

**Annual report by Charles Mathew, Oxfordshire County Councillor for the division of Eynsham**

Another year has passed and inevitably it has produced some repeat concerns as well as some new issues. I am indebted to the Parish Council and my fellow Councillors for all their help and cooperation in trying to ensure the quality of life in all respects remains superior for those living in the Lower Windrush Valley. As your direct contact with Oxfordshire County Council, I have become familiar with the issues, which constantly occur over the roads, planning and more recently lighting, inter alia.

I remain adamant that the plans for the 'improvement' of the A40 lack substance and have no faith in a Park and Ride for 1,000 cars on a road being used by an average of 32,000 a day nor in the bus lanes. HiF1 amounts to £35 million and is awaiting the submission of a business case to Defra and the submission of Planning to OCC for the P and R. HiF 2 was submitted to Defra last week and covers the dual carriaging to the P and R roundabout (before the Evenlode Inn), the widening of bridges between Eynsham and Dukes Cut and the bus lane on the Southern side- estimated cost £105m.

I have spoken twice to the Local Growth Board, who have supported both these projects and implored that alternative transport is examined to cure the ills of the A40 but I have received no response....sadly. I still believe that smartcarding the Tollbridge, building an extension from Peartree roundabout to the A40 to take all east bound traffic going north prior to the Wolvercote roundabout and the reincarnation of Cassington road on a dual basis would be far more productive in itself than these planned projects or even better an alternative means of transport from Carterton to Oxford via Witney and Eynsham.

I do have a meeting next week with the new Chief Executive of OCC, Yvonne Rees, when I will expound my views strongly. I know many of you agree with me and I am unable to understand why OCC persist in ignoring the importance of the A40 both to local people and to travellers on a mission beyond Oxford. I also have recently had success in changing the OCC Core Minerals and Waste policy 2031 by pointing out the fallacy in their calculations; this has resulted in sharp sand and gravel being reduced to 530,000 tonnes in the North of the County (West Oxfordshire, Cherwell and North Oxford) in the years to 2031 (instead of 1.405m tonnes previously ) compared with 3.201m.tonnes in the South of the County. These figures will clarify the core strategy agreed earlier of equal distribution of the Oxfordshire need for sharp sand and gravel between North and South by the conclusion of this plan (530,000 tonnes is equivalent to under twenty one month's activity at the normal washing plant, which runs at about 300,000 tonnes a year maximum).

Discussion continues about the new infrastructures needed for servicing the new housing in Eynsham. The next public meetings on the Garden Village is the site walk on Wednesday 15th May- meet at the Evenlode pub 2.30pm, two discussion days at the Witney Lakes resort on the 16th (9.00-5.30pm) and 17th (9.00-5.00pm), followed by a public exhibition at the Scout Hall on the Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> (11.30-3.30). (Consult Astrid.Harvey@westoxon.gov.uk or jas@kevinmurrayassociates.com for further information). Currently it is envisaged that there will be one Primary school for two forms built West of Eynsham and two/three forms on one/two the Garden Village site - when the mix of housing is available, this will become clearer. A Secondary school to house years seven and eight as part of Bartholomew School is presently foreseen at the Garden Village. This is also subject to the approval of the Regional School Inspectorate. Likewise discussion continues on the plans for the future of the Eynsham Surgery.

I continue to work with the parties on all plans to ensure that the result will protect Eynsham as a rural community of character and will result in a development of stature.

I strongly support the Parish Council in its current concerns with Taylor Wimpey at Thornbury Road and find the current situation abominable; Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council must ensure that the site planning conditions are honoured.

I look forward to working with Eynsham in the coming year. Please contact me if you feel that I can help.

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