



Tetsworth Parish Annual Meeting

Record of the Annual Meeting of Tetsworth Parish

Held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 20th May 2025

in Tetsworth Memorial Hall

Present

Parish Councillors: Seb Mossop - Chairman
 Sue Rufus
 Chris Thompson – Vice Chairman
 Kim Bhagat

Meeting Clerk: Victoria Nuthall, Clerk & RFO

Members of the public: 33, including representatives of village organisations

1. Welcome – Seb Mossop

The chair thanked everyone for coming along to hear from members of local groups about what has been happening over the last 12 months. An important note, that this is not a Parish Council meeting, we are merely here to host & facilitate the session.

The chair introduced himself and notified the meeting that he had recently taken over as Chair of the Council, Chris Thompson is now Vice-Chair with councillors Susan Rufus and Kim Bhagat. Our other councillor, Sean Whitehead, sent apologies to the meeting. Last, but not least, Vicki Nuthall was introduced as the Clerk & RFO.

These changes in the Council were prompted by the resignation of Paul Carr and I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Paul for all his considerable efforts over the many years he has served on the Council. Including prolonged stints as our Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer. Thank-you Paul!

As a result of Paul's departure, we do have a vacancy on the Council so please contact Vicki if you are interested in applying.

2. Tetsworth Parish Council – Seb Mossop

So why do we have a Parish Council & what do we do? When the previous Council stepped-down a few years ago, I was conscious that we were facing a "use it or lose it" situation. Whilst Parish Councils represent the lowest level of local Government, I believed it still served a valuable purpose. So, we formed a new Council with people with a variety of experience – both old & new. In a nutshell, I believe the Parish Council serves as the hub or glue of the village. We hope to act as a link between parishioners & village bodies and also to represent the village to the District, County and Parliamentary levels of Government.

What does this mean in practical terms? With a relatively modest precept, or annual budget, we have responsibility for maintaining certain areas of the village, as well as providing services to Parishioners. A brief overview of what we are responsible for:

The play area inc. regular & annual inspections

The PC owns the TSSC building but it is managed by its own committee

Several areas of Common Land around the village

Grass cutting, Trees, The allotments, Forest School

Dog bins – installing, maintaining & emptying, Bus shelter

Speed signs – initially installed the 30mph speed-activated & 20mph school signs; recently replaced the 30mph with 20mph in line with the new 20mph speed limit

A number of benches on the Jitty and around the Green

Our War Memorial

The Defib here on the Village Hall

In addition, we are also responsible for, support, or consider:

Planning applications & enforcements

The NDP development

Financial or project requests

Liaison between villagers, village groups & district/county/MP

Maintenance of website

Emergency plan

Warm & cool Spaces

Setting of precept – minimise impact on council tax

It is important to note that our financial records are reviewed annually by both internal & external auditors

24/25 activities

Play area resurfacing project (inc. grants)

20mph speed limit

Generator installation (inc. grants)

Xmas tree & carols

War memorial cleaning

NDP review kick-off

Replaced & relocated the bench by the War Memorial

Planning application responses – particular effort was made in our response to the proposed development on the car boot field. Particular thanks to John Gilbert for his work on this.

Grants & donations – various local causes

Ongoing & future projects

Flooding – ditch clearance

NDP review completion

New fence for play area

Renovation of the War Memorial

Wicket gates at the Postcombe end of the village

Thank-you for listening. I'll now handover to Paul & Sarah to give us an update from the Primary School.

3. Tetsworth Primary School – Sarah Spencer / Paul Hankey

Sarah introduced herself as the Headteacher of Tetsworth Primary School. It was reported that there had been a number of changes since the last Ofsted inspection and changes to the leadership team.

Curriculum development – the school continues to work on this, strengthening its delivery which pupils are benefitting from. Staff continue to receive training to help children where gaps are identified to ensure staff are confident to deliver the support required.

SEN – working with parents and local authorities with training provided.

New Building – currently awaiting planning permission for a new boiler.

Outdoor Space – the school continues to utilise its outdoor space for the children to enjoy.

New Hall - currently awaiting tender process to finalise which is expected end of June. Delays have been experienced due to OCC's procurement process on the feasibility stage but hopefully not much longer now.

The leadership team are confident and happy.

