

## **DC report for East Challow Parish Council 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

July and August are typically quiet months.

### **County and cross-county NHS**

You will remember that the county health services were incorporated into a cross-county structure called the BOB-ICB (Integrated Care Board covering Bucks, West Berks and Oxfordshire) with the initial aim of reducing costs by sharing equipment etc across county boundaries but which developed into all health services being managed across county boundaries and, of course, involving another administrative layer to run it all!!

So, now with the cuts required to be made to the NHS by the government means that now, after just 2 years, BOB ICB needs to cut its administrative costs by 30% by next year - no cuts in front end clinical services, which is good. However, this would involve loss of the county directors. Ours, Dan Leveson, has been very supportive over Wantage Hospital and the Great Western Park Surgery. HOSC has objected strongly to this move and believes there are other ways to save money. The county council, which works closely with the NHS, has some ideas of its own. Watch this space.

### **Wantage Health Committee**

Wantage Health Committee met a few weeks ago and the two GP practice managers attended. Major outcomes of this discussion were:

1. The new online triage system (e-Connect) has replaced the earlier one (e-Consult) which was very clunky. Although this is the main route to seeing a Doctor or nurse, this can be done via the phone or by calling at Mably Way. The initial triage is done by one of the doctors and these rotate the shift. They never refer patients onto the 111 service. They now get an average of 147 requests using this system every day.
2. This new system has reduced the number of phone calls they get and has enabled consultations to be increased from 10 mins to 15mins.
3. There is a national shortage of GPs and neither practice has enough doctors. It is a seller's market and new GPs can ask to work part-time, do private work etc in addition to the main job.
4. Many people have iphones and they are encouraging people to use the NHS App to do the initial contact and it can also be used for repeat prescriptions. There will be face to face digital cafés soon to explain this system to residents.

### **Transport Community Bus No 68**

In a recent online meeting of parish representatives with the county public transport officers, I was told that the No 68 bus service will continue after March 2025, which was the original date for termination of this service.

### **Temporary Traffic Restriction.**

There has been a traffic restriction on the A338 at The Ark. This will be repeated on Oct 13-14. A 20mph speed restriction will be in place until the end of this period.

### **The canal - new weir**

West Challow and the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust has been successful (almost approved!) with a county council flood mitigation grant to build a small weir 2/3 of the

way along the canal to West Challow. This will regulate water flow out of the canal across the field to the A417, contributing to flood reduction by Mellor's, ensuring the canal fills up more than it does at the moment but also reducing the risk of flooding to the two bungalows on the canal.

### **Hedge plan will call for volunteers**

The Challows and Childrey Hedgerow group will again be planting this winter, (i) in East Challow along the side entrance of the recreation area from Cornhill Lane (the old car park), and (ii) the south side of Childrey Way between Cornhill Farm and Silver Lane. As with last winter we will in due course be looking for volunteers again. No dates as yet.

### **Community/Warm Space**

The first meeting will be September 13<sup>th</sup> and not the 6<sup>th</sup> as originally agreed.

**Cllr Paul Barrow**  
**Ridgeway Ward**  
**Vale of Whitehorse District Council,**  
**September 3rd 2024**