you have more time. It also allows you to review as many times as you like before taking the assessment which is at the end of each module.*

*The course covers the basics but also more complex considerations when managing public money on behalf of the Parish Council. The course covers all that is required for performing the role of RFO but, also very worthwhile knowledge for clerks and councillors alike to have an understanding of why the rules need to be followed and the various regulation sitting behind the processes and internal controls."*

Our current series of Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) mentoring sessions is part way through and continues every other month until March 2023.



CiLCA – Well done, Lucy Blake, Didcot Town Council.

Lucy has gained the Certificate in Local Council Administration, and managed it without official mentoring as well. Even more kudos! Lucy works for Didcot Town Council where the Clerk is extremely experienced and supports her staff to undertake relevant training and qualifications, setting a really good example of professionalism in the sector.

## OALC TRAINING PROGRAMME

1. **Local Council Award Scheme FREE TRAINING SESSION**

23 November 2022 — 12.00 – 13:15



The Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS) is an accreditation scheme for the local (parish and town) sector to celebrate the successes of councils and provide a mechanism for continuous improvement and development. To ensure all local councils feel confident in applying to the scheme, NALC is hosting this event to provide insights into submitting an award-winning application for each award level. Increasing your chances of achieving the award level hoped for. This event is open to clerks, councillors and council staff interested in the scheme.

Speakers: Charlotte Eisenhart, Anders Hanson and Lisa Etchell (NALC)

Tickets here [LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME - PREPARING AN AWARD WINNING APPLICATION Tickets, Wed 23 Nov 2022 at 12:00 | Eventbrite](#)

## **2. Training for councillors, and clerks too.**

The majority of OALC training is delivered via Zoom although we will have one or two face to face training events this year depending on the topic, the location and the trainer.

Our Zoom training courses are limited to 14- 20 participants, depending on the trainer. We do training **not** webinars and our trainers are always experienced and knowledgeable practitioners, they know their subject and they know this level of local government. Our courses fill up quickly and as a consequence we often have waiting lists.

**Bookings close one week before the date of the course. When bookings have closed we will then send to all those booked on the course the Zoom joining instructions, the presentation (where appropriate) and any other papers. We ask that you confirm your attendance, no shows are annoying and a waste of taxpayer's money especially when there is a waiting list.**

Please note our revised cancellation and late payment policy which is on the website

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

date	subject	time	trainer	location
November 8 <sup>th</sup>	Councillor Fundamentals	10am -12 noon	Kim Bedford	Zoom <b>4 places</b>
November 21st	Planning	10am -1pm	Phil Shaw	West Oxfordshire DC offices Witney <b>16 places</b>

Next year's training programme is being finalized. Details will go up on our website and we will let you know when that happens.

## VACANCIES

If your council has a vacancy or anticipates having a vacancy OALC has a number of resources which can assist your council:

- A template for the advert to ensure your council provides all the necessary information and has thought about a job and person specification
- Information on salary scales
- A step by step guide to recruitment
- Copies of generic job contract
- NALC publication *Being a Good Employer* (in members area of the website)
- Access to OALC HR/Employment consultant for advice or an independent job evaluation (chargeable service)
- Library of employment briefings (in members area of the website)

### PARISH COUNCIL CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER VACANCY

#### Claydon with Clattercote Parish Council

Working from home

Hours: 15 per month

Salary: NJC Scale LC1 or 2 scale points 5 to 21 (£10.04 to £13.78 per hour), starting point depending upon experience, CiLCA qualification and transferable skills. 8% pension contribution subject to employee making 1% contribution.

#### Job Description

The Clerk provides administrative and clerical support to the Council and, as the Responsible Financial Officer, will be required to manage the Council's finances. Duties will include:

- Managing the meetings of the council meetings and trustee meetings including preparing the agenda, taking the minutes, monitoring actions and decisions
- Ensuring planning applications are considered, and submitting responses to the District Council
- Managing the Parish Council's finances, preparation of accounts and reconciliation, payroll and PAYE, payment of invoices, banking, end of year accounts, submission of accounts for external audit, VAT reclaim, preparing for budget review and precept
- Dealing with a variety of correspondence and public notices

#### Qualities

You will be required to work from home and attend evening meetings on the second Thursday of every other month. You must be computer literate, have some administrative experience and able to maintain accurate accounts.

