



Creating Futures



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Welcome

from Barry Norton

Leader of the Council



Britain has walked an extremely difficult path during the last five years since the country's economy went into recession. Businesses in all sectors have been hit, families' finances put under pressure and the public purse tightened as the Government tackles the country's deficit.

It has not been an easy journey in West Oxfordshire. Businesses and residents have not gone unscathed and we know that some are feeling the pinch more than others, but, on the whole our District has fared well in the face of adversity. A thriving local economy, high employment levels, low crime rates and a great choice of shopping and leisure facilities are good reasons to feel very proud of the area in which we live and work.

With cutbacks in public spending, local authorities across the country have faced tough choices and this has meant a reduction in public services for many communities. Hard work, careful planning and efficiency savings have enabled our Council to protect frontline services once again this year - despite a continuing fall in income - while freezing council tax again.

We are extremely proud to have been able to achieve this while keeping on track to deliver further savings and remain steadfast in our approach to safeguarding things like free parking. Examples of just a small section of the services we provide and work we do can be found throughout the following pages.

You will see the huge impact that major developments have on our District, not only in providing much-needed additional housing, but also in bringing in millions of pounds worth of infrastructure and investment. It is vital that these developments are carefully planned from the outset and our Council always aims to achieve what is best for West Oxfordshire. (Pages 4-5).

It is always heartening that so many local residents are willing to get involved on issues that affect our District. It is not a pleasant subject and we wish there was no need to talk about it, but dog fouling is a problem and we are grateful for the support of residents like those featured (pages 10-11). Without their help, our work on problems like this could simply not be as effective.

Whatever the issue, we do what we can to support local communities. One of our biggest achievements for this year has been safeguarding grants for the voluntary sector, at a time when other authorities are clawing back or stopping funding altogether. In addition to more than £275,000 going to causes like West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice Bureau, Chipping Norton Theatre and Witney's Base 33 youth service, we continue to give a variety of grants and funding support to communities across the District. See page 8-9 for more details.

There is no doubt that times remain tough but by working together, with on-going determination and community spirit, I believe West Oxfordshire will continue to ride out the storm.

Know your councillors

West Oxfordshire District Council is made up of 27 electoral areas, called wards, represented by 49 councillors. All councillors are listed

ALVESCOT & FILKINS



Cllr David McFarlane
Conservative
01367 810102

ASCOTT & SHIPTON



Cllr Hilary Biles
Conservative
01993 831822

BAMPTON & CLANFIELD



Cllr Martin Barrett
Conservative
01993 202561



Cllr Mark Booty
Conservative
(Deputy Leader)
01993 851003

BRIZE NORTON & SHILTON



Cllr Verena Hunt
Conservative
01993 841853

BURFORD



Cllr Derek Cotterill
Conservative
(Chairman)
01993 823188

CARTERTON NORTH EAST



Cllr Norman Macrae MBE
Conservative



Cllr Henry Howard
Conservative
01993 844631

CARTERTON NORTH WEST



Cllr Peter Handley
Conservative
01993 842147



Cllr Maxine Crossland
Conservative
01993 212654

CARTERTON SOUTH



Cllr Michael Brennan
Conservative
01993 212863



Cllr Lynn Little
Conservative
01993 842269

CHADLINGTON & CHURCHILL



Cllr Neil Owen
Conservative
01993 830875

CHARLBURY & FINSTOCK



Cllr Hywel Davies
Conservative
01993 868004

CHIPPING NORTON



Cllr Liz Leffman
Liberal Democrat
01608 810153



Cllr Eve Coles
Labour
01608 643570



Cllr Rob Evans
Labour
01608 643800



Cllr Annie Roy-Barker
Conservative
01608 644107

DUCKLINGTON



Cllr Steve Hayward
Independent
01993 622511

EYNSHAM & CASSINGTON



Cllr Peter Kelland
Conservative
01865 880028

EYNSHAM & CASSINGTON cont



Cllr Larry Poole MBE
Liberal Democrat
01865 375130



Cllr Edward James
Conservative
01865 731009

FREELAND & HANBOROUGH



Cllr Colin Dingwall
Conservative
01993 706363



Cllr Toby Morris
Conservative
01993 849402

HAILEY, MINSTER LOVELL & LEAFIELD



Cllr Simon Hoare
Conservative
01993 869241



Cllr Warwick Robinson
Conservative
01993 774386

KINGHAM, ROLLRIGHT & ENSTONE



Cllr Andrew Beaney
Conservative
01993 832090



Cllr Nigel Colston
Conservative
01608 643209

MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD



Cllr Jeff Haine
Conservative
01993 830078

NORTH LEIGH



Cllr Barry Norton
Conservative
(Leader)
01993 702302

STANDLAKE, ASTON & STANTON HARCOURT



Cllr Hilary Fenton
Conservative
01993 852082



Cllr Steve Good
Conservative
01865 882668

STONESFIELD & TACKLEY



Cllr Charles Cottrell-Dormer
Conservative
01869 347110



Cllr Derrick Millard
Conservative
01993 891484

THE BARTONS



Cllr Arthur Goffe
Conservative
01869 347712

WITNEY CENTRAL



Cllr Andrew Coles
Labour
01993 703812



Cllr Pete Dorward
Conservative
01993 705359

WITNEY EAST



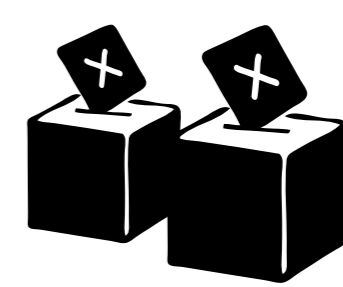
Cllr Duncan Enright
Labour
01993 200012



Cllr Jeanette Baker
Conservative
01993 702301



Cllr James Mills
Conservative
01993 700884



Get involved in decision-making

We're currently looking to appoint independent people to help with two areas of work:

Allowances Panel:

We're seeking three people for our Allowances Panel. Appointments are for a four year period, potentially beginning next April.

