



# TOWN NEWS

A NEWSLETTER  
PRODUCED BY  
WANTAGE  
TOWN COUNCIL

## Community Calendar

Many people ask if there is a calendar showing events taking place in Wantage...

Love Wantage has a 'What's on' page which is dedicated to Wantage events. If you have an event that is



taking place around Wantage, please complete the form <https://lovewantage.uk/calendar-form>

Make sure to also include a jpeg image of the event.

Contact [andrea.yates@wantagecouncil.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.yates@wantagecouncil.gov.uk)

## Message from the Mayor

Welcome to the March edition of Wantage Town News. Spring is finally here and it is so wonderful to see nature blooming after the winter months.



It is a great opportunity to celebrate Earth Day at the Beacon on 20th April. Come and join us celebrating all things sustainable.

I wanted to let you know about an event that I'm planning on 21st of April called the 'Big Thank You'. It's an opportunity for everybody to say thank you for something big or small that someone has done for them.

My inspiration for this event was from the Covid lockdowns when so many people helped their neighbours, friends and family by doing small or large acts of kindness. There was such a lot of kindness shown that it really pulled us together as a community.

This is your chance to make a public

gesture to show your appreciation by writing a thank you message on a tag and tying it onto our tree of thanks in St Peter's and St Paul's our Parish Church on 21st of April between 2pm and 5pm. If someone has done something kind for you come between 2pm and 4pm and write a tag. Afternoon tea is available and you can see the gallery of pictures that our local primary school children have drawn of the things that they want to say thank you for.

At 3pm I have asked my Mayor's charities: Team Mikayla, The Letcombe Brook Project and Riding for the Disabled to talk to us about what they do. Any donations very much appreciated. This is an opportunity to promote and thank them for the wonderful work they do for the community. At 4pm there will be a short service with guest singers Glee Club UK.

If you are not able to make the event but would like to take part – collect a tag from the Beacon, write your message and we will put it on the tree for you.

Come and celebrate

### ST. GEORGE'S DAY

in Wantage Market Place  
April 28th 10am to 3pm  
Attractive artisan stalls, live music, great food and free children's entertainment!

- Children and adults – why not come dressed as knights, dragons, or princesses?
- Live farm animals on show
- Children – make your own shields at the free arts and crafts stands
- Other attractions too!

**'Tame the Dragon' and other surprises!**

## TOWN EVENTS

**Annual Town Electorate**  
Monday 8 April 7.30-10pm  
The Beacon Wantage

**Celebrate Earth Day**  
Saturday 20 April 2-6pm  
The Beacon, Wantage

**Big Thank You Day**  
Sunday 21 April 2-5pm  
Wantage Parish Church

**St. George's Day Celebration and Market**  
Sunday 28 April 10am-3pm  
Wantage Market Place

**Oxfordshire Art Weeks**  
19-27 May, Various local venues

**Wantage Carnival – Ray Collins event**  
Sunday 9 June 11am-6pm  
Wantage Market Place





**LOOKING AHEAD TO FUTURE TOWN EVENTS**

Wantage Town Council is pleased to announce the following forthcoming events either arranged or supported by the Council for the enjoyment and benefit of the community

9th June – **Wantage Carnival** (Ray Collins event)

29th June to 7th July – **Summer Arts Festival**

7th July – **Wantage Food Festival** and the **Big Picnic Event**

14th September – **Wantage Fair**

26th October – **Alfred Fest**

1st December – **Wantage Christmas Market**

6th December – **Dickensian Evening**



**More information available from:**  
andrea.yates@wantage.towncouncil.gov.uk



Dan Leveson, Integrated Care Board (ICB) Place Director for Oxfordshire addressing local residents

Thanks to local residents who gave their views on Wantage Community Hospital, the NHS is working with Wantage Town Council Health Committee on a plan to invest £600,000 to modernise Wantage Community Hospital by 2025.

Existing Outpatient services will be made permanent and will be expanded with a mix of new specialist services which will bring more clinicians to Wantage and save residents many thousands of car and bus journeys to the John Radcliffe.

The plan is being project managed by Oxford Health, working collaboratively with Oxford University Hospitals Trust and the Wantage Primary Care Network and scrutinised by Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**VCI monthly Prize Draw**

Providing advice, information, community transport and befriending services to the community, VCI (Vale Community Impact) has now launched its VCI 500 club

There is a prize of £50 every month (with occasional other prizes) and the draw takes place on the last Wednesday of every month with entry costing £5 'per number'.

Although VCI is fortunate to receive grants

from District, County, Town and Parish Councils across the Vale, it is still vital that it seeks supplementary organisational grant funding and individual donations, in order to continue to offer its services to the community and its residents.

VCI staff, relatives and others with possible conflicts of interest would be unable to participate.

