



Focus on Parishes with Cllr Freddie van Mierlo (Chalgrove and Watlington)

May 2023

Welcome to my monthly update, shared in the first week of every month.

Upcoming meetings:

- 15th May: Lewknor Annual Parish Meeting
- 16th May: Stonor with Pishill Annual Parish Meeting
- 16th May: Nettlebed Parish Council
- 17th May: Swyncombe Parish Meeting

***** **OCC NEWS** *****

Councillor priority fund: Applications to the councillor priority fund have reopened. The application process has slightly changed, requiring an online application and an email/letter of support of the councillor. Eligible organisations include, registered charities, not for profit companies, community or voluntary groups, and parish councils/meetings. Grants cannot be made to individuals, profit making organisations and private limited companies. Projects seeking funding must be deliverable by March 2025.

Electric Vehicle Chargers: OCC is set to receive £3.6 million to rollout EV charging points across the county. The priority will be to provide charging points in rural areas and where off-street home charging is not possible. Community organisations (e.g., parishes, village halls) may be able to take ownership of the charging points to provide them as a community asset and deliver a revenue stream. Further details will follow.

Air Quality Strategy: An OCC air quality strategy (long term) and 'route map' (short term) has been developed. While monitoring of air quality is a district responsibility, the Environment Act 2021 places a responsibility on the County Council to support districts and reduce air pollution. An information campaign will follow, which will include information on indoor pollution and log burning fires.

Social care: OCC runs a 'shared lives' carer scheme whereby approved Oxfordshire residents, with space in their own home, care for a person with learning difficulties, mental health problems or other needs that make independent living difficult. Carers can offer to provide one-off respite care, or longer-term care and everything in between. The scheme has been running successfully since 2020. More information for anyone interested can be found [here](#). A scheme to match older residents with a spare room with younger people looking for alternative accommodation called [Homeshare](#) also runs as a way to provide older people with additional support / company. Both schemes are examples of the 'Oxfordshire Way' to allow people to live independently in their communities.

Verge cutting and 'no mow May': Oxfordshire County Council is again supporting 'no mow May' and encouraging participation. Due to the amount of verge cutting required, OCC has an updated maintenance schedule to prioritise biodiversity. However, OCC is not able to put away its mowers for a full month and still meet its schedule of work, meaning some areas will be cut in May. Verges that need to be cut to maintain public safety will be cut back multiple times if necessary.

Household waste strategy: [Consultation](#) closed on HWRC strategy 2023-2043. The strategy replaces the 2015 Conservative HWRC strategy which aimed to close local sites and deliver 3 or 4 super sites. The new strategy aims to retain the current 7 sites. The strategy encourages re-use and repair, rather than disposal in the first instance.

Hydrogen powered fire engines: Oxfordshire is taking part in a pioneering [project](#) to develop hydrogen powered fire engines

*******GRANTS AND COST OF LIVING*******

Sustainable Warmth Grants: Funding for residents without mains gas, and household incomes of less than £30,000 (or in receipt of means-tested benefits) is still [available](#).

Grants for care workers: Cost of living grants remain [available](#) for care workers.

*******PARISH ROUND-UP*******

Not all parishes are covered – below is a selection of the main updates.

Chalgrove

- **High street safety:** A meeting will be held with officers to review parking and traffic safety on the high street.

Ewelme

- **Flooding:** Several sites have been recorded with officers as areas of flood risk and ponding on the road for assessment.

Lewknor

- **Manor Close land gap:** I am chasing officers up to find out the status of the situation.

Watlington

- **Road closure & Charlotte Coxe Trust:** Work by Thames Water to reconnect 33 High Street has been completed. OCC granted Thames Water permission quickly, and responded rapidly to reports during the road closure of buses unable to pass, working with the bus company and Thames Water to resolve the situation and avoid the work not being completed again.
- **Red Kite to Cuxham Road connection:** Work to open the connection between Red Kite View and Cuxham Road is continuing. The developer (Bloor Homes) will deliver the road/pavement improvements needed to make the route safe. This process requires OCC to review the plans, grant the developer the legal right to work on the highway, and for the developer to then commission and perform the work. OCC recognises the importance of the route and is working to streamline the process so that work can be completed in the next 3-6 months.
- **Potholes:** I have flagged to officers the poor state of Hill Road (by the car park), Spring Lane, and Britwell Road. The majority of the defects reported should be fixed by 18th May.
- **Cuxham Road flooding:** Officers are assessing the situation with a view to resolving the current flooding / ponding issue.

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS MAY 2023 FROM CLLR KEVIN BULMER

GENERAL OCC REPORT

OCC £336,000 SPENDING PLANS FOR ANPR CAMERAS

A recent Oxford Mail report states householders have accused OCC of being “out of touch” after a Freedom of Information request revealed OCC plans to spend £336,000 of taxpayers’ money on replacing Low Traffic Neighbourhood bollards in Oxford with surveillance cameras. The council intends to enforce the existing LTN restrictions in Cowley through the introduction of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, which will issue motorists a fixed penalty notice unless they have an exemption. In the context of the recent 5% increase in Council Tax, some may wonder whether council spending is in line with residents’ expectations.

OXFORD TRAFFIC FILTERS (THE FOUR SECTOR PLAN)

The ‘Traffic Filter’ scheme that will divide Oxford into four sectors for traffic purposes continues to generate controversy. Conservatives are continuing to press that the consultation is re-run.