The Panel recommends the allowances to be paid to our councillors.

- www.westoxon.gov.uk/allowances

Councillor Conduct:

We're also looking for an 'independent person' to help with standards and the code of conduct.

They will help to decide whether complaints about councillor conduct should be investigated.

Their view may also be sought by a councillor who is the subject of an allegation of misconduct.

- www.westoxon.gov.uk/standards

For more information on either of the posts above call 01993 861521 or see our website.

We are happy to provide this newsletter in other formats. Please contact us if this is required.

All information contained in this newsletter is correct at the time of going to print. If you have any further comments call 01993 861000 or email communications@westoxon.gov.uk

WITNEY NORTH



Cllr David Snow
Independent
01993 703365



Cllr Richard Langridge
Conservative
01993 704493

WITNEY SOUTH



Cllr Alvin Adams
Conservative
01993 772098



Cllr Jane Doughty
Conservative
01993 774945



Cllr David Harvey
Conservative
01993 706501

WITNEY WEST



Cllr Louise Chapman
Conservative
(Deputy Chairman)
01993 773560



Cllr Harry Eaglestone
Conservative
01993 702915

WOODSTOCK & BLADON



Cllr Julian Cooper
Liberal Democrat
01993 811519



Cllr Elizabeth Poskitt
Liberal Democrat
01993 811590

Councillors can also be emailed. Please use the following format: name.surname@westoxon.gov.uk

For more information visit: www.westoxon.gov.uk/councillors

Major investment for West Oxfordshire

How we got to this stage

The planning process for major developments such as West Witney is lengthy and complicated, involving many people and lots of organisations. Here's a brief guide to explain some of the steps involved for large scale developments:

The next large-scale new development, estimated to be worth around £250m, promises to reap huge benefits for Witney and surrounding areas.

The development on the west side of Witney was recently given the go ahead to deliver up to 1,000 new homes, on what has been described as an attractive tree-lined, boulevard-style development.

An agreement negotiated by Council planning officers will also ensure the developer provides significant improvements and contributions towards local infrastructure.

The development is part of the Council's existing and emerging Local Plan. (For latest updates on the Local Plan visit www.westoxon.gov.uk/draftlocalplan)

The West Witney development will bring:

Housing

- 1,000 new homes, with at least 30 per cent classed as affordable
- Provision for an 80-unit extra care home, comprising 40 affordable units
- Energy efficient housing

Employment

- An employment area within the northern part of the site, adjoining the existing Windrush business park

Local amenities and leisure

- Neighbourhood centre with shops, a free car park and potential for other amenities
- Upgraded facilities for West Witney sports ground
- Contributions to refurbishing the Corn Exchange in Witney
- Public art features
- Leisure facilities including playing fields, a multi-use games area, BMX track, play areas
- Allotments
- Open space with landscaped and ecological habitat areas

“ I believe this development will contribute positively to Witney and surrounding areas. Its carefully thought out design has evolved over many years with a huge input from our own Council to secure more much-needed affordable housing, as well as infrastructure improvements. ”

Cllr Warwick Robinson,
Cabinet Member for Planning

Education

- New primary school and space allocated for a secondary school for future use, if needed

Transport and travel

- New roundabout connecting the A40 to Downs Road, relieving some of the traffic currently using the Ducklington interchange at Station Lane and Minster Lovell A40 junctions
- Contributions to town centre improvements eg, car parking
- Footpaths and cycle tracks integrating off-site amenities and Witney town centre
- Local bus stops



Illustrations courtesy of The Barton-Willmore Partnership



■ Illustration of the view of Downs Road frontage

Witney road junction upgrade

Further good news for Witney is that Oxfordshire County Council has approved plans to upgrade the Ducklington Lane / Station Lane junction, which would see extra lanes added to increase capacity for traffic.

The £2m scheme, planned for 2014, is part of a wider package of proposed improvements to traffic infrastructure in the town.

Planning round-up

Several applications of wider significance have been determined recently by the Council, and in some cases, work has already started.

Carterton:

- Work on the new Morrisons superstore is underway and the store is planned to open before Christmas 2013. Developer funds will go towards projects in the town including a new Market Square, planting trees and town centre walkways.
- Planning permission has been approved for 200 homes for RAF service personnel on Upavon Way.
- Planning permission has been granted for 93 extra care self-contained apartments and a nursing home on Milestone Road.

Chipping Norton:

- Planning permission has been granted for the Co-op supermarket expansion which will double the size of the store and create a car park on two levels.

Long Hanborough:

- The new car park at Hanborough Station is set to open this summer. It will provide over 200 car parking spaces and make a huge difference as currently there are only 50 parking spaces which fill up very quickly.

Witney

- Planning has been granted for a new retirement village of 185 homes at Coral Springs, near Thorney Leys. Communal facilities include a pool, wellness suite, library, kitchen, restaurant, laundry, bar and admin offices. For details: www.richmond-villages.com
- Developers have started work on the former Buttercross works, Station Lane, for 106 homes plus an extra care home.
- Premier Inn has planning permission to build a 57-bed hotel and restaurant on Ducklington Lane. This will create jobs and encourage businesses and visitors to the district. Construction work has started and the hotel is due to open Spring 2014.

Finding major development sites

Major development sites often form part of the Council's Local Plan, which means they have been identified previously through extensive public consultation and assessed against a range of criteria - such as location, access, flooding, school capacity, proximity to facilities, landscape and ecological impact etc.