4. Tetsworth Memorial Hall – Caroline Cann

It was reported that it had been a busy year for the hall with the refurbishment works. Currently awaiting building regs sign off then the counter tops can be installed as awaiting builder clarification of where the RSJ's are installed.

Judy Thornton recently resigned as trustee and Caroline took the opportunity at the meeting to thank Judy for her contribution.

The Memorial Hall committee are looking for a booking clerk, social media support and secretary. A note of thanks was noted to everyone who had supported the hall over the last 25 years and look forward to the hall re-opening fully in the near future with the full facilities.

If anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer or a trustee, please let Caroline know.

5. Tetsworth Sports & Social Club – report below read out by the chairman

CCTV has been installed at the social club from £500 donation received from PCC funds made from the sale of unclaimed stolen goods.

Generator installed from TPC grant

For the first ever year, there has been no football in Tetsworth.

The club is financially struggling with a £10,000 deficit. The club has increased the prices twice for drinks and also increased the price of memberships. Memberships are currently £20. Live sports, bar wages and electricity are the club's biggest expense.

Tetsworth 10K was a success and the club is hopeful to make this an annual event. There is currently a Tuesday running club to encourage new runners.

The club is trying to organise a village fete to be held on 28th June but could do with extra volunteers and donations.

The club is driving the clearing of the ditch around the village green to help prevent flooding. Funds have been requested from TPC.

Both cricket teams won promotion to their leagues.

6. Cozens Bequest – report below read out by the chairman

The Cozen's Bequest was founded in 1923 to provide pensions to poor widows and spinsters of good character professing the Protestant religion and living in Tetsworth or adjacent parishes, which comprise Thame. Great Haseley, Stoke Talmage, Wheatfield, Adwell, Lewknor and Aston Rowant. In 1991, the scope of the Charity was extended to relieving, either generally or individually, persons resident in the area of benefit who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by making grants of money or paying for items, services or facilities calculated to reduce the need, hardship or distress of such persons. However, we are not allowed to use the charity's assets to replace or make up shortfalls where a statutory body has the funding responsibility.

The chairman requested that if anyone is interested in applying for assistance, please contact the trustees or the clerk who will act with absolute discretion to pass details on.

7. Neighbourhood Development Plan – John Gilbert

TETSWORTH COMMUNITY-LED PLAN 2015-2025

It is now a decade since Tetsworth launched its Community-Led Plan. Back in 2014, the project investigated all aspects of village life and documented actions that could make Tetsworth an even better place to live in within a 10-year timescale. No fewer than 46 ideas were identified. Each was fleshed out with details of how, when and by whom they might be implemented.

So, we are now 10 years on and it is time to report what happened to the 46 ideas. Using traffic light colour coding, 25 achieved green status and another 13 are graded amber. 8 came to a redlight full stop either because they were impractical or failed to attract volunteers to take them forward.

Successes included the refurbishment of the heating and kitchen in the Memorial Hall and the mass planting of daffodils along our roadside verges. A couple of the non-starters were bringing natural gas to village households and something as simple as preparing an information pack for new village residents and visitors.

Hard copies of the CLP document were distributed to all Tetsworth households at the start of 2015 and a digital copy and the final version of the Action Chart documenting the outcome of all 46 ideas has been posted on the Parish Council website.

TETSWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN – REVIEW

With the support of a volunteer Steering Group (SG), Tetsworth Parish Council developed its current Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) in the years running up to 2021. Its purpose is to formally document local land use policies which have statutory status as the third tier of Planning Policy below the National Planning Policy Framework and the District Council's Local Plan. Tetsworth's plan addresses such issues as housing growth and design, protection of village heritage and green space assets, and preservation of its rural setting and countryside.

It was supported by 93% of residents voting at a local referendum held in May 2021 after which it was 'made' and adopted as part of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. Since then, its policies have played an important part in SODC, our Local Planning Authority's decision making on Planning Applications affecting Tetsworth.

Although the 'made' Tetsworth NDP 2035 still has an expected validity for another 12 years, periodic reviews are needed to keep it in step with evolving higher level planning policies and changes in local circumstances. The decision of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils to prepare a Joint Local Plan (JLP2041) and developments in Tetsworth such as completion of the 39 new houses in Blackthorn Rise and the establishment of the Harlesford Solar Farm to the south of the M40 have triggered the need to review our current NDP.