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE STRATEGY 2023-2043 – HAVE YOUR SAY

OCC has seven Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). These centres are very popular, with around a million visits every year. They take in around 40,000 tonnes of waste, and 65.5% of which is recycled. The HWRCs are an important part of the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership's plan to reduce waste, increase recycling, and decrease the amount of waste going into landfills. The HWRCs accept a wide range of materials, which helps to increase recycling. However, the council is careful to consider budgetary constraints and is developing a new HWRC strategy. The results of the recent public consultation are awaited.

UPDATE ON 20MPH SIGN-CHANGING EXERCISE – ‘MINDSET’ NOT ENFORCEMENT

As previously reported, OCC is spending £8m on switching 30mph signs to 20mph signs where requested by town or parish councils. Many such councils have requested the change as it is funded by OCC, and they consider they have nothing to lose. Applications have now topped 200. However, some parish councils are having second thoughts when they realise the £8m could have been spent on road repairs, which have more obvious benefits, and that the 20mph limit is very unlikely to be enforced as the police have objected to the change in most instances. The likely lack of police enforcement was acknowledged in OCC’s press release on 27th April, which stated: *“While the council has been working alongside Thames Valley Police, the emphasis is on drivers adhering to the new limits through a change of mindset, rather than enforcement. It is hoped that as 20mph areas become more common, breaking the limit will become socially unacceptable for drivers.”* There is also a concern that people will be lulled into a false sense of security. Data from the Cuxham trial show that the introduction of a 20mph limit resulted in a very small average speed reduction of between 3 and 4 mph, with over 50% of traffic exceeding the 20mph limit.

OCC PAID OVER £350K IN PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS

OCC has paid out £350,920 in personal injury compensation over the last year. There were 135 personal injury claims submitted to the council from April 2022 to April 2023. Amongst the leading causes were falls over carriageway potholes and uneven footways. The figures were released after LegalExpert.co.uk submitted a Freedom of Information request.

OCC POTHOLE REPAIRS

This is still an area highways are failing on, which given the discretionary expenditure above is unacceptable.

ROAD WORKS

The recent roadworks in Streatley and Goring have shown that not sufficient thought is being given to coordination of roadworks and cross border communication seems to be wanting.

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Title	District Councillor Report
Authors	Maggie Filipova-Rivers
Meeting	Goring-on-Thames Parish Council Meeting – 12 th June 2023

PLACE HOLDER



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee of the
Goring-on-Thames Parish Council**

Tuesday 14th March 2023 at 18.30 at Gardiner Pavilion

Public Session – Prior to the Start of the Meeting

MoP1: spoke regarding the Jubilee Garden and the tariff/licence for the Bowls Court.

Members Present:

Chair Cllr J Emerson (JE)

Members

Cllr A Smith (AS)

Cllr C Ratcliff (CR)

Officers Present:

Clerk Sarah Edmunds (SE)

Public and Press: At least one MoP

Meeting started 18:30



22.43.1. To receive apologies for absence and to approve the reasons given. (LGA 1972 s85(1))

Bryan Urbick , unanimously approved

22.43.2. Declarations of Interests (LA 2011 s31)

Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for dispensations that accord the Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

None

22.43.3. To consider requests for Dispensations [LA 2011 s33]

None

22.43.4. To approve minutes of the meeting of 14th February 2023

Appendix A

Unanimously approved & signed.

22.43.5. To approve finalised payment list 1st -28th February 2023

Appendix B

Unanimously approved.

22.43.6. To note receipts 1st – 28th February 2023

Appendix C

Unanimously noted.

22.43.7. To note the reconciled bank account & reserves balances as at 28th Feb 2023

Appendix D

Unanimously noted.

22.43.8. To discuss/note movements from the EMR to expenditure budgets

Appendix E

The committee declined to update the budget, contrary to advice from the Clerk / RFO, apart from the Christmas tree costs from the EMR and balancing the hedge/grass cutting nominal codes.

22.43.9. Items for next Agenda

Options & recommendations for savings accounts to take advantage of interest rates & finance protection schemes.

22.43.10. To confirm the time and date of the next meeting:11th April 2023

Move the start time to 18.30 in future but reserve the right to start at 18.00 if required. The exact start time of meetings will be stated on the agenda published in advance.

Meeting Closed: 19:18



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee
of the Goring-on-Thames Parish Council**

Tuesday 2nd May 2023 at 19:30, Gardiner Pavilion

Public Session – Prior to the Start of the Meeting

None.

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr S Lofthouse (SL)
Members	Cllr L Reavill (LR)
	Cllr J Emerson (JE)

Officers Present:

Assistant Clerk	Mrs L White (LW)
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Public and Press: 0

Meeting started 19:30

22.50.1. To receive apologies for absence and to approve the reasons given. [LGA 1972 s85(1)]

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Cllrs Smith, Ratcliff & Brooker.

Resolved: The reasons for absence of all councillors were approved unanimously.

Cllr Wills was also absent.

22.50.1.1. To Record Councillor Substitutions, allowed under the Terms of Reference of this Committee.

None.

22.50.2. Declarations of Interests [LA 2011 s31]

None.

22.50.3. To consider requests for Dispensations [LA 2011 s33]

None.



22.50.4. To approve the minutes of previous committee meetings [LA 1972 Sch 12. Para 41(1)]

22.50.4.1. Meeting held on 18th April 2023

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed.

22.50.5. To consider applications and approve response to planning authority.

22.50.5.1. P23/S1251/HH – Cricketers Cottage, High Street, Goring, Reading, RG8 9BB

Two storey extension to the rear and eastern side of the dwelling. Erection of a glazed link between new extension and existing garage.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, to submit the response NO OBJECTIONS and attach the General Planning Informative.