Outline planning application

Once a site is confirmed in the Local Plan, landowners can submit outline planning detailing the principles/concepts of the site's development. We ask for your views and those of consultees, such as Thames Water.

Armed with these comments we can then liaise with the developer to ensure that the design and overall impact of the development is acceptable. Our planners also negotiate the best community benefits possible. For example new road junctions, money for additional classrooms, recreational provision etc.

Planning decision

A report taking into account all the comments received and assessing the merits of the proposals, is then taken to Planning Committee. Often further site visits are required before the application is either approved or refused* by councillors. If the application is approved, the developer is required to make one, or more, detailed planning applications for the site.

Detailed planning application

The more detailed plans submitted by the developer for different areas of the site will include aspects such as drainage, landscaping, window details etc.

Site construction

The site is carefully monitored during construction to ensure that approved plans are followed. Building control officers also visit regularly to check properties are built to meet regulatory fire and safety standards.

On completion

Once people move in to the new homes other council services such as waste collection come into play.

* If the application is refused the developer can appeal.

Local firms and tradespeople are being encouraged to find out if they could boost their business by becoming an authorised Green Deal installer.

GREEN DEAL boost for businesses

Green Deal gives householders the chance to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes and pay the cost back through savings achieved on their bills.

To access funding, householders need to have their property assessed to identify suitable improvements and work must be carried out by an authorised Green Deal installer.

Over 45 measures are available under the scheme, including internal/external (solid wall) insulation, loft insulation, new boiler/heating systems, double glazing, draught proofing and renewable technologies such as solar panels.

Local businesses and tradespeople who install these types of energy saving measures are being encouraged to join the scheme and benefit from gaining work from customers who choose to have Green Deal work carried out.

Becoming an authorised installer

To become an authorised Green Deal installer you must gain certification from a Green Deal accreditation certification body (a fee applies). As part of the certification you (and your company, if applicable) will need to:

- Meet the Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 2030 for the measures you wish to install. This is a technical standard for installing, managing and providing energy efficiency measures.
- Comply with the Green Deal Code of Practice.
- Keep clear records of work done and allow monitoring of installations work, if requested.

Once you've been accredited, your details will be added to a register maintained by the Green Deal Oversight and Registration Body and you will be able to use the national quality mark.

To find out more about becoming an installer visit www.greendealorb.co.uk

Tradespeople and householders interested in the Green Deal should contact:

- www.greendealtogether.org.uk (local provider) / 0300 111 3330
- www.energysavingtrust.org.uk / 0300 123 1234
- www.gov.uk/greendeal

Could your home benefit from Green Deal Together?

A new company called Green Deal Together (contacts above), owned by West Oxfordshire District Council and 14 other local authorities, will launch early autumn to provide Green Deal services for West Oxfordshire among other areas.

Green Deal Together can arrange for an approved assessor to visit your home. After a home survey you will be given a report showing energy efficiency measures you could make, along with potential savings on your energy bill.

If you decide to follow these up, you can take your report to a Green Deal Provider, such as Green Deal Together, who can arrange approved Installers and funding for the work. You can approach more than one Provider before entering into a contractual agreement, called a Green Deal Plan.

In addition, you will be given an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) showing the energy rating of your home - which is needed when a property is being sold.

“Nationally 60,000 jobs are expected to be supported in the insulation sector alone by 2015 – up from 26,000 in 2011.

This is a great business opportunity for local tradespeople to get involved with the Government's Green Deal scheme, as well as helping people improve their homes and make them more energy efficient.”

Cllr David Harvey,
Cabinet Member for Environment



Look out for the Green Deal Approved quality mark when you want to find Assessors, Providers and Installers.

Planning issues answered: solar panels



Solar panels capture sunlight and generate power either for electricity or heating water and are the most common form of renewable energy for householders.

Panels are usually fitted on south facing roofs, but can also be installed on outbuildings or as free-standing systems within a property's grounds.

As long as you do not live in a Listed Building, Conservation Area or World Heritage site, planning permission is not needed for:

Roof or wall-mounted panels if:

- the highest part of the panel is lower than the highest part of the roof (not including chimney)
- the panel is in line with the roof/wall and does not stand out any more than 200mm

Free-standing panels if they are:

- the only set within the grounds of the property
- not taller than 4m, wider or deeper than 3m or have a surface area of more than 9m²
- more than 5m from the property's boundaries

Even if you do not need planning permission to install solar panels, there is still a requirement to meet building regulations.

It is also important that work is carried out by a professional installer who is registered under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme.

If you live in a Listed Building, Conservation Area or within the Blenheim Palace World Heritage site and you are interested in installing solar panels, please contact us to discuss planning permission.

We're here to help

If you're not sure if you need planning permission or building regulations approval we will happily give you free advice first. Simply complete the 'Do I need to submit an application' form at www.westoxon.gov.uk/permission or call 01993 861420 and we will send you an enquiry form. (We're unable to tell you if planning permission is needed over the phone).

You can find out more about your property, including if it is listed, in a Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, from the 'My West Oxfordshire' section of our website: www.westoxon.gov.uk/mwo

For further advice and guidance: www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning

Building regulations and planning permission in brief

Most people realise that they may need approval for their proposed building work. However, it may not always be clear how planning and building regulations differ.

For many types of building work, separate permission will be required for both planning and building regulations as they are separate pieces of legislation. For other building work, such as internal alterations, building regulations approval will probably be needed, but planning permission may not be.

Planning permission: deals with the appearance of the proposal, the effect it will have on neighbouring properties and the general environment.

Building regulations: deal with the construction details of the building works to ensure the health and safety of people in and around the building.

