



TOWN NEWS

A NEWSLETTER
PRODUCED BY
WANTAGE
TOWN COUNCIL

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Jim Sibbald, Councillor Major,
Town Mayor of Wantage



This year is off to a fragrant start with wildflowers blooming earlier than we see normally. They bring with them some hope on the horizon that the pandemic is weakening or at least becoming less intrusive in our daily comings and goings.

On 4 April, the Annual Town Electorate Meeting will be held in The Beacon at 7.30pm. All Wantage electors are invited to attend and raise any issues or questions relating to the parish.

With regard to the 4-day Bank Holiday Weekend in June, which will form the main celebrations of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, we are liaising with Grove Parish Council to coordinate our Jubilee Celebrations, which will include the Big Lunch in the Market Place on Sunday 5th June. *Keep safe!*

TOWN EVENTS

Monday 4th April, 7.30pm
Annual Town Electorate Meeting

Sunday 24th April, 10am – 4pm
St. George's Day market event

Saturday 7th May
Wantage Fair

Sunday 15th May 10am – 3pm
Artisan Market

Sunday 5th June 10.30am – 4pm
The Big Jubilee Lunch

Sunday 26th June
Armed Forces Day and Wantage Carnival



Photo by Jessica Fedel on Unsplash



Love your local market!

The Town Council is responsible for The Market Place and Victoria Cross Forecourt (in front of Victoria Cross Gallery). Did you know Wantage Market dates back to the eleventh century? Initially on Saturdays, then adding Wednesdays during the nineteenth century.

Wantage Market was held on Saturdays when meat, poultry, butter, cheese, and vegetables were offered for sale. But from 1845 a sample corn market was pitched each Wednesday, and although the Saturday market continued to flourish, the mid-week occasion gradually came to be the day when farmers met to strike bargains and chat over the state of agriculture.

Whilst the products on offer have varied over time the importance of the market remains key to the town.

Trading on *Wednesdays and Saturdays from **8.00am to **3.00pm, Wantage Market hosts a wide variety of stalls including fresh fruit & vegetables, bakery, meat & poultry, eggs & honey, fish, menswear & workwear, flowers & petfood and speciality stalls like Kombucha. Many of these stalls have been coming to Wantage for many years now come rain or shine.

Joe, from Aylesbury Fisheries has been coming to Wantage for over 35 years.

"I love coming to Wantage and seeing all my regulars and new customers. I'd move here if I could".

New stalls have joined over the years, and we currently have a horse box selling speciality coffee, teas, hot chocolate and milk shakes. Also, others selling biltong, homemade brownies, olives, nuts, Turkish Delight, Italian pastries, grain free dog food, and homemade samosas. Look out for extra stalls on the last Saturday of each month.

The Town Centre Manager is constantly looking for new additions to our markets and spends time filling gaps where possible. Artisan Markets are held during the warmer months with live music and entertainment, the first one being Sunday 15th May 10am to 3pm.

Come along and support your local market and keep this long-standing tradition. After all, Wantage is a market town, and we wouldn't want to lose it!

** The Market is not held on the days of the May, September, and October Fairs, nor if Christmas falls on either of these days. These dates will be published in future newsletters.*

*** These are our standard times; however some stalls arrive and leave earlier.*

Please follow our Market Facebook page for regular updates.



The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is an opportunity for us all to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and create a greener Wantage. Each one of us, as individuals, groups or communities, is encouraged to plant a tree in our garden or as part of a woodland.

Take a look at the following website and register the trees you plant to benefit the environment and future generations, <https://queensgreencanopy.org/>.

It is suggested trees are obtained from a certified plant healthy nursery and there is more advice available on the Woodland Trust website. Plant the trees during

the official planting season up to March this year or from October 2022, through to the end of the Jubilee year.

"With a focus on planting sustainably, the QGC will encourage planting of trees to create a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the Nation, which will benefit future

generations. As well as inviting the planting of new trees, The Queen's Green Canopy will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service."

So let's be part of this together.



The Highways team at Oxfordshire County Council are recruiting and training volunteers to be 'Super Users' on the Fix My Street reporting website.

The scheme has been in place for about 3 years now, and they have recently recruited several volunteers for Banbury and Abingdon. This is to expand on the coverage of smaller parishes.

A Super User is the 'eyes & ears' for the area Highways Officer. They are

BE A 'SUPER USER'

How about doing your bit for our streets?

able to raise works orders that go directly to the contractor Milestone Ltd, to carry out pothole and kerbing repairs on minor low speed roads.

This saves the Highways Officer being taken away from scheduled surveys of A & B roads for something that is relatively easy to get fixed.

You need to be reasonably fit and able to measure the depth of a pothole and mark it up with spray paint.

There is no need to inspect roads daily, but someone who regularly walks around the town, or designated streets, is ideal.

You will need internet access, and confidence using online systems.

Super Users volunteer for Oxfordshire County Council and as such are required to sign a Volunteer Agreement and undertake Health & Safety training with a Highways Officer.

The initial training is done remotely using MS Teams, saving both time and expense.

