

Wantage Town Council E-Newsletter

APRIL 2026

EDITION 10

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St George's Day Event – Come and Join the Celebrations

Come and celebrate

St George's Day



Slay the day with St George's Day fun in Wantage! -
Dragons, music, and medieval fun for all the family!



Image credit: Vicki McNelly



Sunday 26th April 2026

Wantage
Market Place

11am - 3pm

- Plenty of artisan stalls
- Live music
- Great food
- Free entry
- Free children's entertainment!

Scan the QR code
for more info!



Why not come dressed up?

Knights, dragons, princesses, and more!
Dress for adventure!



WITH THANKS TO
OUR SPONSORS:



Join us in Wantage Market Place this weekend!

This Sunday (26th April) come and slay the day at St George's Day in
Wantage!

A legendary celebration filled with dragons, live music, and medieval fun for the
whole family! 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM

What's on:

- o Fantastic stalls
- o Delicious food
- o Live music & medieval entertainment
- o Free children's activities
- o Free entry for all

And a huge thank you to our sponsors for making this event possible:

Larkmead Vets

Specsavers Wantage

Helping Hands Home Care

Town Survey Working Group



Following the recent town survey, a dedicated working group has now been established to review the feedback received and consider next steps.

The group met for the first time recently and began discussing key themes and priorities identified by residents. This is an important step in ensuring that community views help shape future plans and initiatives.

We will continue to keep residents updated as this work progresses and as further developments are made.

Engaging with Young People in the Community



Recently, we had the pleasure of visiting Sweatbox in Wantage (a local youth centre providing a safe space, activities, and support for young people) as part of an ongoing initiative to involve more young people in council matters and ensure their voices are heard.

We brought along some (very popular!) sweets, information, and interactive posters, which helped spark some great conversations about what matters most

to them. It was fantastic to hear their ideas and perspectives on the community.

Listening to young people is incredibly important, and we are committed to working closely with them going forward to help shape future plans and decisions. Their insights, ideas, and experiences are vital in building a community that works for everyone.

We were really impressed by how enthusiastic and thoughtful everyone was, and we're looking forward to running more sessions like this in the future—possibly even in local schools.

A big thank you to the Sweatbox team for welcoming us and helping make the session such a success.

Extra Garden Waste this April



Great news for local residents - if you have a garden waste permit, you can put out extra garden waste for free this spring!

Available between 20 April – 1 May 2026

On your normal collection day only

What you can do:

1. Put out up to 4 extra sacks per permit
2. Place them next to your brown bin
3. Use standard 60L sacks or small containers

Please remember:

Garden waste only (grass, plants, small branches)

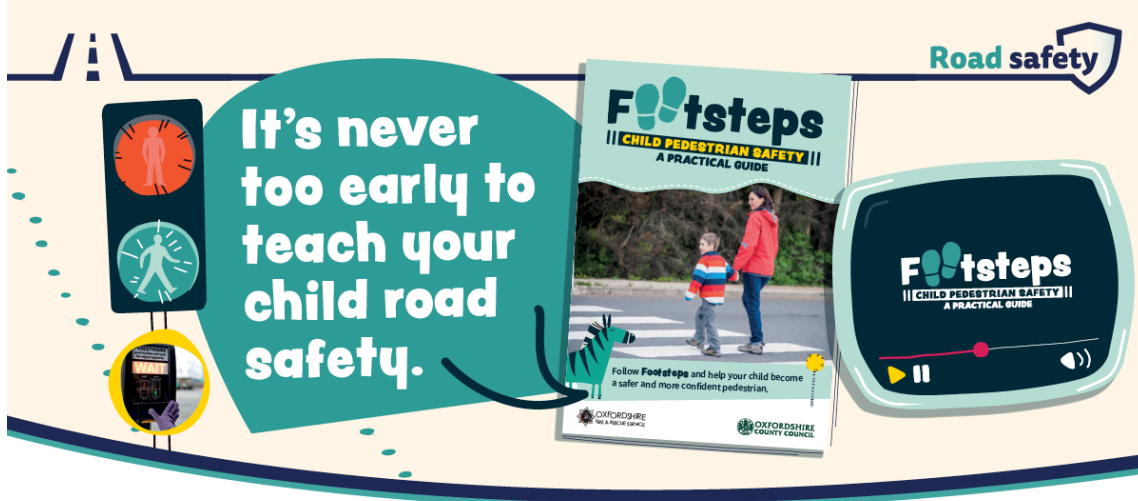
No oversized bags (e.g. builder's bags won't be collected)

Leave sacks/containers open so crews can check contents

All collected waste is turned into compost locally and reused by farmers

This service is for households with a valid 2026/27 garden waste permit

Footsteps – Child Pedestrian Safety



Footsteps is a fire and rescue service child pedestrian safety programme. It's designed as a short, step-by-step guide and videos for parents and carers to use, to help them teach young children the skills they need to use the road safely.