For more information visit www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning or call 01993 861420.

Breathing new life into community facilities

Community life is at the heart of our District and it is vital that this continues, particularly as we live in one of the most rural and sparsely populated areas of the South East.

Across West Oxfordshire there are residents who go the extra mile to support their village or town - perhaps by helping to set up or run clubs, or through fundraising to improve local facilities.

Grant funding is available to help communities that want to improve or enhance existing facilities, along with support and advice to guide them through the process.

This year, £200,000 has been set aside to support projects and help community and sports organisations make improvements, or purchase new equipment through our Community Facilities Grants.

Enhancing community spirit

South Leigh Parish Council is among applicants that have already successfully bid for a Community Facilities Grant and a project involving local residents to completely refurbish and extend the village's dilapidated hall is now coming to fruition.

A £50,000 grant and £35,000 loan from our council has been added to more than £100,000 in donations from villagers and money raised through fundraising, along with other grants secured by the Parish Council, to pay for the renovation.

The hall - a former Victorian school - is getting a new kitchen and toilet extension, including facilities for disabled people, as well as a larger community space and new windows. Other improvements like damp-proofing and electrical rewiring will help bring the hall up to modern standards, while retaining its original character.

Parish Council chairman Nicky Brooks (picture right) says: "There has been incredible support from the village. When finished, the hall will provide a real focus for local people and enhance community spirit. We'll also have more space for social events and classes."

Other projects to have received Community Facilities Grants where improvement work is under way, or due to begin shortly, include Enstone Village Hall, Freeland Village Hall, Long Hanborough Pavilion and High Street Methodist Church, Witney. Funding has also recently been approved for projects in Eynsham, Over Norton, Tackley, the Wychwoods and Witney, ranging from village hall refurbishment work to new playground equipment.

Communities can get a maximum grant of £50,000 and can apply for up to 25% of the total project cost. There is some funding still available in 2013 - the deadline for applications is 23 September. In addition, the Council provides funding for sports coaching and playwork qualifications, heritage or arts opportunities and for individuals to develop their sporting talent.

For criteria and further information, call 01993 861080 or visit www.westoxon.gov.uk/grants



“Across the country, other authorities are withdrawing this type of funding and voluntary bodies are finding themselves in unprecedented circumstances. Times are tough for everyone, including our Council, but with careful planning and a continuing commitment to efficiency and savings we have been able to protect these grants for another year while not reducing any of the services we provide to the public.”

Cllr Simon Hoare,
Cabinet Member for Resources

Other grant support

The Council continues to support the voluntary sector this year with grants worth more than £275,000 going to:

• West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice Bureau	£156,000
• Chipping Norton Theatre	£25,900
• Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	£22,500
• Wychwood Forest Project	£18,600
• Cotswolds Conservation Board	£10,300
• Base 33 youth charity	£10,000
• Age UK	£10,000
• Oxfordshire Woodland Project	£4,000
• Oxfordshire Playbus	£2,250
• Volunteer Link-Up	£2,000
• Lower Windrush Valley Project	£2,000
• A variety of other projects	£14,300

Active investment

Carterton's leisure facilities are getting a boost during the summer:

Carterton Leisure Centre

More than £100,000 is being spent on new equipment, improving accessibility and completely redecorating the gym. The new equipment will make it easier for people with disabilities to use, while improving the gym for everyone.

Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP)

The ATP will be resurfaced with the latest '3G AstroTurf' to replace the existing worn out pitch, at a cost of around £170,000.

Once complete, the Council will have invested more than £750,000 in upgrading leisure facilities across the District in the last year, including gym refurbishments at Chipping Norton Leisure Centre and The Windrush, Witney.

Find out more about leisure facilities in West Oxfordshire at www.westoxon.gov.uk/leisurefacilities or call 01993 861080.

Music Diary

Hit the right note this summer with local musical entertainment, and you may not have far to go!

Music Diary is a free online listing of concerts and performances in the District. For more information, or if you'd like to submit an event for inclusion, call 01993 8601080 or visit www.westoxon.gov.uk/musicdiary

FREE Playday
on Wednesday
31 July from
11am - 3pm
at the Oxford
Road Playing Field, Eynsham.



All activities are free and include go karts, climbing wall, sensory bus, circus skills, arts and crafts, sports and much more. All ages welcome.

Visit www.oxonplay.org.uk or call 01865 779474.

Help for young carers

The Spurgeons Young Carers Service supports under 25s whose life is impacted by the responsibility of care for an adult or sibling. This may be due to a long-term illness, disability or substance misuse.

Young carers dedicate their lives, often making huge sacrifices, to care for someone they love. As a result they have less time and money for their own leisure time. Working with Spurgeons, we are offering discounted leisure centre membership for West Oxfordshire young carers in all our leisure centres - Carterton, Chipping Norton, Witney and Eynsham (see back page).

To find out more or to register as a young carer, contact Jennifer Mahon at Spurgeons Young Carers Service on 01865 777224 or 07791 273700. Alternatively, email jmahon@spurgeons.org

■ A recent Children's Society report estimates there are 166,363 young carers in England - and this is likely to be the tip of the iceberg.

Mosaic to tell a story

A mosaic depicting images of the Cogges area of Witney is being installed at the local doctor's surgery.

Local residents of all ages have helped to inspire images on the mosaic, which will wrap around the outside walls of an extension at Cogges Surgery.

Stonesfield artist Lindsey Thompson is creating the mosaic and we've been working with the surgery to create a focal point for the local community. The mosaic is being funded by developer's contributions.

Find out more about the Council's work on public art at www.westoxon.gov.uk/publicart or call 01993 861080.



Joining forces in the battle against dog fouling

Local residents are taking action to urge owners to scoop the poop and spread the message about the risks posed by dog mess.