Contact Rebecca McNaught, Volunteer Co-ordination Officer Communities, Oxfordshire County Council Tel. 07557 082579



CHANGES TO WANTAGE BUS SERVICES

From 2 January 2022 the main changes to bus services in Wantage are:

S9/NS9 service now runs every 20 minutes during the day (Mon-Sat) and 30 minutes evenings and Sundays. Route changed to serve Mably Way Health Centre and Brereton Drive (Grove).

X1/NX1 service replaces the **S8/NS8** using a similar timetable but route is changed to serve Mably Way Health Centre and Main Street Grove.

X32 service has some minor timetable changes. Some journeys extend to Grove as **X1**.

X36 now serves Charlton, Aldworth Avenue at off-peak times - replacing the **38**.

38 service is discontinued - **X1** and **S9** now serve the Mably Way Health Centre.



SOLAR AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Are solar panels the way forward for you?

Wantage Town Council take the climate emergency very seriously as we need to focus on solar and other renewable energy forms to help us move away from our dependence on gas and oil.

With the rising cost of energy prices that we are facing at the moment it is a good time to consider how we can use renewable energy sources in our homes.

There has been real progress with many councils building into their local plans commitments regarding renewable energy. For example, the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan, in consultation November 2021, has aims such as

"Developments should be fossil fuel free and fossil fuels should not be used to provide space heating, hot water or fuel for cooking. Demand for energy should be balanced by the provision of on-site renewable energy generation".

The government has a Green Homes Grant voucher scheme that can be used towards the

cost of installing energy efficient improvements in existing homes.

There are various initiatives that are being put in place to enable homeowners to install solar panels or ground heat pumps.

As a council we urge you to ensure that you have fully assessed the options and obtained several quotes before you invest in such a project.

If you would like to find out more about solar energy Sustainable Wantage are launching a solar campaign with a zoom event on **Thurs 7th April 7.30pm**. If you'd like to join you can register here:

<https://tinyurl.com/wantagelaunch>

This will be an opportunity to find out more about solar energy as an option, and ask any questions you have.

THANKS!

- to all who helped during Covid

Wantage Town Council would like to thank the numerous organisations that have supported the community in various ways throughout the Covid epidemic.

Because of these gallant efforts our vibrant community has come through very challenging times.



Arts-Hub

To find out about all kinds of local arts groups and events subscribe for free at artshubwantage@gmail.com

or contact Jim Mitchell on 01235 767975

Promoting the Arts in and around Wantage

Want to know more about concerts, theatre and films happening in and around Wantage and Grove? Or how to join local music, art and theatrical groups? Subscribe for FREE to our monthly e-mailed information letter at artshubwantage@gmail.com or contact Jim Mitchell on 01235 767975

20 is plenty



As there have been a number of road traffic incidents in recent history, the Town Council has decided to take advantage of the recent campaign '20 is Plenty'. It is hoped by reducing the speed limit on roads that the traffic will flow more steadily, there will be less accidents and it will give more people confidence to cycle and walk.

It is also hoped that this will help make the town safer, easier to navigate and as a result more attractive and friendly.

To support the application the Council has published a survey. The aim of this survey is to get your thoughts on the proposal and determine if it is supported by the community. This survey will also be available in paper format from The Beacon.

The key principles behind the proposal are to:

1 Reduce the speed limit to 20 mph outside all schools within Wantage, in all

residential areas and in the Town Centre.

2 Maintain an east/west link via Mably Way that is 30 mph (apart from where it passes schools).

For full details, please look at:

<https://wantagecouncil.gov.uk/20-is-plenty-proposal-and-survey/>

Please note that the information given by you in this survey will be used by the Town Council to help develop its proposal and, to take this forward and help the Council understand some of the objectives and desires of the residents.



Park & Charge

Work has started on a Park and Charge Electric Vehicle charging scheme in Wantage. The scheme proposes a total of up to 62 new charging points in car parks across the Vale of White Horse district.

Engineers began installing electric

chargers at Portway car park in Wantage from 24 January. This will involve several bays being fenced off temporarily and some disruption to the car park at the entrance from Portway.

The Park and Charge scheme allows residents without off-street parking to park for free overnight and charge up using a 'fast' 7 - 22kw EV charging point.

The chargers will also provide much needed battery top-ups to commuters and visitors during the daytime.

EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC ORDER FOR MARKET PLACE WEST

Oxfordshire County Council has made an Experimental Traffic Order (ETRO) that continues the prohibition of driving and waiting

- In the western section of Market Place,
- the southern section of Alfred Street, and
- in the northern section of Church Street.

The order came into force on Monday 3rd January 2022 and It will operate for a maximum period of 18 months and the County Council will be considering in due course whether the provisions of the experimental Order should be continued in force indefinitely.

There are a number of services and activities that take place in our town that are not the responsibility of the Town Council. We hope the following will be helpful in directing you to the right place.



01235 763459
clerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk
www.wantagecouncil.gov.uk



01865 792422
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/
residents/contact-council
(for individual departments)



01235 422422
enquiries@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk



YOUR FEEDBACK WELCOMED

We hope that you have enjoyed the articles in the Wantage Town Council Newsletters. Feedback and suggestions are welcome to:

The Town Clerk
Tel: 01235 763459
Email: clerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Other useful contacts:

Andrea Yates,
Town Centre Manager
Email: andrea.yates@wantagecouncil.gov.uk

Sheryl Sanders,
Deputy Town Clerk
Email: deputyclerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk



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