

District Councillors Gemma Coton and Julian Nedecleu Report

It is a real privilege to represent Launton and Otmoor on Cherwell District Council. Over the past couple of years we have aimed to be a strong and effective voice for the community and have loved working with so many residents and the Parish Council to ensure this.

As I am sure you remember, after the elections in May last year, no party had overall control of Cherwell District Council. Talks took place between the Progressive Oxfordshire Group (made up of Liberal Democrats, the Green Party and some Independents) and the Labour Party to try to form an administration but unfortunately the Labour Party decided to pull out of the talks. This led to the Conservative Party running the administration at Cherwell again this year. Since then, we have provided a strong opposition to the administration to ensure all decisions are properly scrutinised and thought through.

Within this year we had the Local Plan 2040 consultation and thank you to all residents who made their views known as part of it. Officers are currently working their way through all of the responses and pulling together the latest plan. We hope to be able to share with you the updated plan as soon as it is available.

We are aware of the financial pressures that so many residents are facing at the moment due to the cost of living crisis. To reflect this, at the budget in February, we tried to remove a little of the financial burden on residents by:

- Delaying the charge for replacement bins
- Freezing the charge for bulky waste and instead introducing a premium charge for a faster service
- Freezing the charge for recreational use at NOA, Cooper School and Stratfield Brake
- Keeping the toilets open at Pioneer Square.

We have also been working with residents who are facing financial hardship at the moment to help them get the support they need and would encourage any residents who are struggling to get in touch.

At a more local level we have been working with Parish Councils and residents on a number of issues. In particular we have:

- Pushed for repairs to the canal gate at Shipton-on-Cherwell and secured a commitment that the gate will be repaired this winter.
- Continued to work closely with County Colleagues to help with the roll out of this phase of 20mph through our villages.
- Given advice to residents across the ward on the best way to navigate the often confusing planning system at Cherwell and have represented residents' views at the Planning Committee.
- Kept residents updated on the progress of the proposed Solar Farms at Noke and Botley West.
- Worked with Cherwell District Council to try and limit some of the effects of the recent flooding we have been experiencing across our villages. Within Launton, we are trying to find a solution to the flooding that occurs at Sycamore Road and Yew Tree.
- Supported Parish Councils across the ward to secure funding for community projects.

Alongside this we have tried to keep you as up-to-date as we can with everything going on at Cherwell and will continue to do so moving forward. Please do get in touch if there is anything that we can help you with – our inbox is always open! Gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or Julian.nedeclu@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

All the best,

Gemma & Julian