The number of dogs in Britain is increasing - with around 25% of householders keeping one as a pet - and, like other areas of the country, West Oxfordshire is suffering from dog fouling.

Some groups of residents, including responsible owners who clear up after their dogs, are now helping our Council tackle the problem in their community by:

- putting up warning stickers explaining that dog fouling could lead to prosecution and a fine of up to £1,000
- reporting problem spots, to enable patrols to be carried out by our wardens, who have the powers to issue £50 on-the-spot fines
- approaching dog owners to raise awareness of the importance of scooping the poop and highlighting the health risks.

National research by the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign shows that the highest level of fouling happens in places near to where people live.

This is being experienced in local communities, including Madley Park in Witney. Suzanne Estevez (pictured front cover, far right) is among a group of residents who have joined together to try to stop the problem.

She said: "It's not very subtle, right in the middle of the path where everyone walks to the school, or the shops. One day, I noticed some right outside our house and, at that point, I'd had enough so I put a message out online among a group of local people and got lots of response. I contacted the Council to see what could be done and we've taken it from there.

"The biggest concern is the health risk. I wonder if those who do it just think it acts like compost, but it's actually very hazardous and can take months to go. I hadn't realised how serious it was until I started looking into the issue."

Don't be collared without a tag!

You could be fined up to £5,000 if your dog doesn't wear an identification tag.

It's a legal requirement that a dog must wear a collar and tag with its owner's name and address on it when out in a public place.

Don't forget to microchip your dog. This only takes a moment and lasts forever. For more information contact us or speak to your vet.



■ Nicola Boulton and residents from Milton-under-Wychwood

Don't fall foul of the law

As part of the fight against dog fouling, the District's dog warden and community wardens are patrolling 'hot spot' areas and have powers to issue £50 fixed penalty notices or prosecute offenders.

Cllr David Harvey, Cabinet Member for Environment said: "Most dog owners are very responsible and it's a minority who cause problems. We would like to urge them to think about their actions. Not only are they breaking the law and affecting their local area and environment, they are also potentially putting people at risk."

For more information about tackling dog fouling in your community, or to report a problem:

- Visit: www.westoxon.gov.uk/litter
- Call: 01993 861020

Protect your community: scoop the poop

As well as being unpleasant, dog fouling is dangerous and can pose a real threat of serious illness which, in extreme cases, can cause blindness, seizures and breathing difficulties. Those most at risk are children - the ones most likely to step or fall in it.

Toxocarasis: This is the most serious risk, a disease caused by roundworm parasites found in a dog's digestive system. Parasite eggs can be transferred to soil and then onto a person's hands and into their body. Inside the body, the eggs hatch and release larvae. The condition can cause a headache or cough or even blindness. People of all ages can be affected.

Bag it and bin it

We have put around 500 dog waste bins in prominent locations across the district for owners to dispose of their dog's waste, without the need to take it home. These bins are emptied at least once a week.

Each year a huge amount of dog waste is picked up off the pavements and public areas by our street cleansing staff.

Nicola Boulton (pictured left) is among a group trying to raise awareness and stop the problem in Milton-under-Wychwood. She said: "It's just horrendous and shouldn't be happening. Why should we have to face that obstacle when we walk outside with our children? People need to take responsibility - if they can't clean up after their dog, they shouldn't have one."

Ideally, your dog should be trained to use your garden at home and garden play areas should be fenced off. To cut the risk of spreading germs, dog mess should be picked up straight away:

- Use a doggy bag or suitable plastic bag (eg nappy sack), put your hand inside, pick up the mess and pull the bag down, effectively turning it inside out. This protects you from touching the dog mess.
- Tie a knot in the bag and place it in a dog waste bin or take it home for disposal.
- As a last resort, double-wrap in two plastic bags and place in a litter bin.
- Wash your hands as soon as you can.

Faulty electric blankets can cause fires!

Book your free check at:

- Witney - 11 October
- Chipping Norton - 23 October

To book call 01993 861060 or visit www.westoxon.gov.uk/blankettesting



More days for Witney Shopmobility

Witney Shopmobility is now open four days a week 9.30am to 4.15pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Anyone with a physical disability can borrow, for free, a wheelchair or scooter to travel around Witney town centre. The service is based in Langdale Gate, Witney and there is disabled parking nearby.

Jackie Pitts from Filkins (pictured below) uses Witney Shopmobility once or twice a week. She thinks it's an excellent service and wants more people to use it. She said, "I see a lot of people with mobility difficulties like myself, struggling to get around Witney.

"Shopmobility is a great way of getting around town and I couldn't manage without it. I like shopping in Witney and I use the library and hairdressers. It's given me a new lease of life."

West Oxfordshire District Council took over running the service at the end of last year and, in addition to opening an extra day, we will be upgrading facilities and replacing equipment reaching the end of its working life.

To book Shopmobility call: 01993 864787 or 861000.



Beware bogus callers advising that your council tax band may be too high

These callers are offering to obtain a reduction on your behalf for a fee. You can appeal against your council tax banding yourself very easily by calling the Valuation Office Agency on 03000 506 330. It won't cost you anything.

If you receive a call, do not give out any personal information and we recommend you end the call as quickly as possible.

To report a suspected scam, call Trading Standards on 0845 051 0845.

Do you 'like' us?

Are you looking for new ways to find out what's happening at your District Council or maybe you want to know more about what's going on in your local area?

Then check out our social media sites and get involved with the conversation.

Our Twitter account has over 1,100 followers (and is growing every day) and we've launched a new Facebook page

where you can post comments, share information and interact with us.

We use these pages to highlight key issues, promote upcoming events, answer your questions and share all that's good in West Oxfordshire.

