

MILCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT APRIL 2024-APRIL 2025

This report covers the activities of Milcombe Parish Council during the period April 2024 to April 2025.

Milcombe Parish Council is funded by public money received via Cherwell District Council through the Council Tax. It is Milcombe Parish Council's responsibility to use these public funds in a responsible manner for the benefit of the whole of the village of Milcombe.

The Council meets bi-monthly plus the AGM and all meetings are open to the public however there continues to be a very low attendance rate.

The current Council comprises Myra Peters Chairman, Nigel Davis Vice Chairman and Councillors Mandie McCullagh, Chris Hill, Tracey Scott and Oscar Chang Anderson. There is currently one vacancy to fill. The current complement was elected in May 2024 and Councillor Chang Anderson was co-opted in September 2024.

Mrs Theresa Goss is the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and oversees the efficient running of the Council affairs and statutory obligations. The precept for 2024/2025 was set at £15000. The precept for 2025/2026 will be £15600.

Our thanks go to Country Councillor Keiron Mallon for his ongoing support dealing with Oxfordshire County Council and Councillors Andrew McHugh and David Rogers in dealing with Cherwell District Council. Our thanks go to Andrew McHugh who is leaving public service, and we wish him and Mrs McHugh a happy and well deserved retirement.

Planning

The following planning applications were dealt with during the year:

Little Acre, Main Road, 3-bedroom dwelling, no objections and permission granted

Jasmine Cottage, Main Road, resubmission of planning, no objections and permission granted

Manor Farm, Horton Lane, 10 replacement sash windows on the north elevation, no objections and permission granted

Rickfield Farm, Station Road, change of use of existing poultry shed to container storage, objections raised but permission granted

Mulberry, Horton Lane, retrospective 3-bedroom house amended to replace demolished bungalow, no objections and permission granted

Oak View, Bloxham Road, change of use of existing barn to commercial use, no objections but application withdrawn

Oak View, Bloxham Road, Milcombe, Prior approval application for the conversion of an agricultural building to Use Class E, specifically E(g), it is proposed that the building be converted into 5 separate commercial units, no objections and permission granted.

The Piggeries, Bloxham Road, outline planning mission sought for 50 dwellings and associated infrastructure. Objections have been registered with comments and alterations to the proposed design if it is given planning permission. This will be discussed at CDC planning committee later in 2025

Play Park & CCTV

The play park continued to suffer minor vandalism during the year and thanks go to Nigel Davis for carrying out repairs and Alan and Ian at Peter Booth Agricultural Engineers for manufacturing small parts required. The litter bins have sustained more damage, but the decision was made not to replace them until the CCTV has been installed.

The CCTV pole has been installed but MPC are still awaiting a final decision from CDC regarding the Wayleave permission across The Dovecote land so that electricity can be installed. It is hoped that this will be within the next 6-8 weeks and the project can get up and running for the 2025 school summer holidays.

During the year weed control was carried out by Complete Weed Control and the grass verges, cemetery and play park were cut by Nigel Prickett.

Defibrillator Training

It was agreed to organise defib training with Alex Harrison, a Community First Responder. The session could be attended by 20 people, and they would be asked for a £5 each donation. The Parish Council would then make up the total donation to £200. The session is scheduled to take place on April 26 2025.

Church Clock

The Parish Council discussed the service agreement with Smith of Derby, for maintenance of the church clock. A three-year service agreement for £817.00 plus VAT was approved.

Oxfordshire County Council's Highways Engagement Team

A meeting was held on 26 November 2024 with Kathryn Gash from the Highways Engagement Team and Myra Peters. A walk through the village was taken to point out all the potholes, damaged foot paths and drains that need urgent attention. It is hoped that repair work will be carried out during 2025.

Memorial Bench

A two-seater bench in memory of Bryan French, a long-standing villager who sadly died whilst cycling along the A361, was installed by the village pump and the Parish Council agreed that his sister, Wendy French-Carter, could plant some small shrubs & bulbs around the bench and that Wendy had volunteered to help keep the area tidy. Nigel Prickett would also be maintaining the grass area when he completed his monthly visits to the village.

Flooding

During Storm Burt on 23 November 2024 several properties experienced sewage/flooding in ground floor toilets. Mr Tony Brummell of CDC also carried out checks at Oak Farm to ascertain whether ground water and sewage were the cause of some of the domestic ground floor flooding, but it was considered that it was down to the severe weather which overpowered the pumping station by Heath Close.

There was also flooding around the crossroads area causing flooding to frontages of the bungalows on Bloxham Road and water flowing into the garage at Unicorn House and into the workshop of Peter Booth Agricultural Engineers. Sandbags have been obtained and are at Peter Booths yard if this type of heavy weather comes again. Problems were reported to Thames Water about severe raw sewage flowing from the drain at the junction of New Road and along the A361 during this storm and Engineers attended to pump out the drain with limited success.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

A preliminary meeting regarding the NDP was held for villagers on 7 March 2024 and was well attended. However, since that date there has been very little progress and a decision will need to be made regarding the plausibility of continuing with the project in view of the new planning regulations that are being implemented by CDC on instructions from the current Labour government.

Village Hall

On going work to obtain grants to refurbish the village hall continues. The monthly coffee mornings are popular and well attended. Thanks to Raychel Pomroy and Doreen Wyatt who provide the lovely bacon sandwiches and cakes. Bookings for the hall remain low but the account is still in the black.

Litter Pick – this was carried out on 5 April by 4 volunteers with six bags of rubbish collected.

Conclusions

Milcombe continues to evolve with some wins and some losses but overall is a small, friendly community to live in.