**For further information please contact:**  
Email: [help@vci.org.uk](mailto:help@vci.org.uk) or  
Telephone 01235 765348



**A tribute to Bill Falkenau former Town Clerk**

By Angela Dunford, Town Mayor of Wantage

*I want to take this opportunity to write a special thank you and pay tribute for all of the work that Bill has done as he steps down from being the Wantage Town Council Clerk*

He has been a rock, he is incredibly knowledgeable on all things 'council' and has served his community well. The council hold Bill in high regard and are grateful for his help and support over the years. He has witnessed a lot of changes in Wantage over his years as Clerk.

Bill was the Clerk for Wantage Town Council for two stints firstly between 1990-1994 and then 1999-2023 a total of over 28 years. He served as director/treasurer for the Vale and Downland Museum for nine years

before he stepped down in 2021. Before being Wantage Town Council Clerk, Bill was Grove Parish Clerk between 1979 and 1993.

**“**  
*... a rock, incredibly knowledgeable on all things 'council' and has served his community well*

In his other professional life he has held director and above levels such as being a director of Segsbury Ltd, a soft play centre.

He's been the Chief Financial Officer at Engineering UK, the director consultant at Segsbury Limited

in Wantage as well as a Financial Controller of Standards at BSI and Global Financial Controller for Clifford Foods.

I didn't really know Bill very well as a person until we went on our civic visit to Seesen. Up at the crack of dawn to catch a flight to Hamburg and then the drive past German towns featured in various fairy tales before arriving in Seesen. We were treated wonderfully by our hosts and I felt we all got to know each other there better

as a result. I liked Bill's affable nature, gentle spirit and laugh. He has a great sense of humour.

I would like to again say thank you and wish Bill all the best for the future.

**Wantage Town Council welcomes Mrs. Julia Evans as the new Town Clerk.**



**Wantage Eastern Link Bypass**

Work is now proceeding rapidly on the new road with completion expected in Summer 2024. Of the three phases section 1 (at the Kingsgove end) is now open to traffic, sections two and three are still under construction.

**Lidl consultations**



Lidl are currently circulating a leaflet to local residents asking for their support for a slightly revised planning application for their new store between Grove and Wantage.

Much of the proposal remains the same apart from an increase of 4sq. metres internal store area without increasing the overall store size, 16 additional trees added to the landscaping plans, solar panels on the store's roof and rapid electric vehicle charging spaces.

The store is estimated to require the equivalent of 40 full time employees.

There are currently no dates for the revised planning application to be heard or for the store's planned opening date.



# Changing Places Toilet for all opened in Wantage



The Wantage community has come together to help fund a new Changing Places Toilet in the public toilet block in Portway, Wantage.

The Changing Places toilet is a unisex facility that is specially designed with extra space and equipment so that it can be used by people with a range of disabilities.

Vale of White Horse District Council secured a £100,000 grant from the Government for the toilet, as well as adding £45,000 from developer contributions, a contribution from Wantage Town Council of £12,000 with

the Council contributing £65,000 to cover the cost of the total refurbishment of the building. The building now contains the following:

- \* Changing Places Toilet
- \* An accessible toilet
- \* A female toilet
- \* A male toilet
- \* A unisex toilet

The toilets were opened on Monday, January 29th and more details about this facility and other Changing Place toilets can be found on the Changing Places website: [www.changing-places.org](http://www.changing-places.org).

Councillor Andy Crawford, Town Councillor for Wantage Charlton ward and a District Councillor for the Vale of White Horse District Council said:

*"This toilet will help anyone, regardless of their disability, enjoy everything that Wantage has to offer without the worry of needing the bathroom."*



Wantage Town Council has written to the Vale of White Horse District Council Planning Enforcement Team regarding the illuminated sign on this new shop on the junction of Newbury Street and Market Square as no planning application has been submitted for it.

Wantage Town Council seeks to maintain the historic nature of the town and we will work with shop owners to help achieve this. Policy 4 (vi) of our emerging Neighbourhood Plan states 'Specifically on shop signs efforts should reflect the historic town centre and again reflect the historic character and be made of wood and not illuminated.'

However, neither Wantage Town Council nor the Vale of White Horse District Council has any power to prevent vape shops opening. This can only be done by central Government. We urge people to contact their MP asking them to bring the restriction of this type of shop before Parliament.



**Wantage Town Council works alongside Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of White Horse District Council. We hope you'll also find these contact details useful.**



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## 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](mailto:clerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk)

### Town Centre Manager

Email: [andrea.yates@wantagecouncil.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.yates@wantagecouncil.gov.uk)

### Deputy Town Clerk

Email: [deputyclerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@wantagecouncil.gov.uk)

### Town Project Coordinator

Email: [jimmitchellpc@outlook.com](mailto:jimmitchellpc@outlook.com)

## Published by Wantage Town Council

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