You can follow us at:

 www.twitter.com/WodcNews

 www.facebook.com/westoxfordshire

August Bank Holiday Waste collection dates:

Normal collection:	Revised date:
Mon 26 August	Tues 27 August
Tues 27 August	Wed 28 August
Wed 28 August	Thurs 29 August
Thurs 29 August	Fri 30 August
Fri 30 August	Sat 31 August

* Look out for 2013/14 waste collection calendars in the post in September *

Ethical banking service helps those in need

If you live or work in Oxfordshire and are struggling to access banking services, the Oxford Credit Union could help.

The union is a non-profit organisation which provides basic financial services, such as:

- **Current accounts:** to deposit cheques, draw your benefits or pension
- **Savings:** through payroll deduction, by standing order, from benefits or in person
- **Loans:** save for three months with the union and apply for an affordable loan up to £500. Established members can borrow as much as they can afford to repay up to £2,000 (conditions apply).
- **Financial advice and help:** the credit union promises to do what it can to provide the service you need.

Loans are granted through the money invested by savers. Any profit the credit union makes, through investments and interest on loans, is returned to saving members in the form of a dividend.

The Oxford-based organisation is one of around 500 credit unions in Britain, set up to help local communities. They also provide an alternative to 'payday' loans and doorstep lending.

See www.oxfordcreditunion.co.uk or call 01865 777757 for more information.

Flooding - be prepared

According to Met Office figures, summer 2012 was the wettest in the last 100 years. Hopefully the weather will be better this year but flooding can occur at anytime and it's best to be prepared.

Call 999 for immediate assistance if there is a risk to life or a risk of serious property or environmental damage.

Floodline warnings direct

This free service gives flood warnings direct to your phone, mobile, email or fax. Sign up by calling the Environment Agency's Floodline on 0845 9881188 or at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/floodline

Reporting flooding

Burst water main:

Thames Water - www.thameswater.co.uk

General enquiries - 0845 9200 800 or 24-hour leakline - 0800 714 614

Roads, blocked gullies, gratings and drains:

Oxfordshire County Council - www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/flooding
0845 310 1111 (24 hrs)

Main rivers:

Environment Agency - www.environment-agency.gov.uk
Incident hotline - 0800 807 060

Other watercourses such as a stream or ditches:

The riparian owner or contact us via www.westoxon.gov.uk/flooding or 01993 861000.

Benefits changes

Changes to some benefits are now in place under the government's plans to simplify Britain's welfare system, with more to come in the next few months.

Our Council is working with other authorities and organisations to look at the effect the changes are having on local residents and explore what can be done to support those in need.

Changes already in place, or being phased in, relate to housing, council tax and disability benefits, as well as benefits for those who are looking for work or on a low income. From September, a cap on benefits will also be introduced.

See www.westoxon.gov.uk/benefitchanges or www.gov.uk. Alternatively, speak to one of our benefits advisors on 01993 861030 if you have any concerns.

Meet James Price - one of the local farmers who has seen the benefits of food waste recycling first hand.

Ever wondered what happens to your food waste?

James from Woodstock uses the liquid fertiliser, called digestate, which your food waste is recycled into, to help grow his crops. We caught up with him to see how it all works:

Tell us a bit about yourself and your farm?

I was born in Oxford and grew up on the farm in Woodstock which has been in the family since 1946. The farm is now all arable, growing wheat, barley, oilseed rape and beans.

What do you use digestate for?

This will be our second year using it to fertilise the soil to grow oilseed rape, but we are looking at using it on the wheat crop too.

Can digestate be spread on land like normal fertiliser?

Yes and no. There are restrictions on the timing of applications for digestate due to its solubility. In addition it is spread at very high volumes (20m³/ha) whereas the equivalent artificial fertiliser would be spread at 200kg/ha.

Why do you use digestate over other fertilisers - does it improve soil condition?

Digestate has more nutrients in it than just nitrogen; it is the blend of all the micro and macro nutrients that makes it an effective product at developing a healthier root system.

Has using digestate made any difference to the crops?

So far we've seen excellent growth from using digestate. This hasn't translated to higher yield yet but as the weather was so bad in the autumn it did help a lot with the establishment of our crops - making a big difference between having a crop, or not.

Is there a message you'd like to give people to encourage them to use their food waste bins?

If reports are to be believed and 50% of food is wasted (although not all by the consumer) then I think we should at least be doing something constructive with it. If we can recycle food waste to produce both fertiliser and electricity rather than sending it to landfill, then it's got to be the right thing to do.

We recycled over 3,600 tonnes of food waste in West Oxfordshire last year. If you'd like a food waste caddy and/or bin please get in touch.



Your food waste can make a difference...

These crops were grown on James' farm - the one on the right was fed with digestate.

...so please don't waste it in your grey landfill bin.



www.westoxon.gov.uk/waste

01993 861025

Where Oxfordshire's recyclables go

What happens to our recycling?

