

# Great Milton Parish Council

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## **DRAFT Minutes of Great Milton Parish Council (GMPC) Annual Parish Council Meeting held at the Pavilion on Monday 19th May 2025, at 7.30pm**

Present: Bill Fox (Vice Chair), Councillors Sarah MacMahon (SM), David Harms (DH) Andrew Noble (AN) and Malcolm Horsley (MH).

In attendance: Jacqueline Wren (Clerk), Judith Edwards (County Councillor), Georgina Heritage (District Councillor)(arrived at 8pm) and 18 members of the public.

### **15/25 Election of Chair of the Council**

Councillor Fox proposed Stephen Harrod as Chair and Councillor Harms seconded. Although Stephen Harrod was not present he had made it known prior to the meeting that he would like to stand. The Council resolved unanimously to elect Stephen Harrod as Chair.

### **16/25 Election of Vice Chair of the Council**

Councillor Harms proposed Councillor Fox as Vice Chair and Councillor MacMahon seconded. The Council resolved unanimously to elect Bill Fox as Vice Chair.

### **17/25 Signing of Declaration of Acceptance Forms**

Both Councillor Harrod and Councillor Fox will sign Declaration of Acceptance Forms at the next meeting of the Council on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

### **18/25 Apologies for Absence**

Stephen Harrod (Chair)

### **19/25 Declarations of members' interests**

Nothing was declared.

### **20/25 Reports**

#### **Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**

No report was received from the County Councillor however the newly elected **County Councillor – Judith Edwards** (JE) was in attendance. JE introduced herself to the Council and explained that she had not yet met with the CC so was not able to report yet. She also expressed her intent to compile a written report in advance of future meetings and noted that Chalgrove and Thame West is a large division so it may be difficult for her to attend every meeting. The Vice Chair welcomed Councillor Edwards and thanked her for coming.

#### **South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC)**

The District Councillors Annual Report and Monthly Report for May were noted. See Attachments 1 & 2.

Both GH and JE expressed that they would like to support community efforts to continue the presence of a shop in the village. The Vice Chair noted that a Working Group has been formed.

## 21/25 Haseley Trading Estate

The Vice Chair outlined the proposed development of the Haseley Trading Estate as detailed at the public consultation meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April.

- 186 car parking spaces on the new site to accommodate all the staff (drivers and onsite workers)
- The site will provide a base for; 45 main waste collection vehicles, 15 food waste trucks, 9 street cleaners (over 7.5 tonnes) and 13 under 7.5 tonnes. There will also be 9 ancillary vehicles.
- The estimate is 10 - 16 staff will be onsite permanently
- All vehicles will leave once and return once daily (they will not make multiple journeys)
- Vehicles will be cleaned once before returning to the site to be cleaned again.

MH noted his objection to the proposal citing concerns about unpleasant smells and increased traffic in particular. There followed around 45minutes of discussion with **members of the public raising the following points** and concerns:

- SODC and VoWHDC currently use a site in Culham for waste transfer and as a refuse vehicle hub – the lease on this site comes to an end in Summer 2026.
- The DCs have been aware of this timeline for some years and yet the purchase of the Haseley Site and subsequent application for planning allows less than a year for resolution.
- The DCs claim that hundreds of sites have been considered and the favoured site was ruled out due to a legal issue with a right of way across the site. Many sites were apparently ruled out, however it is unclear what the exact criteria were. There were 4 sites on the short list.
- There may be up to 90 vehicles (many HGVs) based at the site and leaving early in the morning between 6 and 7am (at 30sec intervals) towards locations in the two districts.
- The Haseley site is not a logical choice for servicing Vale of the White Horse as vehicles will be travelling long distances with the most direct route going through Little Milton which is already a bottle neck for traffic.
- A more central location between the two districts seems reasonable to prevent the significant travel times and associated environmental impact, not only for vehicles from the site but personnel driving to work.
- There was concern from members of the public that at the current site in Culham there are problems with pollution, smells, noise, overflowing drains, flooding and rats. Apparently vehicles often leave the compound within the required times but wait on side roads with engines running for crew members to join them.
- While certain routes to and from the site can be encouraged, this is very difficult to enforce. If as yet unknown third party operators are to bear the penalty for contravening these rules then this is likely to lead to a poor decision-making process at this stage.