22.50.5.2. P23/S1315/HH - 15 Milldown Avenue, Goring, RG8 0AS

Removal of existing vertical hung tiles to front & side elevation and replacement with horizontal cedar cladding with new insulation.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, to submit the response NO OBJECTIONS subject to the wildlife officer being content this will not adversely affect any roosting bats and attach the General Planning Informative.

22.50.5.3. P23/S0208/FUL - Cedar Wood House, Elvendon Road, Goring, RG8 0LP – **AMENDED**

*Demolition of the existing dwelling house and construction of a replacement dwelling and garage including improvements to existing vehicular access. Amended plans to remove basement and alter roof received 10 March 2023
GPC Previous Response: NO OBJECTIONS.*

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, to submit no further response.

22.50.5.4. P23/S1366/HH - 2 Valley Close, Goring, RG8 0AN

First floor extension and alterations including timber cladding and demolition of conservatory.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, to submit the response NO OBJECTIONS and attach the General Planning Informative.

22.50.5.5. P23/S1390/HH – Westwood, Elmhurst Road, Goring, RG8 9BN

First floor extension above existing garage and front canopy with single storey rear extension, demolition of existing car port, replaced with new garden pavilion outbuilding, new cricket netting system and extended swimming pool.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, to submit the response OBJECTS and attach the General Planning Informative. The Planning Committee objects on the following grounds:

This development fails to comply with 5 of the 7 bulleted items (1, 2, 3, 5, 6) in Goring Neighbourhood Plan Policy 16 Building design principles.

“To ensure that all development respects and maintains the character of the village and the surrounding rural AONB, the Plan will support proposals which:



- comply with SODC's Design Guide and the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide;
- respond positively to scale, mass, density and design of the immediate area and the village context;
- conserve and enhance the characteristics of the Conservation Areas and their settings that make a significant contribution to the area;
- in edge of village locations, acknowledge the Plan's spatial strategy and are sensitive to the transition from urban to rural character;
- sympathetically introduce high quality, modern design in appropriate locations;
- particularly in the conservation areas, consider the use of locally distinctive features and materials such as decorative red and grey brickwork, flint work, tile work, chimneys and porches, as described in the Goring Design Statement;
- respect and protect the AONB. "

Westwood and Glendale are a mirrored pair of handsome late 19c 3-storey detached villas, very characteristic of Goring in its Victorian hey-day. Built of red bricked brick with clay tiles roofs and corbel brick detailing, they have brick porches and moulded bricks on corners & cornice with large, gabled bays. This pair of houses form an important feature of the Elmhurst Rd street scene in the conservation area and currently contribute significantly to the character of this Victorian part of conservation area.

The garage extension is undistinguished and unsympathetic in design and proposes inappropriate materials (horizontal timber walls) that will not enhance the attractive brick Victorian villa or nearby properties.

The garage extension proposes a doubling in length and height of the building, potentially unneighbourly to the house next door.

Horizontal timber walls to the 'garage extension' and 'garden pavilion' will not enhance the predominant red brick character of this Victorian part of the conservation area.

22.50.5.6. P23/S1124/HH – Heronsgate, Bridle Way, Goring, RG8 0HS

Proposed single storey rear extension with associated alterations.

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, to submit the response NO OBJECTIONS and attach the General Planning Informative.

22.50.5.7. P23/S1411/S73 - 21 Springhill Road, Goring, Reading, RG8 0BY

Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) on planning application P22/S4608/FUL. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of semi detached houses

Resolved: Approved Unanimously, to submit the response NO OBJECTIONS and attach the General Planning Informative.



22.50.6. To note planning authority decisions on applications.

All of the decisions below were noted.

22.50.6.1. P23/S0296/HH - 28 Elvendon Road, Goring, RG8 0DU – GRANTED

Erection of part single part two storey extension. (As amplified and amended by information received 21 March 2023.)

GPC Response: OBJECTS, out of character, unneighbourly & overbearing.

22.50.6.2. P23/S0789/HH – Fairfield, River Lane, Goring, RG8 9EE – GRANTED

GPC Response: NO OBJECTIONS.

22.50.6.3. P23/S0179/S73 - Ridgeway Rise, Goring, RG8 0JY - GRANTED

GPC Response: NO OBJECTIONS.

22.50.6.4. P23/S0251/S73 - Wey Cottage, 2 Manor Road, Goring, RG8 9DP – GRANTED

GPC Response: NO OBJECTIONS.

22.50.7. To note Discharge of Conditions (DIS), Modifications of Planning Obligations (MPO), Change of Use (N5B), Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), Screening Opinion (SCR) and Certificates of Lawful Development (LDP)

22.50.7.1. P23/S1272/DIS - 21 Springhill Road, Goring, Reading

Discharge of condition 3 (Tree Protection) on application P22/S4608/FUL. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection a pair of semi-detached dwellings, with revised access.

Noted.

22.50.8. To Note Planning Applications Withdrawn Before a Decision was Made

22.50.8.1. P23/S0946/FUL - Midland House, High Street, Goring, RG8 9AR

Partial change of use from commercial to residential with internal alterations to form a new residential unit.

GPC Response: OBJECTS, the Planning Committee is keen to retain and attract business. The application does not conform to the SODC Local Plan 2035 Policy EMP3: Retention of Employment Land.)

Noted.

22.50.9. To consider correspondence received

The Assistant Clerk informed the Planning Committee more comments received regarding the potential future development without planning permission in the field adjacent to the burial ground. The Clerk team has informed the member of public that only development which is in progress / completed can be reported.