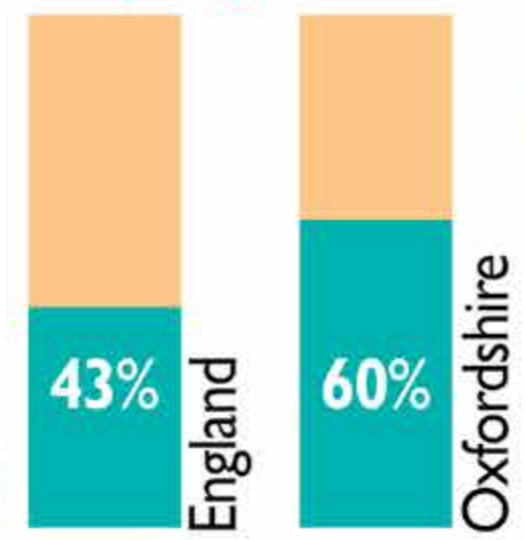
- Paper mills break down old **paper**, using the fibres to make new paper products.
- **Cardboard** can be turned into new boxes, stationery or animal bedding.
- **Aluminium cans** are recycled into new aluminium cans.
- **Steel cans** are turned into any other steel product such as another can, a nail, a car part or even a bridge.
- Old **plastic bottles** are recycled into items like textiles, pipes, crates, bottles and films.
- **Glass bottles and jars** are recycled into new bottles and jars or used to make fibreglass or insulation.
- Good quality **textiles** are reused. Tatty or damaged material is recycled into car seats, punch bags or insulation.
- **Food and garden waste** is turned into compost or a liquid fertiliser and electricity.
- **Electrical items** are broken down into their component parts with the plastics and rare earth metals being used to make new electrical products. The rare earth metals in batteries are used in many industrial processes.
- **Drink cartons** can be used to make new paper based products, furniture, or to help generate energy.

It takes twenty five two litre plastic bottles to make one adult fleece.

All our food waste is treated within Oxfordshire and makes enough green electricity to power 4,200 homes.

Making an aluminium can from another can uses 95% less energy than using virgin materials.

2011/12 Recycling levels



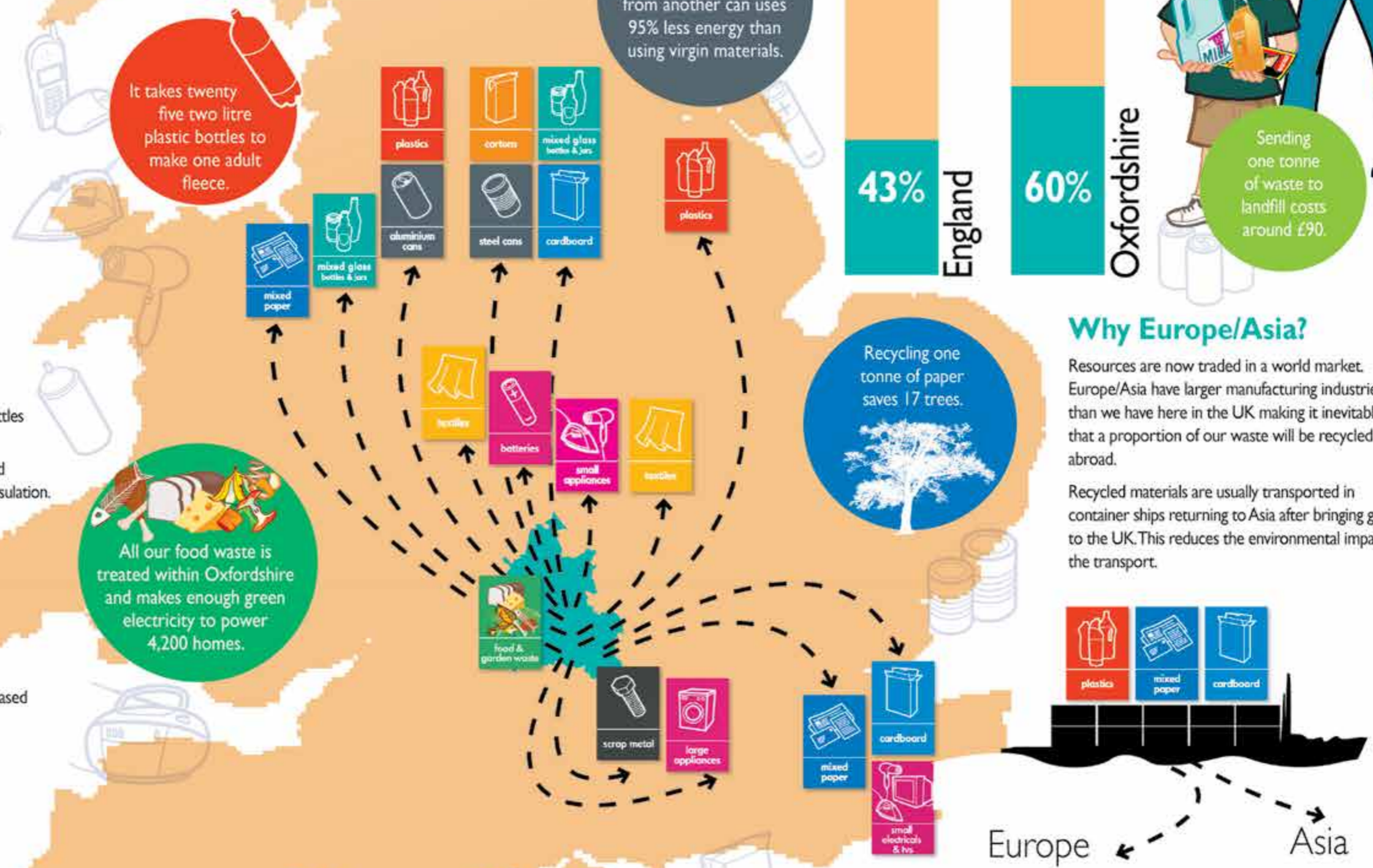
Sending one tonne of waste to landfill costs around £90.

Why Europe/Asia?

Resources are now traded in a world market. Europe/Asia have larger manufacturing industries than we have here in the UK making it inevitable that a proportion of our waste will be recycled abroad.

Recycled materials are usually transported in container ships returning to Asia after bringing goods to the UK. This reduces the environmental impact of the transport.

Recycling one tonne of paper saves 17 trees.