JLP2041 is currently under examination by a Planning Inspector. Here in Tetsworth, the reconstituted NDP Steering Group has confirmed that the original Vision and Objectives of the 'made' plan remain sound and has updated the Evidence Base supporting documents to reflect 2021 census data and changes in local circumstances. It has also proposed some new policies and small changes to existing ones that will make the overall plan more robust.

These changes include: the definition of a settlement boundary to differentiate policies applicable in the village's built-up footprint and its surrounding countryside; housing design criteria to address climate change; encouragement of small-scale commercial development, community infrastructure development and utility improvements in the village; and quantitative limits on the size of future solar and wind farm developments to mitigate the landscape-harming impact of clustering.

Our proposals have been reviewed by planning consultants who also produced a Modification Statement detailing the impact of the changes. They concluded that our proposals are sound and that they do not change the nature of the 'made' plan sufficiently to trigger another local referendum downstream. However, we still have a number of formal hurdles to negotiate before we reach that stage. These include SODC deciding whether we do, in fact, need a local referendum, a 6 -week period of local consultation, submission of the draft NDP, Evidence Base and other required documents to SODC, its further period of publicity and then examination by a Planning Inspector.

We are now close to launching the local consultation required by Regulation 14 and are holding an informal resident engagement event in conjunction with this Annual Meeting of the Parish to explain our proposals. The display material will be posted on the Tetsworth Parish Council website.

8. St Giles Parochial Church Council – Martin Paul – report read out by the Chairman

Our Parish church of Tetsworth St Giles is situated in Chiltern View, Tetsworth, Oxfordshire. Our P.C.C has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Rev. Peter Waterson, in promoting the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, within its parish.

MEMBERSHIP Members of the P.C.C. are either ex-officio or elected by the A.P.C.M. in accordance with Church Representation Rules. During the year the following members served:

Incumbent until September 2024 - Rev. Peter Waterson Churchwarden Mr. Martin Paul Secretary Miss. Jeneva Paul Treasurer Dr. Carolyn Carr And: Mrs. Heather Moore Mr. Richard Moore Mrs Carol Mayes Miss Karen Cheetham Mrs Tessa Peacock

There were 16 members on the electoral roll.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR CHURCH SERVICES

During the year 50 services were held.

Service Type Number of services Average Attendance

Holy Communion 20

10 Morning worship

26 7 Special Services

4 23 Special services were Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, a Service of Nine Lessons and Carols and Easter Day.

There were during the year: 1 Funeral 1 Baptism

LEADERSHIP

My thanks go to the Rev Peter Waterson and his wife June who have for the entirety of their incumbency been whatever each individual parish or parishioner have need them to be in all circumstances. We have been extremely lucky and honoured to have been granted the pleasure of knowing, working and praying with them. I also thank Miss Jeneva Paul, Mrs Heather Moore, Dr Carolyn Carr and Mrs Carol Mayes for their leadership in our morning prayer services. We have also been lucky enough to have the current Curate of the Thame Valley Team - the Rev Emma Endean-Mills step into the breach of the beginning of the interregnum to continue Holy Communion and special services for St Giles. Her enthusiasm and spiritual leadership has been most welcome in this difficult time.

GENERAL

Obviously the most significant event of the year has been the retirement of our Incumbent Rev. Peter Waterson, along with this we also had a new Quinquennial Report prepared and the repercussions of that are many and ongoing. My thanks go to all those in the parish who have continued to contribute to the upkeep and running of the church, Their efforts embrace many forms - the cleaning and maintenance of the Church building and the churchyard, flower arranging and baking cakes. Special mention must be made of Kelly Walker who has been professionally maintaining the Churchyard for many years. Thanks to regular giving and contributions by the congregation and from the Friends of St Giles we are managing to meet day to day running costs. Sadly this year we lost Mrs Margaret Paul and her Funeral which was held in May of 2024 raised a substantial amount which she kindly had elected to be given to Giles to continue its work. We still have funds remaining from a bequest some years ago which hopefully should cover any repairs needed from the quinquennial report. The heart of the congregation is very much sustained by our love of God, of each other and the village itself and influences everything we do.