22.50.10. Matters for future discussion

None.



GORING-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix E

22.50.11. To confirm the date of the next meeting – 23rd May 2023

Confirmed, subject to the new committee wishing to continue to meet on a Tuesday.

Meeting Closed: 19:56



Minutes of a Meeting of the Traffic Management, Parking & Pedestrian Safety Committee of the Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 11:00 am, Gardiner Pavilion

Public Forum (prior to the start of the meeting)

MoP1: Was pleased 20mph limit and bollards are done, put in a plea re Gatehampton Road & Sheepcot, something needs doing regarding defective pavements, road & hedge trimming. MIGGS have received grant offers of funding for the orientation plaque. Investigate QR codes on the plaque.

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr Sonia Lofthouse (SL)
Members	Cllr David Brooker (DB) Cllr Richard Osborne (RO)

Officers Present:

Clerk	Mrs S Edmunds (SE)
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Public and Press: 1

Meeting started: 11:10

22.46.1. To receive apologies for absence and to approve the reasons given. (LGA 1972 s85(1))

None.

22.46.2. Declarations of Interests (LA 2011 s31)

None.

22.46.3. To consider requests for Dispensations [LA 2011 s33]

None.

22.46.4. To approve the minutes of previous committee meetings [LA 1972 Sch 12. Para 41(1)]

22.46.4.1. Meeting held on 21st February 2023

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting and they were duly signed.



22.46.5. To consider a request to consult on where there are existing or potential future challenges with inappropriate Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements, from OCC.

Resolved: Unanimously Approved, to submit a response to OCC Survey, delegated to Assistant Clerk in consultation with SL, to ask that ANPR cameras are used to enforce any restrictions.

22.46.6. To receive correspondence from members of public and agree actions.

It was noted that e-mails had been received regarding the yellow lines review and the Chair of this committee and Clerk responded.

22.46.7. To review the Action List and agree and further Actions

Action List

See attached Action List.

22.46.8. Matters for future discussion.

- Ensuring Gigaclear are correctly repairing, there are worries that the repairs are flat and will drop over time.

22.46.9. To confirm the date of the next meeting – 18th April 2023

Confirmed.

Meeting Closed: 12:09



Open Spaces Projects:

Playgrounds Working Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Remit

- To create a fully scoped proposal for the Bourdillon Play Equipment / Gardiner Play Equipment in response to the Thirlwall Open Spaces Report to include:
 - Seeking proposals
 - Seeking quotes for chosen design(s)
 - Obtaining planning permission if required
 - Seeking funding and where applicable applying for grant funding
 - To organise and manage fundraising projects to contribute funding, if needed.
- Where applicable, to work with the other stakeholders, to facilitate individual project, including conducting consultations with user groups.
- phase 2 will be to look at access points for new playgrounds and enhance.

2 Frequency of Meetings

To hold public meetings, as required, to support the remit and scope of the Bourdillon / Gardiner Playgrounds Working Group

3 Appointment of Members

The Committee will be comprised of three councillor members, who are appointed by the full council, with a quorum of three which must include two Council members. The Committee may also recommend for co-option up to four non-councillor members who are electors of the Parish of Goring-on-Thames for Full Council approval.

Non-Councillor members shall meet the eligibility criteria to be a Councillor in the Parish of Goring-on-Thames.

A chairman shall be appointed at the first meeting of the Committee, and the first meeting after the annual meeting of the parish council each year after that.

4 Process

- Pursue the project as detailed in this ToR and conduct any appropriate consultations, investigations, quote seeking and funding seeking required in the process of forming a final recommendation on the project.
 - Formal regular updates and motions to be brought to the Council for approval.



5 Scope

- Where required to define the brief for a professional, expert report from a suitably qualified consultant, and the most appropriate procurement process.
- To make regular progress reports to the Full Council
- To obtain advice and information on behalf of the Council from the planning authority
- To obtain and evaluate evidence of the views of residents at large and of special interest groups, including but not limited to groups representing the immediate residents to any project, the elderly and disabled people and parents and carers of young children.
- To consider and make recommendations on the timing and methods of funding of any works the committee recommends, and the Council approves, including pursuing any grant applications.
- Having regard to the results of the 5 items above to recommend to the Council the most appropriate course of action.

6 Review

This Terms of Reference document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 12th June 2023, it shall be reviewed periodically.

Signed:

Dated: 12th June 2023

_____, Chair of the Council.

Title	Proposal for an Access to East Cottage from White Hill Burial Ground, Goring
Authors	Cllr C Ratcliff
Meeting	Goring-on-Thames Parish Council Meeting – 12 th June 2023

The previous council formed a working group to negotiate on behalf of council with Julia Huggins, the owner of East Cottage, adjacent to the White Hill Burial Ground, regarding a right of access over the first part of the burial ground entrance and to create an entry to East Cottage across land she already owns.

The working group have negotiated draft terms which, subject to approval by council at this meeting, will be converted by council's solicitors into a right of access agreement.

All legal costs will be met by the owner of East Cottage.

I've included a couple of photographs which show the location involved. The proposed entrance would be to the rear (south) of East Cottage as shown by the arrow. The strip of land adjacent to the driveway is currently owned by East Cottage and could be developed into a driveway and entrance unilaterally (with Highways permission).



Ms Huggins' current access to her property goes down the adjacent driveway to West Cottage, around the back of that house immediately behind their cottage and in full view of their rear outlook.. It should be noted that the houses pre-date the burial ground by many years and the access into East Cottage would probably have been originally intended to run along the strip of grass which is now situated next to the burial ground driveway.