- If water from washing vehicles is to be taken offsite by tankers how many and at what times? The existing drainage at the site and in the local area is already inadequate.
- Many residents have already written to OCC, MP Freddie van Mierlo and the District Councillor expressing concerns primarily regarding pollution, environmental and ecological impact, health concerns, structural damage to roadside buildings (especially in Little Milton) and reduced amenity value.
- Increased traffic is a real concern, especially with regard to road safety at the A329 junction. This will be compounded by the relocation of Le Manoir's main entrance directly onto the A329 almost opposite the Trading Estate. There are likely to be up to 186 employees driving to and from the site every day.
- It might be helpful to get other interested parties involved in formulating an objection – Thames Water, Defra, OCC.
- Previous planning application for Countax details 125 parking spaces, 10 lorries, 100+ travelling to site every day. Although the number of parking spaces is similar the number of HGVs is much fewer than for the new proposals and therefore the impact on traffic on local roads is very different.
- The planning application for development and change of use of the site will have to meet the same criteria as for any other unrelated applicant. This will include ecological impact assessments, consultation with Highways etc.
- Objections will carry more weight in the planning process if they are objective and consider the planning policy, not just the emotive aspects.

MH noted that he hopes to speak with MP Freddie tomorrow to feedback information from this meeting.

DH noted Highways and traffic aspects detailed in Le Manoir planning application are significant and will be very relevant to this application, especially with regard to safety on the A329 junction.

The Vice Chair noted that a senior representative of **Le Manoir has clarified that they are totally opposed to the proposals** and will be meeting with the DCs to discuss it at the earliest opportunity.

The **Chair of Great Haseley Parish Council** noted a similar discussion at their last meeting. Since planning application not yet submitted unclear what it will include. GHPC and residents share concerns around drainage, traffic, landscaping, noise, smells. GHPC resolved that they could not discuss further until the planning application is submitted. He also noted that they will consider **appointing a planning consultant** to formulate their objection.

**District Councillor Heritage addressed the meeting** and explained that SODC looking for this site for some time since the contract in Culham expires summer 2026. Waste is a statutory service. Other sites were considered which were more central but there were legal barriers including a right of way issue which couldn't be overcome. This means the Haseley site is ultimately the only site which fitted the criteria. It is not an ideal location but there was not another option on the table. The current Haseley site has been acquired as an industrial site with all the relevant permissions, it would have been sold as an industrial site regardless of to whom. GH noted that of course there are concerns which she is taking onboard and working closely with everyone to consider mitigations. She also noted that she has experience of industrial landowners who are not respectful of local concerns and the DCs are potentially more considerate towards residents than others might

be. GH noted that proposed activities onsite will be not be in contravention of the existing planning conditions. Some objections can be easily mitigated but her personal concern and the one she is fighting for is **mitigation of the traffic on surrounding roads and through villages – in particular on the A329 through Little Milton**. She has brought it to Cabinet Meeting, raised with Senior Officers as well as our MP. There is a lot of work to do but she emphasised that **any correspondence she receives will be passed on and she will ensure a full response**.

MH asked whether there is a contingency plan if planning not granted. GH replied that this was unclear as no other viable sites identified.

GH notes her main concern is logistics and she would like a traffic plan to be produced now but this is not possible without the Highways consultation. She would like to make it a requirement for vehicles leaving the site to join the motorway to reach VoWH rather than going through Little Milton. In response to questions from members of the public GH also noted that the planning application won't need to take into account all logistical or operational concerns but Highways will be consulted and the application needs to be compliant to be considered. SODC are taking pre-planning advice from Highways but she does not have that information yet.

MH noted Haseley Brook Action Group regarding Harrington development – would GH support a similar group? GH noted her priority is to support her residents. Trying to get a date together to discuss most critical points with Chief Exec, Senior Officers, and MP.