By following Footsteps, parents and carers can support children to become safer, more confident pedestrians.

Living Well at Home

Living well at home



Thinking about a time when you or the person you're caring for might need extra help can be tough. But don't worry, you're not alone on this journey. There are plenty of resources available to support you.

Our living well guides are an essential read, they're here to help you navigate finding the support you need, from assessing care needs, to aids and equipment, finding care at home and paying for your care. Think of them as your go to guides.



Scan to find out more



www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livingwell



OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

Flexicare Community Walk



Are you ready for the challenge? Then grab your walking boots, bicycle or wheels, and join the annual Flexicare Community Walk. Meeting on Sunday 17th May at Snells Hall, East Hendred, OX12 8LA.

Bring your family, friends, dogs and determination; and meet at Snells Hall to start between 8.30am and 10am. A range of walks are available at 10 miles, 7.5 miles, 5 miles and 3 miles. The 3 mile walk and village stroll are wheelchair and buggy accessible. Homemade cakes and refreshments provided! To register please visit www.flexicare.org/news-events

Flexicare is an Oxfordshire charity providing a specialised service for families with a disabled child in Wantage, Oxford, Abingdon and surrounding villages for 40 years.

This event is free entry for all to enjoy but if you would like to help raise funds, your generosity will help Flexicare to provide their unique, vital sitting service for families with a disabled child.

Just One Thing: Helping Tackle Climate Emergency



“Just One Thing” we can do to reduce global warming – Laundry.

My mother was one of the first in her neighbourhood to get a motor driven washing machine when my father attached an electric motor to a “dolly tub”, a time when Monday was always washing day and the clothes were hung to dry outdoors.

We now have tumble washing machines, some with integral dryers and computer control so washday can be anytime day or night and clothes can be fresh and scented ready to wear after just an hour or so. Current tariffs additionally favour overnight washes when electricity can be as little as 6-7pence per kWh compared with 28 pence per kWh during the day.

These tariffs are offered because homes and industry do not use much electricity at night and it is difficult to simply turn off generation when it is not required. Reports appear from time to time of supply companies paying for power they do not use at time of glut, such as when the weather is windy at night. Balancing the power grid as environmentally friendly generation become predominant is a complex challenge which makes some companies offer good deals during quiet periods. The supply company I use to charge my car will control when the charger becomes active, especially at night to help balance the grid.

So how should we organise ourselves on wash day to save the planet and save money. First, whenever the sun is shining and the weather forecast is favourable, put your washing out to dry rather than use the tumble drier. It takes a lot more planning but saves an enormous amount of energy. At least put it out for a while and finish off with a spell indoors or if you really need to in the drier. Drying clothes indoors is a problem because damp conditions indoors causes problems with mould (more on this in Chapter 6), so invest in a cheap dehumidifier to take up the extra water vapour rather than a heater as this simply adds to the dampness in the house.

Try to put your washing machine, or dishwasher, on at night when it will use environmentally friendly electricity. By taking up dual tariff options will also save you a lot of money so you can buy that very expensive electric car or put solar panels on your roof for even more environmentally friendly power.

Update from MP



Spring is a beautiful time across the constituency, with warm sunshine at last, and so many roadsides and woods enhanced by daffodils and bluebells.

Trump's illegal military actions in Iran have caused significant death and global disruption to gas and oil supplies, which rural areas have felt the brunt of. Many constituents have expressed concerns over tripling oil prices and the need for urgent support for rural communities, many of whom are dependent on heating oil for warmth. I signed an Early Day Motion to introduce a three-month zero rating of VAT and price caps to help alleviate some of this financial burden. In Parliament I raised concerns about local government funding, road safety, and improving women's health. In a debate on the condition of rural roads, attended by MPs representing dozens of counties all frustrated by the state of their roads, I spoke about the need for better approaches to road design, maintenance, and repair across the country. Funding to maintain our roads must be spent both on fixing potholes, and on long-term, preventative work, such as drainage improvements and surface dressing.