Future proofing access to East Cottage would possibly be best served by allowing access from the burial ground entrance.

The intention is to build and legally ensure through the agreement, sufficient space within the grounds of East Cottage to allow a full turning circle, so that any vehicles going to the house can turn around and exit cleanly without having to progress further down the driveway towards the burial ground.

Refuse bins would be required, as part of the agreement, to be collected from the roadway outside the entrance gates.

Access would be given only for the use of East Cottage as a private dwelling house and associated traffic.

No right of way would be allowed beyond the entrance to East Cottage and includes specific exclusions about access to the burial ground and driveway edges.

There are legal processes to go through before this might be finally agreed by council which includes advertising the intention to the public and obtaining value for the asset disposal (right of way).

It is hoped, following valuations to exchange the right for the strip of land by the driveway. This would ensure council control over the whole of the land behind the entrance gates (at the moment that is not the case).

A contribution to driveway maintenance would be included.

A right to temporarily suspend access in the event of a large funeral occasion is also built into the draft agreement.

It is unlikely that disruption would take place to any of the usual burial ground activities from the limited additional vehicular traffic to a single dwelling part way along the driveway. Numerous people and vehicles currently use the driveway to visit and park at the burial ground or walk with or without dogs with the implied permission of the council. Often those attending funerals park on the land currently owned by East Cottage and this has always been supported by the owners.

I have consulted with all three church leaders in Goring and the three most regular funeral directors that use the burial ground asking for comments on the above proposal.

Responses received at the time of writing are:

From Ben Phillips, the Vicar of St Thomas of Canterbury, Goring:

‘That sounds like a sensible way forward to me, as long as East Cottage happy to be occasionally delayed by a funeral procession.

Thank you for dealing with this on everyone’s behalf’

From Matthew Walker of AB Walker, Funeral Directors:

‘Thank you for your email laying out the proposed access amendment.

My comments would be in respect to funeral attendees being able to park ‘on site’. As you correctly mention the strip of land running the length of the driveway is used by the funeral attendees as parking. Owing to the location of the burial ground most visitors use vehicles.

I have witnessed cars attempting three point turns on the driveway in order to safely exit on to the main road.

In order to future proof perhaps some parking areas could be considered. Parking on the grass strip is not ideal in wet conditions.

Whitehill Burial Ground is one of the nicest and best kept burial grounds that I professionally attend. (I hope it to be my final resting place when my time comes!) The Parish Council should be very proud of this faculty and rigorously defend the natural beauty and peaceful setting that has been developed.'

I ask that council consider the following motion:

That due process now be followed to allow for disposal of an asset, i.e. The Right of Access from White Hill Burial Ground driveway to East Cottage in line with the draft agreement negotiated by the working group and summarised in this document, and for delegated authority to the Clerk to prepare a final agreement through council's solicitors, subject to satisfactory valuations, for approval by council.

Colin Ratcliff

Chairman



COMMUNICATION & MEDIA POLICY

1. Introduction

Each Parish Councillor has a duty to represent without bias the interests of the whole community.

They will always try and do their best and are available to help parishioners with regard to matters relating to the Civil Parish of Goring-on-Thames.

Parish Councillors may be contacted via the Clerk or using their Parish Council email addresses.

If it is felt by the villager that the matter is important, then a letter or email to the Parish Clerk (clerk@goringparishcouncil.gov.uk) will ensure that it is dealt with in a timely and professional manner (also see the Correspondence section below).

It is the Parish Council's intention to meet the timescales detailed below but there could be occasions when this is not possible. When this happens the Parish Council will review their procedures and where necessary make changes to the policy or procedures.

2. Aims

To establish clear, easy to use channels of communication between the Parish Council and Parishioners, and the media, and vice versa.

To provide information on important matters in a timely manner to facilitate and encourage informed comment from interested individuals and groups.

3. Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council meets 10 times per year, starting in May normally on the 2nd Monday of every month except August and January. Additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary.

The Parish Council will normally meet in a room at the Goring Village Hall, in the Civil Parish of Goring-on-Thames from 7.30pm.

Public participation will generally start at 7:30pm to enable discussion on agenda items, 10 minutes is reserved for this, with the meeting starting immediately after.

Members of the public wishing to address the Council during the formal meeting or wishing to record the meeting must make the Chairman aware of their wish before the meeting starts.

The media are encouraged to attend Council meetings and seating and workspace will be made available. The Press may record meetings in accordance with the Openness of Local



Government Regulations 2014. This is set out in more detail in Standing Orders (section 3. L, m and n), and the Recording of Meetings Policy.

The Council's Committees are also open to the public. See www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk for details of Committees, meeting locations and meeting times.

4. Notice Boards

The following items will be displayed on the Parish Council noticeboard outside the Old Jubilee Fire Station

- Parish Council meeting dates for the year
- Contact details for the Clerk
- The Parish Council's meeting agenda - which will be posted at least 3 clear days in advance of each meeting.
- Agenda of other committee meetings of the Parish Council - which will be posted at least 3 clear days in advance of each meeting.
- The information displayed on the Parish Notice Board will be kept up-to-date.

Where possible the other notice boards around the village will also be kept up to date, however the board outside the Old Jubilee Fire Station remains the office noticeboard.

5. Correspondence

All correspondence relating to the Parish should be addressed to the Parish Clerk in the first instance either via email or via post to Goring-on-Thames Parish Council, Upper Red Cross Road, Goring RG8 9BD. This will ensure that the matter is recorded and passed to the relevant person or organisation as soon as practically possible. However, all Parish Councillors have their own Council email addresses which have the format [firstinitial.lastname@GoringParishCouncil.gov.uk](mailto:firstname.lastname@GoringParishCouncil.gov.uk).