A member of the public asked how the DCs have purchased this site without the baseline studies? While another member of the public noted that this site is likely to have been purchased as available and more affordable than other options.

DH asked GH whether she, and MP Freddie van Mierlo support the proposed plans for Haseley Trading Estate. She was not to be drawn either way, but said the considerations are 'nuanced' and more conversation was needed.

DH asked whether SODC have consulted Le Manoir yet? – GH noted that she is due to meet with them soon. The Vice Chair reiterated that Le Manoir have stated they are 'totally opposed' while several members of the public confirmed that consultants representing the DCs at the information session had claimed that Le Manoir were supporting the proposals. GH agreed to investigate this misinformation and emphasised again that she wants to represent her ward and is committed to relaying all concerns and questions and ensuring they receive a full response. She also noted that the **most effective way to object is to respond to planning application via portal with material objections which are then on the record as part of the planning process**.

## **22/25 Correspondence and Public Discussion**

The monthly correspondence was noted.

**23/25 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 were signed.

**24/25 The following new or amended policies were considered:**

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Freedom of Information procedure and publication scheme
- Complaints Procedure
- Risk Assessment
- Code of Conduct
- Financial Reserves Policy

The Clerk noted the need for updated policies as recommended in the Internal Audit Report. There are newly published updates to model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and in particular a new **Risk Assessment** will inform the Council's formulation of a **Reserves Policy**. The Council resolved to consider the above policies as they become available. The Clerk will draft these documents for the Council to review at a later meeting.

**25/25 Planning Applications:** The following planning applications were discussed;

**[P25/S1224/FUL](#)**

**Mount Pleasant Farm, Thame Road, Great Milton, OX44 7HX**

Erection of Two x 4 bedroom dwellings with x1 double garage and x1 single garage (resubmission of previously approved P19/S2605/FUL)

- The Council agreed they have no concerns regarding this application.

**[P25/S1268/LB](#)**

**Le Manoir Aux Quat Saisons, Church Road, Great Milton OX44 7PD**

Reroofing of the Flower House building with associated repair works.

- The Council agreed they have no concerns regarding this application.

The following planning appeal was discussed;

**[P24/S3699/FUL](#)**

**Garages at Holloway Farm near Great Milton Oxfordshire OX33 1GX**

Conversion of existing garages outbuilding into a 1-bedroom dwelling.

- The Council agreed that they have no comment to make on this appeal.

**26/25 Finance**

**A** The following payments were authorized:

Payee	Element	Amount	Date	Minute Ref Order Agreed	Power to Spend
Shield Maintenance Ltd.	Dog waste – May 2025	£92.82	20/05/25		Open Spaces Act 1906 s10
Bibby Financial Servies Ltd.	Tactical Facilities Management Ltd. May 25	£581.80	20/05/25	150/24	Open Spaces Act 1906 s10

Jenks Oxford Ltd.	Tree Works	£1464.00	20/05/25	201/24	Open Spaces Act 1906 s10
JM Dudley	Bulletin - May	£335.20	20/05/25		Local Government Act 1972, s142
Jane Olds	Internal Audit Fee	£210.00	20/05/25	143/24	LGA 1972 s112
Scribe (Starboard Systems Ltd)	Accounts Set-Up Fee	£298.80	2/6/25	26/25 E	LGA 1972 s112

It was noted that some allotment paths have not been cut nor the strip outside North End Cottage. It was agreed that the Clerk will circulate the Mowing Map to Councillors so they can check their wards and any omissions can be fed back to Tactical Facilities Management.

### Monthly Direct Debits

The following direct debits were authorized;

Payee	Description	Monthly Amount	Power to spend
BT Group plc	Microsoft 365 and Email	£14.23	Local Government Act 1972, s142
HugoFox	Website Hosting	£23.99	Local Government Act 1972, s142

It was noted that the Council are still paying HugoFox for the old website while the content is being migrated to the new site. The Clerk noted that HugoFox are now offering sites with .gov.uk domains and the contract with ParishOnline is due to renew on 1<sup>st</sup> July. The Council requested that the Clerk investigate the comparative costs of staying with HF and migrating the old site onto the new .gov.uk domain.

