

Eynsham Parish Council

Chairman's report 2018 – 2019

This has been a further difficult year for the Parish Council. The reports I have written for the last two years reflect the treatment of the village by both Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council and there has been little improvement in the last twelve months. Concerns regarding both the expansion of the village to the west and north and the Park & Ride on the A40 have been largely ignored and meetings to address excellent points raised by residents have not proved to be productive. After months of chasing, our local Member of Parliament has finally agreed to help arrange a meeting with Chris Grayling and so I hope this will help.

Neighbourhood Plan and Western and Northern Extensions

What we hope will be the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan has been completed and submitted to WODC to progress to examination. WODC have remained less than helpful, but I hope the end is in sight. A new Inspector has been appointed and we await her comments.

Like many in the village we remain deeply concerned at the manner in which WODC have dealt with the consultation regarding the Northern Development. It is clearly very flawed and has been constructed to obtain the result they are seeking. To try to overcome some of this the Parish Council is now dealing with Grosvenors direct and whilst not perfect this is at least enabling us to put forward our views and they appear to be listening.

I regret to report that we have made no progress with WODC regarding answers to the many questions raised by residents at the Public Meeting held in December 2016 but we continue to press. I would thank those who wrote following my report last year. Please keep sending me copies.

The A40 and Park & Ride

Little has changed on this subject in the last twelve months. Many of you wrote in to the consultation and I thank you for all your support. The long delayed "Business Case" for central Government has still not been produced and without evidence to the contrary we continue with our view that this is a vanity project for OCC and a complete waste of money.

OCC have also now submitted a request for funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund to further tinker with the A40 between Witney and Eynsham. They appear to have no long term vision and we look on with envy at the plans being promoted by other towns and cities to provide mass transport systems for the future.

Anti-Social Behaviour

We have seen a steady rise in various activities over the past two years. We are not immune from the spread of drug related activities across the County as a result of which we have continued to lock car parks nightly and one on a permanent basis, for review with the Police. I would ask you all to report activities that give you concern to the Police. They often say to us that there have been no incidents although we are very well aware that this is not the case. However, I would urge care if you are picking up drug related materials. Better to report what you have seen and registration numbers of vehicles are very helpful.

Sports Pavilion & Bartholomew Room

Plans to replace the pavilion and upgrade the Bartholomew Room continue. Professionals have now been appointed for both projects and initial plans developed. We are at the early stages of looking for grants and will keep residents informed of progress in the Eynsham News. Both schemes are very exciting and should provide facilities for many generations to come.

Thornbury & Hazeldene

Both these schemes are developments by Taylor Wimpey. Some of the end product at Hazeldene is reported to be of a poor standard and we are aware of concerns regarding fencing and planting. The roads have yet to be adopted, after seven years, and OCC and the developer continue to blame each other.

Thornbury has been a nightmare from day one. Residents have had to endure daily breeches of planning conditions. Help from both OCC and WODC has been poor and clearly the state of the roads leading to the A40 gives major causes for concern. Lorries to and from the site rat run through the village and much of the preparatory work, which should have been undertaken prior to work on site, has still not been completed.

After nine months of complaining OCC & WODC have finally agreed to a meeting with the Parish Council and Taylor Wimpey. The date has yet to be agreed and in the interim please continue to report concerns on both sites.

Wharf Stream Way

The final work of art has now been installed in the field close to the lock. This consists of a lovely place to rest at the end of your walk. I would like to thank Will Glanfield, the artist, for all his work and the team who assisted him with the installation.

Joan Stonham

I have reported over a number of years the help Joan has given the Parish Council with both Eynsham News and our web site. It is therefore with great pleasure that I am able to record that at a ceremony, in Oxford Town Hall, all her work was recognised with a High Sherriff Award. We are delighted that our proposal for this honour was accepted and would thank her for all her efforts over many years.

Finally

The Parish Council comes to the end of its four year term in May. A number of members have decided not to stand for re-election and I would thank them all for their work, in some cases over many years. I would not wish to single out individuals but I would particularly record my thanks to Dennis for all his work on planning and Richard for the hours he has spent on the Neighbourhood Plan.

The continuing support from the village is very much appreciated. These are difficult times for Eynsham and I know many of you are very concerned about the future. Please keep us advised of your thoughts on the matters raised in this report and anything else which we may be able to help with. When we form the new Council in May we will have a number of vacancies, so if you feel that you have the time and skills to assist then please drop me an email or give me a call.

Gordon Beach