The Clerk is responsible for dealing with email received and passing on anything relevant to Councillors or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Council will usually come from the Clerk, and, if otherwise, will always be copied to the Clerk. All new email requiring data to be passed on may be followed up with a data consent request before action is taken with that correspondence. Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with villagers in relation to their own personal views, if appropriate, with a copy to the Clerk.

It is important to note that any emails sent to Parish Council email addresses will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act requirements.

These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.



It is imperative that all correspondents never forward personal information on to other people or groups outside the Council, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

All correspondence to the Parish Clerk will be acknowledged within one week of receipt if possible. If email is used, then an acknowledgment will be sent via email.

Councillors will be notified of correspondence, but the addressee will not be named on minutes of meetings unless requested. Anonymous correspondence in any form will be recorded as received but not responded to.

Email should be thought of in the same way as a letter. A subject line, the sender's name and the content should be in the main body of the email, not as an attachment. Attachments will not be opened unless the Clerk has prior knowledge of the subject. The Council regrets that, for reasons of computer security and virus protection, anonymous emails, and those with no subject in the title will not be opened or actioned.

A parishioner may raise any issue directly with the Parish Clerk or any Councillor. If a satisfactory answer cannot be given immediately in line with the known policies of the council, the issue may be placed on the agenda for the attention of the full Council.

The Clerk will acknowledge all Freedom of Information requests within seven working days and will reply fully within 20 working days of receipt of the request. If this is not possible, a further holding letter/email will be sent with an expected completion date.

6. Website

The Parish Clerk will arrange for the agenda and associated papers to be posted on the Parish Council website (www.GoringParishCouncil.gov.uk) at least three clear days before the meeting and for the draft Minutes to be posted as soon as possible, and no later than one month, after the meeting. The final Minutes will be posted within 24 hours of being confirmed by Council or the relevant committee.

In order to comply with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities, the Clerk will arrange for the annual publication of the following documents no later than 1 July each year:

- a) all items of expenditure above £100
- b) end of year accounts
- c) annual governance statement
- d) internal audit report
- e) list of councillor or member responsibilities
- f) the details of public land and building assets
- g) Minutes, agendas, and meeting papers of formal meetings.

The Parish Clerk is the Webmaster for the Parish Council website. The Parish Clerk will ensure that the Parish Council email address is publicised.



7. Social Media

The use of social media by the Clerk Team, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, does not replace existing forms of communication but is used to enhance interaction with a wider range of the population.

8. Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is convened by the Chairman of the Parish Council and is generally held in April each year to provide parishioners with a summary of the activities of the Parish Council over the previous year and the opportunity to debate local issues and celebrate local events and activities.

9. Related Policies and Procedures

Councillor Code of Conduct

Complaints Policy

Retention Policy

Policy on Requests for Information

Recording of Meetings Policy

10. Contact With the Media

The Clerk and Members should always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the Council in all their dealings with the media. Data Protection is of the highest priority. There are a number of personal privacy issues for the Clerk and Members that must be handled carefully and sensitively. These include the release of personal information, such as home address and telephone number (although Member contact details may be in the public domain); disciplinary procedures and long-term sickness absences that are affecting service provision. In all these and similar situations, advice must be taken from the Clerk before any response is made to the media.

Confidential documents, reports, papers and private correspondence should not be leaked to the media. If such leaks do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and appropriate action taken. When the media wish to discuss an issue that is, or is likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then advice should be taken from the Council's Solicitor before any response is made.

All formal requests for comment regarding policies on any matter should be directed to the Clerk in the first instance. If unavailable, the Chairman should be contacted. When responding to approaches from the media, the Clerk or Chairman are authorised to interact with the media.



All written responses to the Press should be drafted by the Clerk with the assistance of the Chairman, or may be delegated to another Councillor with the assistance of the Clerk for accuracy and lawfulness. In this instance, the Chairman should be made fully aware of the response and agree to its contents. Statements made by the Chairman and the Clerk, or delegated member, should reflect the formal Council's opinion, if one has been established.

If a member is contacted directly by the Press Councillors are at liberty to communicate with the Press in their own right but must ensure that they always make it clear that they speak as individuals and not on behalf of the Parish Council. As stated above only the Clerk, or a member explicitly delegated to do so, can speak formally on behalf of the Council.

Members who wish to initiate contact with the media on Council related matters may only do so with the prior agreement of the Clerk.

There are occasions when it is appropriate for the Council to submit a letter, for example, to explain important policies or to correct factual errors in letters submitted by other correspondents. Such letters should be kept brief and balanced in tone and correspondence should not be drawn out over several weeks. All correspondence must come from the Clerk, or a member explicitly delegated to do so.

11. Press Releases

The purpose of a press release is to make the media aware of a potential story, to provide important public information or to explain the Council's position on a particular issue. It is the responsibility of the Clerk and Members to look for opportunities where the issuing of a press release may be beneficial. The Clerk or any Member may draft a press release, however it must be issued by the Clerk, or by a member explicitly authorised by the Clerk to do so. This is to ensure that the principles outlined above are adhered to, that there is consistency of style across the Council and that the use of the press release can be monitored.

12. Review

This document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 12th June 2023 it shall be reviewed periodically, at least once per council term or if legislation dictates.