9. South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) – Cllr Georgina Heritage – report read out by the chairman at the meeting

I hope that throughout the year I have captured all news and SODC activity in my monthly reports, which are available online via parish council websites and in some local newsletters. I very much encourage residents to contact me via georgina.heritage@southoxon.gov.uk if they have any questions, concerns or suggestions arising from my reports.

For this annual report I am highlighting some of the bigger news items from SODC from the past twelve months, and I do hope the following information will be of interest to residents:

Local Government Reorganisation

In 2024 the Government released a white paper on local government reorganisation which will mean that two-tier authorities (like we have in Oxfordshire) will end, and instead we must form Unitary authorities serving at least 500,000 residents. Unitaries must then combine to form a Combined authority serving a population of around 1.5 million, likely to be overseen by an elected mayor.

Government will make the decision on the direction South Oxfordshire will take, however an initial proposal for "Ridgeway Council" has been submitted on behalf of South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire Council, which would see the three areas combined. This has been developed due to the demographic and economic similarities and historic ties between the areas.

Following the government's request that Oxfordshire authorities submit interim proposals together, the County Council has submitted an outline proposal for the Ridgeway Council and North Oxfordshire Council to the

government, alongside two other options being developed in Oxfordshire which include a county-wide Oxfordshire proposal.

There will be opportunities in the coming months to hear the views of our communities before the final proposal is submitted, and the councils will also continue working positively and collaboratively with the other authorities in Oxfordshire.

SODC Budget 2025-26

The council met in February and approved its 2025-2026 Budget. Diligent financial management ensured that SODC could deliver a balanced budget and marks the first time in nine years that the council has not needed to transfer funds from reserves.

Major funding will be made available to support the purchase of more **affordable housing** across South Oxfordshire. Having already committed £10 million to provide more safe, secure and compliant housing, purchased under the Local Authority Housing Funding (LAHF) schemes, the district council has now committed to make a further £10 million available to support the council's long-term ambitions to meet local housing need.

The budget also includes funding to secure the future of the council's **Community Hub** on an ongoing basis. This valued service provides practical support and advice for those with cost-of-living concerns or who are finding life difficult.

The **councillor grant** budget will increase by 50%, to £7,500 per councillor, while the Capital and Revenue grant schemes for voluntary organisations will continue. This is something we're particularly happy about at SODC, since many councils are not in a financial position to offer such grants programmes.

The council will continue to fund an ongoing programme to improve **leisure centres**, including major decarbonisation & refurbishment projects at Thame Leisure Centre, such as solar panels, a sauna and gym equipment replacement. TLC opening hours will be maintained despite the high cost of energy, which renewables will help with.

Council tax for services provided by South Oxfordshire District Council were set at £151.24 for a Band D property. This means just £2.91 per week for a wide range of services including waste and recycling collections, community support, leisure services, parks and play areas, housing and planning services, environmental health and licensing.

Joint Local Plan

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils worked together to produce a Joint Local Plan (JLP), which aims to help meet their local communities' need for affordable housing, jobs and infrastructure while tackling the climate emergency. Following a series of public consultations, the plan was submitted to Government in December 2024 for the examination stage.

If successfully adopted, the plan will replace the existing Local Plans for both councils.

In the new Plan, the councils have shown that there are enough new homes in the pipeline already. This means that there is no need to build on any extra new greenfield sites over the next 15 years, beyond what has already been allocated. 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.

Crucially, the plan also sets out new firmer environment policies so that development is net zero carbon and delivers twice the national level of biodiversity net gain to help with the recovery of nature.

By completing and submitting the Joint Local Plan to an accelerated timetable, it will be tested against the previous housing numbers and government policies set in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023, rather than the

new (higher) housing numbers and new policies of the new NPPF 2024. Although the Joint Local Plan was not required to meet the new higher housing numbers, and once adopted the housing numbers will be pinned to those in the Joint Local Plan for five years, the new NPPF does require us to calculate housing land supply differently, straight away. A key government change is that all authorities must now demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, regardless of the age of their local plan. This reversed the changes in the previous NPPF, which had withdrawn the 5-year land supply test for councils where their plan was less than five years old.