After an excellent lunch at the White Hart in Harwell, I spoke with the publican about ongoing pressures on the local hospitality industry. I have joined Liberal Democrat colleagues in calling for a 5% VAT cut for hospitality, and against government policies on business rates and employer national insurance contributions, which are making life very difficult for our hospitality sector. I also attended Wantage and Grove Street Pastors on an evening patrol, engaging with the local community.

These constituency activities help me understand the day-to-day challenges faced by people and organisations in the local area, and I will continue to hold the Labour government to account and push for change at a national level.

As always, if there is anything you feel I can help with, please do not hesitate to contact me and my team at olly.glover.mp@parliament.uk or by leaving a voice message on 0207 219 7657.

Olly

Olly Glover, MP for Didcot and Wantage

Town Electorate Meeting



TOWN ELECTORATE MEETING

THURSDAY 7TH MAY 2026 | 7:30 PM

SYKES HALL ,TUGWELL FIELD, WANTAGE, OX12 8FR

Report on Council Business

—*—

Andy Sweeney from Oxfordshire County Council will deliver a presentation on the Market Place Improvement Project, followed by a Q&A session.

—*—

Light refreshments will be provided

—*—

All Wantage residents welcome

—*—

FREE PARKING

**Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner
Update**



Matthew Barber
Your voice in
Thames Valley

STAY IN TOUCH
matthewbarber.co.uk

@matthewbarberpcc   

@matthew_barber 

Promoted by Matthew Barber on his own behalf, of Waterloo House, 58-60 High Street, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 6HJ.

Mobile phones are ubiquitous, and bring many benefits in life, but they also create real problems, particularly within schools. Most schools will have some kind of “phone free” policy; but how effectively these are enforced varies hugely.

Last month I met with teachers and governors from several schools at Aureus Secondary School to talk about their approach to banning phones in school. They have adopted a particular system, using lockable pouches, but there are lots of those things used by schools, such as lock boxes. For most of us a mobile phone is a useful - sometimes indispensable - addition to our lives, but during the school day they distract pupils, disrupt classes, can lead to poor discipline and lower attainment.

There are a number of perceived barriers to implementing a proper phone free policy in school - phones connected to medical devices, and young carers for example - but the experience of schools that have embraced a proper ban shows that these problems can be overcome. The benefits of removing the distraction can hugely outweigh the costs, reducing disruption, truancy and bullying.

I've already been in touch with other schools and discussing how we can spread best practice to all schools in Thames Valley and will hopefully be launching a new project later this year.

As well as increasing the number of neighbourhood police officers locally, as part of my Education Strategy, every secondary school in Thames Valley now has a named schools police officer - and primary schools also have access to local support. The important role these officers play can be both dealing with incidents involving children - as either victims or perpetrators; but also working with teachers to educate children - and parents - about some of the risks facing them.

Vale and Downland Museum Wins Green Award



Congratulations to the Vale and Downland Museum, one of the top winners at the 2026 Green Growth Awards!

The museum was recognised for its sustainability efforts, including solar panels, LED lighting, and improved building efficiency. These initiatives reduce energy use and emissions while supporting the museum's ongoing work in the community.

Sustainable Wantage Updates



Dawn Chorus Walk – Sunday 3rd May

Celebrate **International Dawn Chorus Day** with a guided **Dawn Chorus Walk** along the Letcombe Brook corridor. Perfect for improving bird identification skills or enjoying the early morning countryside.

- **Time:** 4:30 – 6:30am
- **Meeting Point:** Betjeman Park
- **Booking:** £6 without breakfast, £12 with breakfast

Volunteering Opportunity – Membership Secretary

Sustainable Wantage is looking for a **Membership Secretary** to help manage members. This voluntary role is ideal for anyone with some administrative experience who can spare a few hours a month.

- Organised, friendly, and comfortable with email/spreadsheets
- Training provided for membership software
- **Apply:** Email a short introduction to membership.suswantage@gmail.com

Free Home Energy Assessments

Rising energy costs mean now is a great time to make your home more efficient.

Sustainable Wantage is running a pilot offering free home energy assessments for 20 homes in OX12. Advice may cover insulation, heating controls, and renewables.

- **Interested?** Email your phone number and address to josustainablewantage@gmail.com

If you know anyone that would like to receive this newsletter, please encourage them to sign up [here](#).

Louise Brown - Communications Officer

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ov.uk

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[Unsubscribe](#)