Candidates must possess a high standard of oral and written communication skills, be proficient in Microsoft Office software (particularly Word and Excel), be capable of working independently and have the ability to deal with a range of issues.

**How to apply:**

To apply or for further information please e-mail [cwccclerk@outlook.com](mailto:cwccclerk@outlook.com)



**Littlemore Parish Council**

**Position of Parish Council Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer**

Littlemore Parish Council is seeking a highly motivated, committed, professional for the position of **Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)** (25 hours /week, flexible working).

Littlemore is a pleasant Parish on the southern border of Oxford City which includes an attractive conservation area, a Science Park and expanding business premises, two small green spaces and two parks that provide children's play facilities. There are approximately 7,000 residents currently facing the challenges associated with new housing developments.

The Parish Council has 13 Councillors (3 vacancies) and a precept of £98,284. The Clerk line manages the Assistant Clerk, two Maintenance Team members and the Editor of the bi-monthly Littlemore Local newsletter. There are three Committees and five Working Groups.

The **Parish Clerk** will be responsible for all day-to-day management, administrative support and advice to the Council on legal, personnel, planning and regulatory matters related to Council business. He/she takes instructions from the Council as a body, with the Council taking responsibility for all decisions. The position is home based, requiring attendance at Council meetings on two evenings each month, and occasional day-time meetings and on-site visits. The successful candidate(s) will have previous management experience, excellent interpersonal, communication and organisational skills, ability to work independently and competency in using Microsoft Office (primarily Word and Excel).

The **Responsible Financial Officer** will manage the Council's financial affairs. He/she will have experience of financial/ accounting practices including receipts and payments bookkeeping, VAT, and the ability to prepare budgets, accounts, manage the Council's assets, insurance, links to payroll, audit processes and use of accounting software.



Applicants should hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) or be prepared to gain this qualification within 18 months of appointment. Experience in Government and formal Committee work would be an advantage, although the Council also welcomes applicants with transferrable skills. The Council supports continuous professional development.

The starting salary SCP LC2 Grade 19-25 (FTE £25,927 - £30,095 pro rata, £13.48 - £15.64 /per hour, pay award pending) will be dependent on skills and experience. A Pension scheme and homeworking allowance are payable. Office equipment is also provided.

For further information please visit [www.littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk) . If you would like to discuss this opportunity, please contact the Chairman at [chair@littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:chair@littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**The closing date for applications is Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November.**

### **South Stoke Parish Council – Clerk & RFO**

#### **Vacancy for Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)**

The Parish of South Stoke is located in the District of South Oxfordshire, within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with an Electoral Roll circa 400.

South Stoke Parish Council is a small active Council that seeks an organised, enthusiastic person to take on the post of Clerk to the Council and RFO. We are however willing to consider applicants who would prefer to take on a more limited set of responsibilities as we appreciate that the full Clerk and RFO role is a substantial commitment.

The full role is part time, up to 35 hours per month. Working mainly from home, the hours of work are flexible except for attendance at evening meetings on a monthly basis. Our Clerk's pay scale is typically NJC Scale LC2 (18-23). Salary is dependent upon qualifications and experience.

Applicants should have previous experience in a similar role or demonstrate transferrable skills and be able to have a flexible approach to their working week. Knowledge of local government legislation would be an advantage and ideally the postholder will possess or would be willing to obtain a Certificate in Local Government Administration (CiLCA). Training will be available.

To request an application form or if you have any further questions or want to discuss the role, please contact Victor Meyer (Councillor): [victor.meyer@southstoke.org.uk](mailto:victor.meyer@southstoke.org.uk)

The closing date for receipt of applications is the close of business on **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022.**