

District Councillor report for East Challow for 20241113

The Vale and South District Councils' Joint Local Plan

This is making good progress. We all have concerns about possible further housing development. The councils have identified that there are enough new homes in the pipeline already, so there is no need to build on any extra new greenfield sites over the next 15 years. (This good news for us all here!!!). Only one area of expansion has been earmarked, which is on the brownfield land owned by the Ministry of Defence at Dalton Barracks near Abingdon.

The plan also sets out new firmer environment policies so that new development will be net zero carbon and delivers twice the national level of biodiversity net gain to help with the recovery of nature. (It is shame that all the thousands of houses that have been built in the last 15 years did not follow similar guidelines – almost no houses had PV solar which could have kept individual costs down and reduced energy demand).

The proportion of affordable housing on large sites will also go up from 35% to 40% in the Vale of White Horse, without increasing the total number of homes being built. (This is also good although it must be said that “affordable” in South Oxfordshire is still not very affordable for many people!)

Villages Tourist guide/map

This has been approved and I have taken photographs of the historical and other assets in our 7 villages. I have circulated the proposed list of assets to parish councils. I had hoped to include 70 assets but 40-50 will be the limit. Please have a look at the list and text and pass any comments on gaps or interesting information on the village back to me so that I can include extra information into village introductions.

A417 floods and drainage

Despite the fact that OCC and VWHDC have had all summer to fix this, it remains a mess – see image.

The stream flowing through West View (partially silted), and two more properties and is still heavily silted

Has this culvert been inspected yet? We have had plenty of dry weather (not at the moment!) It seems to flow OK but not very fast.

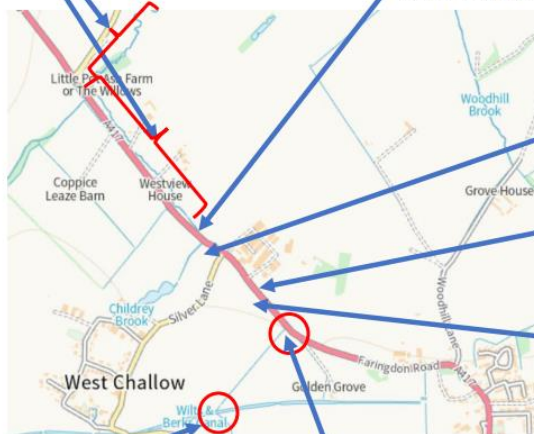
This ditch has now been cleared

The gulleys on the north side of the road are all blocked

Do we know that there are no blockages in this pipe that runs under the field? It should be checked.

The new proposed Canal Trust weir is much needed

The junction between the ditch here doesn't function well – all the water pours onto the road



This is being addressed piecemeal without an overall strategy. The ditch immediately south and west of Silver Lane has been cleared and the gulleys east of Mellor's and draining the A417 to the north were cleared last week. These gulleys drain along the north side of the road, passing under Mellor's forecourt and discharges into Childrey Brook close to where the latter passes under the A417. I visited various weak points in the system with the new MP Olly Glover on Oct 19th and pointed out these remaining areas of weakness and also discussed these last week with Leigh Travers, Vale drainage engineer. Despite my concerns, the latter said that OCC are unlikely to deal with the inspection chamber at the end of the ditch in Ben Smith's field, or the pipe running east from the chamber, until the issues with desilting Childrey Brook have been sorted. I find this to be really unsatisfactory and have updated Yvonne Constance now that she is up and about again and she is taking this up at county level, as is Olly Glover. Progressive Physiotherapy on the W&G estate are very worried about the coming winter. I am just not convinced that OCC and the Vale are doing their best. The sooner the WBCT/West Challow weir is in place, the better as it will help although it is uncertain whether this will be done by end March 2025.

Crest Nicholson A 417 street lights

These have now been fixed and are functioning. It required pressure from OCC on Crest as the lights had not yet been handed over.

Planning, drainage and new housing developments

Residents in the Vale are fed up and appalled by developers not sticking to the original plans which in three instances has resulted in the original proposed drainage system not been set up properly resulting in flooding or lack of capacity. Now, developers are required to show to the Vale, depending on how complete the development is, evidence that the drainage system installed is as planned.

Court Meadow (Country Club) Estate

The Court Meadow Estate has a septic tank serving all the houses. The original plan intended to have the sewerage connected up to the mains sewerage at the caravan park. This is now an enforcement issue with the Vale.

Full council meeting at The Beacon October 23rd.

The Vale is trying to find out from the new government what the settlement for local authorities will be. In general, we get 22% of our funding from central government, 57% from council tax and the rest from business rates and the amount from central govt has been shrinking for several years.

A major concern was raised in the form of a motion to write to Thames Water about the potential safety issue of the size of the SESRO reservoir proposed for Steventon-East Hanney. Cllr Sally Povoltsky suggested we all camp outside the Secretary of State's office until he replies to letters from our council. Actions certainly speak louder than words.

Temporary Traffic Restriction Orders (Road closures)

TTRO 14651 Circourt Rd (A417-Brook Lane, Denchworth) potholes 19-20 December 2024

TTRO 14643 Blowing stone Hill-Kingston Warren road surface repairs 16-18 December 2024

TTRO 14644 Westcot Lane (full extent) road surface 8th January 2025

Denchworth Rd., Wantage will be closed 18th November to 6th December

District Councillor Dr Paul Barrow
Ridgeway Ward
Vale of Whitehorse District Council
November 7th 2024