

District Councillor Report – July 2025



James (Left) Nick (Right)

Ridgeway Council

For those who missed the last District Parish Forum, there was (I think) an excellent talk from CEO Joseph Holmes about it, the other options and the future – including mayoral authorities.

Ridgeway is just one of 3 likely proposals, the others being an Oxford county-wide unitary (that, if it went ahead, would mean Ridgeway would not) and a 3-unitary scenario, in which Ridgeway could. They are all summarised [here](#).

Having joined a working party on this, I am firmly of the view this is a good option, if it happens. It would bring challenges, and I would think increase the scope for parish councils to do more, in terms of delivery and perhaps representing their patch.

Elsewhere in Berkshire, other existing unitaries (Bracknell Forest, Wokingham, Windsor & Maidenhead) are considering aligning. The leader of Reading Borough Council and our MP Olivia Bailey have proposed that if West Berkshire joins Oxfordshire's reorganisation, Tilehurst and suburbs should become affiliated with Reading. More on that idea [here](#).

As you may have seen, there's a community forum – available online and in person - on 15 July from 18.30, where our CEO Joseph Holmes, will be present. If you want to raise questions – see the details on my [Facebook page](#) or let me know, since the deadline may have passed by the time you read this.

Waste and Recycling

I've created a "what to recycle where" that takes account the local choices that exists – for example former Community Award winner Anne Haines' collecting milk bottle tops for charity. The page also lists questions/points about the council's approach to waste and recycling. These are ones I've either seen asked or have been put to me directly. They include those sent to me/cc'd to you by Cllr Geary some weeks ago. I took up his offer to discuss and most were put to our senior waste officer [HERE](#).



Nick's Guide

Highway Improvements

The council's recently approved 3-year highway improvement and maintenance programme has started. This is a significant programme of work totalling almost 65km of various types of treatment on our roads.

Year 1 work includes: Reading Road from Hollybush Lane to the Goring Lane mini roundabout/Three Firs Crossroads (already done); The Hatch from 70m. southwest to 70m. northeast of the Theale Road junction; Pingewood Road South between Amners Farm South and the railway bridge; and Goring Lane from 250m. to 300m. east of the Lockram Lane junction.

Mini Electrical Recycling

The bin has proved popular. This may ease off in future. There have been some teething problems with the emptying schedule, the contact process, and some fly tipping. The latter comprised: some items that would never fit, being dumped - a new sign is coming which may deter this; the bin being full for a period causing some dumping; and a gap between the bin and the hedge which seemed to "invite" dumping.

The emptying schedule is the first week of each month. Fly tipping incidents can be reported to cutomerservices@westberks.gov.uk, who will arrange an ad hoc (chargeable to WBC) pick-up – or you can call me – I now have the direct number for the Veolia subcontractor who assures me he will intervene personally if needed. We plan to move the bin adjacent to the clothes bank to: make emptying easier (the door opens onto a bollard not towards a car), deter the slight temptation to dump in that gap; and avoid its being visible from a neighbouring property. Additional signage should be added to the drawer front, although the current signage does explain that items that do not fit should be taken away not left. Unrelated, I notice a rubbish bin has appeared next to the clothes bin. It was full.

Tower Farm

I'm working on a couple of issue reported by residents – internet connectivity and construction work.

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