Signed:

Dated: 12th June 2023

_____ Chair of the Council



ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL OF LAND POLICY

1 Introduction

Goring-on-Thames Parish Council is committed to developing its landholding for the benefit of its residents. From time to time opportunities may arise which will enable the council to acquire land, through donation, purchase, or lease. The council may also decide to sell, or lease land should opportunities which benefit residents, arise.

As custodians of the parish land for future generations such opportunities will be carefully considered however decision making in this regard will be firmly predisposed towards retaining parish land in most instances.

The council will be especially disinclined to dispose of land when, if developed, there might be negative impacts on the well-being of residents, the environment and the character of the parish as a whole including those areas in close proximity to the land in question.

Any acquisitions or disposals will be to support the aims of our Neighbourhood Plan, the Council's vision and our residents.

2 Considerations in all circumstances

The Parish Council will need to consider and take into account the following:

1. That Government legislation (as detailed in this document) is understood and used as a basis for decision-making.
2. To consider best value for the public purse.
3. To consider how they will demonstrate that maximum consideration has been given to the disposal or sale of land.
4. To consider that land cannot be disposed of for less than it is worth without the consent of the Secretary of State so knowing the value of the land is important to establish in the first instance.
5. To consider an open and transparent bidding process where required and certainly when there is more than one party interested in the disposal.
6. To consider how and when they will advertise the disposal or sale.
7. To consider what the land is currently appropriated for.
8. To consider if the land falls within the exceptional reappropriations and disposals guidance.
9. To consider if such a disposal promotes economic, social or environmental wellbeing, with a limit of £2million between the unrestricted value and the disposal value? If not, the parish council could not dispose of the land without the permission of the Secretary of State and in any case would need to know the value of the land prior to considering any disposal, if for no other reason than to formally confirm the council are not breaching the £2million limit. The council would need to contact either the District Valuer or a Land Consultant/Agent for a valuation.



10. To consider on a case by case basis the valuation of the land – the council could instruct and pay for the District Valuer or a Land Consultant/Agent to value the land.
11. To consider on a case by case basis and ask the proposed purchaser to pay for the valuation as this may demonstrate a commitment. The prospective purchaser would need to be fully informed however, that the final decision to dispose or sale of land would rest with the council as the Corporate Body, so in paying for the evaluation there is no guarantee a disposal of land for example by sale or swap would take place.
12. To consider if the land has recently been valued and proper advice already taken.

3 Section 1 – Acquisition Of Land

The Parish Council are happy to look at ways in which to increase their portfolio of parish council owned land/open space for the benefit of the community.

Opportunities to obtain further land can come from Developers or via the District or County Council. This land/open space is normally gifted to the parish council in most cases for the benefit of the community.

Where land is identified as open space not owned by the Parish Council but is not currently being maintained to the standard that we would hope. The council will often look to see if there is anything that can be done to improve the area in the first instance by contacting the owner.

3.1 Procedure for acquiring land

1. Any request to acquire land for the use of public open space will be added to the next available parish council agenda by the clerk.
2. The clerk will produce a report to council setting out the proposed acquisition, what the land is currently appropriated for, details of the current owner and what proper advice if any is recommended that the council should consider for example, to obtain a land valuation, budget and delegation to the Clerk will be by resolution of the council for this activity.
3. The Clerk will also request a resolution as to how the residents are to be informed and consulted.
4. The clerk will also request a resolution from the council to make contact with the current owner to gauge their intention for the land and to establish its history for example, has it been used for storing toxic substances, are there any hazards, ponds etc, and to ask if the council could obtain the land for the benefit of the community.
5. Once the clerk received information from the current owner a report will be completed to council for their next Parish Council meeting. This will detail if a land acquisition is an option and under what terms. The clerk will ask the council for an indication as to whether the council still wishes to proceed to the next stage, i.e. to acquire the land by resolution.



6. If the council do not wish to continue with a sale at this stage the process will stop, and the current owner will be informed that the parish council does not wish to proceed with the acquisition of the land.
7. If the council still wish to acquire the land, there is a need at this stage for the council to consider the future cost and upkeep of the land, the clerk will write a report for council for their next meeting.
8. If the council still wish to acquire the land, they will consider employing a Solicitor, the clerk will ask the council for a resolution to contact a Solicitor to deal with the acquisition of the land.
9. The council will then formally decide at the meeting whether it wishes to confirm its intention to acquire the land based on the solicitor's advice.
10. Once the formal resolution is made that the land is to be acquired, the clerk will request delegated authority to deal with the administrative matters of the acquisition through to its legal conclusion along with the Solicitor.

4 Section 2 – Disposal Of Land

The Parish Council will not actively seek to dispose of land unless there are sound justifications to do so. The Parish Council values its land/open spaces as part of the fabric of the village and in most cases the monetary value of the land cannot match the amenity value to local residents..

4.1 Procedure for disposing of land, whether by approach or choice

1. The request/proposal will be added to the next available Parish Council agenda by the clerk.
2. The clerk will produce a report to council setting out the proposal, what the land is currently appropriated for and what proper advice is recommended that the council should consider for example a valuation of the land and/or instructing a Land Agent.
3. In the first instance, a valuation of the land is required, budget and delegation to the Clerk will be by resolution of the council.
4. Once the clerk received the valuation a report will be completed to council for their next parish council meeting. This will detail the proposal to dispose, the intended use once disposed and the price of the land. The clerk will ask the council for an indication as to whether the council still wishes to proceed to the next stage, i.e. to establish by resolution the council's intention to dispose of the land by way of a sale as set out in the report.
5. If the council do not wish to continue with a sale at this stage the process will stop, and the prospective buyer will be informed that the parish council does not wish to proceed with the sale of the land.
6. If the council still wish to sell the land, the council will then formally decide at the meeting whether it wishes to confirm its intention to sell the land based on the valuation, the nature of the proposed use of the land, any objections received and any other factors the council considers relevant.
7. Once the formal decision in principle to dispose of the land is made, the council will follow the process below.