Haseley Trading Estate

For the Haseley Brook ward, one of the major topics over recent months has been the announcement from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse councils that they are the new owners of Haseley Trading Estate and, subject to planning, the site will be used as a vehicle depot for waste and street cleaning fleet. This is something I was admittedly nervous about initially, particularly as I was concerned that local residents may assume the estate is intended to be a waste transfer station. It's very important to me that our residents can feel assured of transparency and our parish councils are fully informed. With this in mind, I contacted Andrew Busby, Head of Development and Corporate Landlord, who made direct contact with parish councils in Haseley Brook.

To clarify, the new site would be used as a depot for parking vehicles and for vehicle maintenance. There would be no storage or disposal of waste. The current vehicle depot in Culham is due to be redeveloped for new homes and the existing contract and lease expires in 2026, and the councils have spent a very long time searching for a suitable new location to ensure statutory waste collection services are not interrupted in any way.

The plan is to redevelop and retain one of the existing buildings and make improvements to the site, which will include improving the screening with planting, and managing the adjoining woodland which has suffered some neglect in recent years. They will also be reviewing their vehicle movements to keep the impact on the surrounding areas as minimal as possible.

The new owners intend to be good neighbours and show respect to the surrounding villages. I am nonetheless highly conscious of and sensitive to the concerns of our local communities, and I will work with residents to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns are responded to. If residents have any questions about the intentions for Haseley Trading Estate I am very happy to offer support and assist in getting them answered.

Other Highlights

Almost 49,000 residents are now signed up to the new garden waste permit scheme in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts. This kind of scheme is offered successfully by many other local authorities, including in neighbouring West Oxfordshire. The permits help the waste collection crews identify which bins should be emptied. This will ensure that only households that have paid for the service have their garden waste bins emptied and the changes are part of the councils' ongoing work to improve the efficiency and value of public services.

We were pleased to partner with Soha Housing, Thame Community Land Trust and Thame & District Housing Association to deliver 49 affordable homes in Thame and Wheatley, largely funded by Section 106 affordable housing grants from developer contributions.

A strategy for the future of sports and leisure facilities was approved, and action plans will be created to work with sports clubs, town and parish councils, national governing bodies, leisure providers and other organisations to allocate funding and support projects going forward.

Work has been ongoing to bring empty homes back into use, including working with owners and reviewing council tax on empty properties.

10. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) – Cllr Judith Edwards

Cllr Edwards was unable to attend the meeting. The Chairman reported to the meeting that due to the recent county elections, Cllr Edwards was duly elected and is new in her post so we will look forward to working with Cllr Edwards as we move forward this year.

11. Open Forum

Judds Lane - Parishioner asked for an update regarding Judds Lane and the new building development. The Chairman referred to the Primary School update earlier in the meeting whereby there have been delays due to the OCC procurement process. A further question regarding the resurfacing of Judds Lane. The chairman confirmed that the resurfacing of the road was included in the planning conditions and that the PC will monitor.

Village Ditch Clearing - a parishioner asked whether all landowners had been contacted for a contribution/help towards this project. Concern was raised over the council taking responsibility for this and the ongoing costs for the parish moving forward. This was noted.

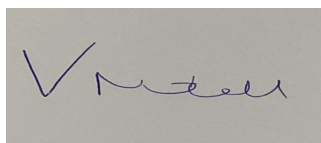
Dog Waste Bin – Swan Gardens. A parishioner requested if anything could be done regarding the dog waste bin. The chairman reported that this was in hand and a quotation had been received which will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

Oxfordshire Way – kissing gate opposite Harlesford Farm. A parishioner asked for an update for when the gate will be replaced as a gate had previously been offered locally. The chairman explained the countryside right of ways officer is currently reviewing this and will report back when we have further information.

Footpaths & Bridleway's. A parishioner reported that some of the local paths and bridleways are sometimes blocked. The chairman notified the meeting that in the first instance, this should be reported via fixmystreet. If this does not resolve the issue, please feel free to contact the council who will follow up.

A parishioner expressed thanks to everyone who attended the meeting and thanked everyone for their contribution to the parish.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.32pm.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Victoria Nuthall', is shown on a light grey rectangular background.

Victoria Nuthall
Parish Clerk & RFO
21st May 2025