An injection of £10,000 from the Government's Mary Portas Review has kick-started an enthusiastic campaign by local businesses to promote Chipping Norton.



Experience Chipping Norton

The Experience Chipping Norton campaign is open to all businesses in the town and Adam Jennings of Red Box New Media explains more: "Times are tough for businesses, but we want to make sure Chipping Norton thrives. Experience Chipping Norton is about spreading the word that the town is a great place to visit and do business. The more businesses that join the campaign, the stronger we will be."

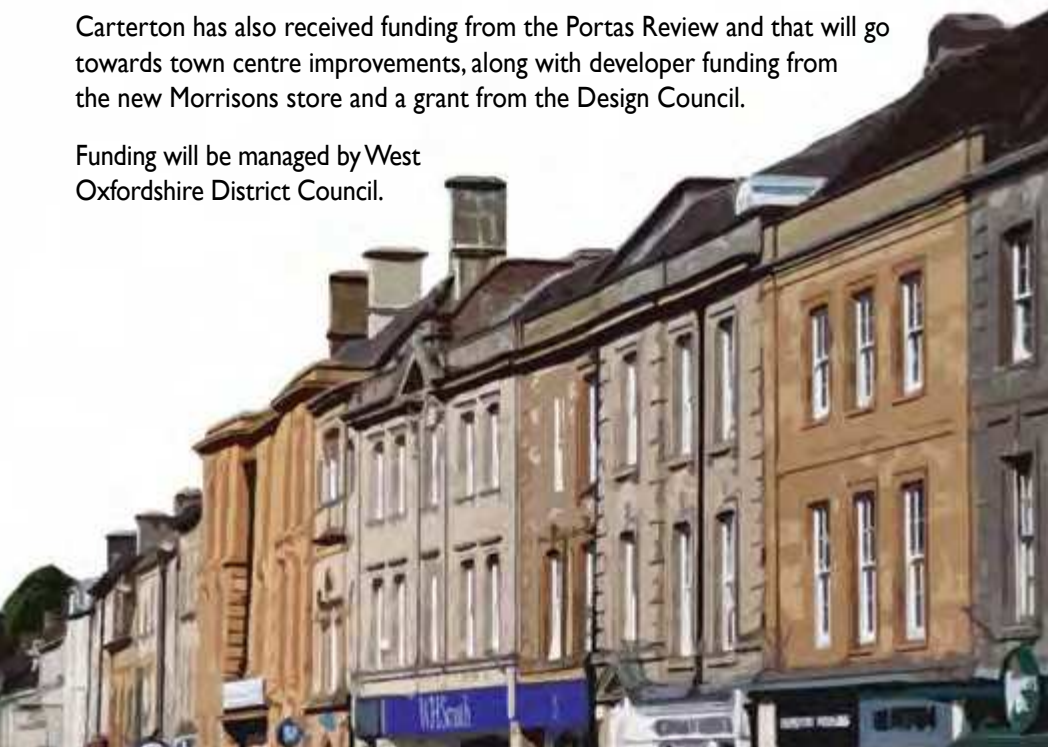
"There are lots of reasons for visiting Chipping Norton, come and find out what it's like to live here, work here, do business here, shop here, eat here and be entertained here."

Recently launched is a new website - www.experiencechippingnorton.com, along with social media activity. The town is also producing other promotional materials including a brochure and window stickers, as well as articles for the local and national press.

Cllr Richard Langridge, Cabinet Member for Local Economy and Communities said, "Wake up to Woodstock started with a few businesses coming together, but has grown and now is incredibly successful. It's great to see Experience Chipping Norton take off and I urge businesses that are not already part of the network to join in and be part of its success. We have some fantastic market towns and villages in West Oxfordshire and it is good to see local businesses being so proactive and flying the flag for the District."

Carterton has also received funding from the Portas Review and that will go towards town centre improvements, along with developer funding from the new Morrisons store and a grant from the Design Council.

Funding will be managed by West Oxfordshire District Council.



Starting or running a business?

We are committed to supporting businesses and offer a wide range of services and information including:

- starting a business
- sources of funding
- commercial property
- networking with other businesses
- procurement opportunities
- licensing
- planning
- food safety and environmental health
- tourism promotion and development
- trade waste and recycling
- pest control
- grounds maintenance and cleansing

For more information visit www.westoxon.gov.uk/business or call 01993 861485. You can also follow @wodcwill on Twitter.

CONTACTING US

You can access lots of council services 24/7 via:

www.westoxon.gov.uk

It's quick and easy to book a service, pay a bill or report a problem online.

From a postcode search you can:

- view planning applications on your property or street
- find your waste collection dates
- register for email alerts
- see your council tax banding
- find the name of your councillor and much more...

Call: 01993 861000

OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCIES:
0845 3039706

Useful numbers

Benefits	01993 861030
Business Support	01993 861485
Community Services	01993 861060
Council Tax	01993 861040
Electoral Services	01993 861410
Housing Services	01993 861010
Leisure and Tourism	01993 861080
Licensing	01993 861060
Planning	01993 861420
Street Scene	01993 861020
Waste and recycling	01993 861025

Leisure centres

www.better.org.uk

Bartholomew	01993 861830
<i>Bartholomew School, Eynsham OX29 4AP</i>	
Carterton	01993 840933
<i>Broadshires Way, Carterton OX18 1AA</i>	
Chipping Norton	01608 644412
<i>Burford Road, Chipping Norton OX7 5DY</i>	
Windrush	01993 202020
<i>Witan Way, Witney OX28 4YA</i>	

Visitor information

www.oxfordshirecotswolds.org

Burford	01993 823558
Chipping Norton	01608 643384
Witney	01993 775802
Woodstock	01993 814106



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.