



News from Watlington Parish Council

1 Old School Place, Gorwell, Watlington OX49 5QH
Telephone: 01491613867
e-mail: wpc@watlington-oxon-pc.gov.uk
website: www.watlington-oxon-pc.gov.uk

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Below are some notes from the Parish Council about issues that members of the public have been asking us about recently.

Bus Services in Watlington

In Watlington we are lucky to have a range of bus services that cover most of the local population centres including Oxford, Wallingford, Thame and Reading. All of the bus services from Watlington are subsidised to some extent and their continued operation depends on this support.

Oxfordshire County Council has recently revised that part of their Bus Strategy that deals with how they manage the bus services which they subsidise. The services in each area of the county are reviewed every four years, and decisions taken on which services will be subsidised through the next period. At the last review two years ago we lost the service to Henley. One of the key factors in allocating the subsidies is the level of usage of the services, and the present records of usage have been obtained from counts for each service on a limited number of days. We need better information to support our claims for continued subsidy and Parish Councils are being asked to help provide this.

Watlington Parish Council would like to hear from regular users of any of our bus services who would be willing to provide us with regular information on the bus services, including not only the number of people using them but also any suggestions for improvements or problems encountered. These will be collected by the Parish Transport Representative (PTR) for Watlington, Ian Hill, and will be reported to the OCC Public Transport team.

If you can help, or wish to discuss this further, please contact Kristina at the Parish Office, 01491 613867.

New Household Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Contract – coming June 2009 for South Oxfordshire residents

As from next June there will be a new waste collection service. The Council is working to respond to the pressing need to increase recycling and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. Not only is the amount of waste going to landfill damaging to the environment but also landfill space is rapidly running out. We face huge fines from government if we do not reduce landfill.

Three companies have been short-listed to provide the new services and final decisions about container types and sizes will be agreed once the new contractor is appointed at the end of this year.

From June 2009 the new service will include;

- weekly separate food waste collections in kerbside bins
- fortnightly residual waste collections in wheeled bins
- at least fortnightly collections of dry recyclables (including glass)
- continuing with the garden waste service in wheeled bins for those who wish to subscribe to it.

Over the next few months SODC officers will be working closely with Town and Parish councils and housing associations to identify those properties that may have difficulties storing and using wheeled bins and to provide suitable solutions.

Recycling of Light Bulbs and Batteries

Just to remind you that you can bring you used batteries and light bulbs to the Community Office where they will be recycled.



Oktoberfest

The Parish Council was awarded a shield from the Zinzenzell band in Bavaria who came to celebrate and play for the Ocktoberfest in Watlington, which was accepted on their behalf by the Clerk Kristina Tynan.

Traffic Issues

Over many months the Parish Council has been in discussion with the County Council on several traffic issues many related to parking and safety issues. The bollards around the town hall have already been installed in response to one of these concerns. Some issues require Traffic Orders to make the necessary changes and the County Council is currently consulting on its proposals. These include measures to improve safety in Cuxham Road, to improve the flow of traffic through the centre of the town, and to limit waiting on the High Street to increase the turn around of vehicles. Residents in the specific areas have been given copies of proposals for comment. *A copy of the consultation is held in the Community Office if anyone wishes to view it.* If any resident who has not individually been consulted wishes to comment on the proposals please email, southernarea@oxfordshire.gov.uk or write to the Traffic Engineer, OCC, Whitton Road, Drayton, Abingdon, OX14 4EZ.

Ongoing Concerns

Much goes on in the Parish Office behind the scenes and residents may not always be aware that we are working on issues and concerns – some of which can take a long time to find solutions, if indeed we manage at all! Some current ongoing issues that we know are of concern to many residents include:

- **Parking around the schools.** Safety concerns from the primary school led them to limit access for parents to the school site to drop off their children. As a result of this there is increased congestion and parking problems in the surrounding streets. We have begun discussions with the school and the County Council to try to see what can be done to alleviate the problem.
- **The Paper Shop.** We have written to the COOP to ask their intentions for this shop and are currently waiting for a response. Next action will of course depend on the reply!
- **Little Orchard/Masons Wood.** We have written to the Master of the Icknield Lodge to ask if we can discuss how we might retain this as an open space for the community for this and future generations. Again response awaited at the time of writing this article.

Dates of forthcoming meetings

Strategy Committee:: Tues 18th November
Operations Committee: Wed 26th November at 10.00am
Finance Committee: Tues 25th November.
Planning Committee: Tues 2nd December
Full Council: Tues 9th December

All meetings start at 8pm and are held in the Community Office unless otherwise stated.

We welcome residents attending any of these meetings as observers, However if people wish to speak on a particular agenda item please discuss with the Parish Clerk during office hours by noon the day before the meeting.

Minutes of all Parish Council meetings are available to members of the public and can be viewed on our website or in the Parish Office during opening hours.

The Parish Office is open:

9.30am-12.30pm Mon, Tues, Weds, Fri
10-12.30pm on Thurs when the Citizens Advice Bureau is also open.

Collated by Angie Paterson, Chairman and Kristina Tynan, Clerk to the Parish Council.

