

Cllr David Rogers, Cherwell District Council

Annual report for the Deddington Ward

Cherwell Local Plan

The change in Government, a revised National Planning Policy Framework and higher housing targets have given planning authorities across the country a fresh challenge. Cherwell were so close to completing their local plan review that it was possible to press ahead with the existing plan and the older, lower targets. Unless there is a last-minute issue, this plan will be submitted for inspection in the coming weeks.

Five Year Housing Land Supply

Cherwell District Council can no longer demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. This means that planners must give more consideration to applications and unless there is a really pressing issue, permission is likely to be granted.

The importance of Neighbourhood Plans

The most effective way a community can have a say in local planning matters is to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan that includes an allocation of housing. The plans have to be formally prepared and frequently reviewed but do represent the best way to shape a community taking local views into account.

Move to Castle Quay

Cherwell has now moved from Bodicote into Castle Quay. The offices are significantly smaller, much more energy efficient and will be easier to maintain. I've offered my congratulations to the officers who made this move possible and kept the project on-time and on-budget.

The future of local government

The short version is that this will likely be imposed on us in 2028. However, with a general election before August 2029 there is an outside chance that delays and budget constraints could leave things as they are.

Three options have been submitted to Government:

a single council for Oxfordshire (Oxfordshire Council), two councils (Ridgeway Council and Oxford City, West Oxfordshire and Cherwell Council using existing district council boundaries), or three councils (Greater Oxford Council, North Oxfordshire Council and Ridgeway Council) – with the latter two options both involving the inclusion of West Berkshire Council.

Flooding and Potholes

These County Council issues have been reported in every Parish Council across the Ward.

Andrew, Eddie, Arash and I are doing all we can to press the County Council to remember the rural communities and to re-consider their priorities. This is budget related and the state of our roads is an ever-growing concern.

Farming Protests

Over the last year I've spoken to many farming families and rural industry businesses. There is a real sense of fear and anger over the Government's planned inheritance tax changes and the farming representatives have repeatedly met government ministers to try to convey the damage that this will do.

Health Care Contributions

This has been a passion of mine for many years and since being elected I've made good progress.

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board are meeting CDC to discuss the future of Primary Care after a motion I raised.

I attended the Health Watch meetings and as many of the ICB board meetings as I can.

I've raised this issue with the Conservative policy teams (both planning and healthcare) and have an undertaking from the Shadow Health Minister, Dr Luke Evans MP, to press this issue in the House. I've recently met Robert Jenrick MP, Dr Neil Shastri-Hurst MP, Nigel Huddleston MP and Sean Woodcock MP to discuss this.

I'm going to do all I can to ensure Primary Care expansion stays on the radar of members, officers and Parliamentarians so that there is a plan for the future of primary care.

Finally, Cllr Andrew McHugh has stood down and there will be an election for a new District Councillor on the 1st May.

May I thank Andrew for his many years of hard work on behalf of us all and to wish him a well-deserved retirement from Local Politics.

Whoever takes his place will, I hope, work with us to do our best to support everyone in this Ward.

Cllr David Rogers

Cherwell District Council – Deddington Ward

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