4.2 Disposal Methods

When it comes to selling land, there are a variety of different methods and strategies the Parish Council could use to achieve the highest price and best value for the community. One of these options is to work with a Land Agent and the Parish Council will rely upon professional advice. Generally, the Parish Council will prefer to sell by way of informal tender unless advised to use another sale process.

After the decision in principle to dispose of the land is made the following process will be followed:

1. advertise the intention to dispose of the land for two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper and on the Parish Council website, notice boards and Facebook page inviting any objections to be submitted to the clerk.
2. Once the deadline for responses has passed the clerk will draw up a further report to council ready for their next meeting, including any objections submitted (redacted under GDPR) or confirm that no objections have been received.
3. The council will then formally decide at the meeting whether it wishes to confirm its intention to dispose of the land based on the valuation, the nature of the proposed use of the land, any objections received and any other factors the council considers relevant.
4. Once the formal resolution is made that the land is to be disposed, including price the clerk will request delegated authority to deal with the administrative matters of the lease, swap, sale etc, through to its legal conclusion along with the appropriate solicitors

4.3 Disposal Criteria

The Council will be inclined to dispose of land when one or more of the following apply:

1. the financial advantage for the parish meets the financial tests described above.
2. the council's current or future liability for maintenance and repair outweighs the current or future amenity the land provides for residents.
3. disposal facilitates broader projects which the council deems to be for the benefit of residents.
4. disposal allows other recognised charitable or not for profit organisations to consolidate landholding for the public good. e.g. Woodlands Trust, Canals and Waterways, National Trust etc.
5. the parish land provides no current discernible amenity to residents nor uncommon environmental advantage for flora or fauna.
6. the value of the land is unlikely to increase beyond inflation, taking into account current market forces, foreseeable additional local developments and national initiatives.
7. disposal will contribute to the vision of the council, goals of the agreed Neighbourhood Plan and the councils' medium-term planning objectives.



The Council will be disinclined to dispose of land when one or more of the following apply:

1. the land's location and current condition add visual amenity.
2. the land has potential to provide opportunity for sport, leisure, or recreation activities
3. the land contributes to the environmental distinctiveness of the area.
4. the land or and its current condition adds to the cultural and heritage dimension of the landscape.
5. the land currently provides useful access routes to residents.
6. acquisition of the land by a third party is likely to facilitate land use which conflicts with the principles established in the Council's Neighbourhood Plan or South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan

These lists are for guidance purposes and not exhaustive

5 Review

The Acquisition and Disposal of Land Policy was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 12th June 2023, it shall be reviewed once per council term or unless legislation dictates.

Signed:

Dated: 12th June 2023

Cllr C Ratcliff , Chairman of the Council

Title	Clerk's Report
Authors	Clerk
Meeting	Goring-on-Thames Parish Council Meeting – 12 th June 2023

PLACEHOLDER

10.1. To approve additional bin, location and budget, Cleeve Road (toward northerly end)

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10.2. To receive a report on No Mow May, comments received and approve approach for 2024/2025

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10.3. Community Centre bollard trial results and proposed next phase of bollard installation.

10.4. To review the Henley Standard subscription and if thought fit cancel.

Title	Proposal for the creation of an Environment Committee
Authors	Cllr A Smith
Meeting	Goring-on-Thames Parish Council Meeting – 12 th June 2023

Background

The council has direct responsibility for the up keep of its own open spaces and buildings and a wider objective of creating a pleasant and safe environment for residents and visitors. It works in partnership with other public and private bodies to achieve its aims, raising concerns of residents and councillors with the appropriate third parties. In order to create sufficient focus on environmental matters it is proposed that a committee be created with specific responsibility for maintenance, cleanliness and the general environment of the parish.

Areas of responsibility

Responsibilities for the committee could include such items as

- Mowing of open spaces
- Maintenance of Goring Burial Ground
- Highlighting of issues to Goring on Thames Parish Council maintenance staff
- Requesting specific “clean ups”
- Liaising with voluntary bodies with similar aims, such as Goring in Bloom, to ensure a coordinated approach
- Monitoring the wider environment and liaising with the appropriate parties including
 - Oxfordshire County Council
 - South Oxfordshire District Council
 - Great Western Railways
 - Goring C of E primary School
 - Shop keepers and landlords etc
- Proposing enhancements to the Parish Council

A number of other councils have given environment committees more general aims, which the Council could consider, such as

- Protect and promote local wildlife
- Promote measures to reduce pollution

Avoidance of double taxation

The committee will need to be mindful of the risk of double taxation, which can occur where other public bodies have a concurrent function. Close liaison with both OCC and SODC should mitigate against that risk.

Considerations regarding work load

The Council has recently moved to monthly meetings, increasing workload. A proliferation of committees will exacerbate the problem. A compromise would be to widen the terms of reference of one of the existing committees to incorporate environmental issues. For example, the Planning Committee could become the Planning and Environment Committee. Under such a scenario I would suggest that environmental matters were included in only one of the two meetings each month as a balance between focus and workload.

Recommendation

I recommend that a committee be given responsibility for environmental matters. Secondly, I recommend that the Planning Committee's ToRs be extended to include environmental matters as a way of managing councillors' and clerks' workload.

If agreed I will bring a draft terms of reference for the committee to the next Council meeting for approval.