

District Councillors report – April 2025



Waste Strategy

Queries raised with me by Cllr Geary, after the last parish meeting, about the council's draft Waste Management Strategy, and the proposal within it to move to a 3-week black bin collection (except for communal stores) were discussed at Monday's Environment Advisory Group. Some I think were covered during Daniel Warne, the senior Waste officer's presentation, and two others, after I raised them him. You can watch the session [HERE](#). The EAG is (since May '23) open to the public, often featuring frank and open debate and invariably talks from outside speakers.

The waste strategy was presented by Cllr Gourlay to and approved by the Executive on Wednesday 3 April. You can watch this [HERE](#)

On a related note I am looking forward to attending [GreenFest](#) at St Bart's school on Sat 5th April.

Annual Parish Meetings

I and my colleagues Vic and Geoff have been invited to talk at two of our four parish council-organised Annual Parish Meetings so far - Beech Hill (9 April) and Burghfield (24 April). At the time of writing (4 April) Beech Hill has asked me to cover the Ridgeway Council proposal – this is the potential formation of a larger unitary authority comprising West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and Vale Of White Horse, in response to the government's plans for reform.

Windmill Court

An interim update since the [latest newsletter](#) is that a) stair lifts can be accommodated/fitted in the proposed replacement premises, to allow returning residents who need such assistance to access the upstairs flats but b) the proposal currently does not restrict occupants of any place to over-55. Note sure if everyone involved knew that – I didn't.

Standing Orders

Further to my concerns over the proposed amendments to Mortimer parish council's standing orders and other policies, upon investigating I understand/can confirm:

"The principle that parish councillors are equals within the council is a legal requirement, not just guidance. Under the Local Government Act 1972, all councillors, including the chair, have equal voting rights and authority in decision-making. The chair has no individual executive powers beyond their casting vote (in case of a tie) and the role of presiding over meetings.

This principle ensures collective decision-making, meaning no single councillor (including the chair) has more power than others outside of meetings. Parish councils must follow this structure *to comply with the law*."

Drop-In/GreenFest

I've postponed my first-Saturday drop-in on 5 April, because of [GreenFest](#). Vic will hold the district council drop-in 'fort' at Burghfield Library from 10.00-11.30.

Nick Carter, Vicky Pool & Geoff Mayes

West Berks District Councillors for Burghfield and Mortimer

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