### Receipts

The following receipt was noted;

25<sup>th</sup> April 2025 - £10,192.42 CIL payment from South Oxfordshire District Council.

**B** The Bank Reconciliation, Statement of Accounts and Bank Statement up to 30th April 2025 was noted and signed. AN also inspected these documents.

### **C Insurance**

The Council's forthcoming insurance renewal was discussed and four quotes were considered;

AJG (Renewal) £405.53; Zurich £396; Ansvar £534.48; Clear Councils £913.54

The Council discussed the relative pros and cons of these quotes and **resolved to insure with Zurich for £396** as long as this policy is equivalent or better than the existing. Clerk to action by 1<sup>st</sup> June (renewal date).

**D Donations**

The Council considered the letter from ***Home Start Southern Oxfordshire – supporting parents to create better starts for children*** and resolved to donate **£100**.

**E Scribe**

The Council discussed subscribing to the online accounts platform Scribe. The Clerk presented information about the system and explained the likely advantages; namely specificity of system for councils, data security and continuity, robust reporting, time-saving. The proposed costs are £31pcm and a one-time set-up fee of £249 + VAT. The Council resolved to start a subscription at the agreed costs. Clerk to action.

**27/25 Training:** To consider any appropriate training courses

The Council agreed that the Clerk may attend the Roles and Responsibilities Training on 24<sup>th</sup> June with OALC.

**28/25 Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25**

The Annual Internal Audit Report was noted. In particular the auditor's responses to questions C and M on the AGAR were discussed. The Council resolved to review the full report in more detail at a later date but in order to address these two issues in particular the Council agreed to

C. Complete a Risk Assessment

M. Correctly provide for a period for the exercise of public rights

N. Comply with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR

**29/25 Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**

The Council considered their responses to the Annual Governance Statement and resolved to answer 'Yes' to all but statements 4 and 5. The Council resolved to provide additional information to the External Auditor detailing how they will address these points in the current financial year.

The Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 was signed by the Chair of the meeting and the Clerk.

**30/25 Annual Accounting Statements 2024/25**

The Council inspected and agreed the Annual Accounting Statements 2024/25 and these were signed by the Chair of the meeting.

**31/25 Notice of Electors' Rights**

The Council considered the requirement for the publication of a Notice of Electors' Rights and the provision of a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

The Council resolved that Notice will be posted by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June and the period will commence on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June and end on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August.

**32/25 Security in the village**

There were no updates regarding security in the village.

**33/25 Items for next agenda or information only**

The Council agreed that there should be a coordinated response to Haseley Trading Estate planning application. It was noted that GHPC, GMPC and LMPC could group together to appoint a planning consultant. DH noted that the Haseley Brook Action Group are a very knowledgeable group and would no doubt have useful advice as to how to proceed.

AN noted that double-decker buses were coming through the village to avoid an accident on A418 and that this seems an inappropriate route given the size of the vehicles.

**34/25 Confidential item** The Council resolved to exclude members of the public from item 35/25 due to its confidential nature.

**35/25 Clerk's Employment**

The Council agreed that the Clerk's three month probationary period had been completed successfully and therefore the contractually agreed salary increase would commence this month (May 2025).

Meeting closed at 21.30

***The next meeting of Great Milton Parish Council will be held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June starting at 7.30pm in The Pavilion.***

***Agenda items for the June meeting are due to the Clerk by Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025***

## Attachment 1

District Councillor Annual Report 2025

Haseley Brook ward  
Cllr Georgina Heritage



I hope that throughout the year I have captured all news and SODC activity in my monthly reports, which are available online via parish council websites and in some local newsletters. I very much encourage residents to contact me via [georgina.heritage@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:georgina.heritage@southoxon.gov.uk) if they have any questions, concerns or suggestions arising from my reports.

For this annual report I am highlighting some of the bigger news items from SODC from the past twelve months, and I do hope the following information will be of interest to residents:

### Local Government Reorganisation

In 2024 the Government released a white paper on local government reorganisation which will mean that two-tier authorities (like we have in Oxfordshire) will end, and instead we must form Unitary authorities serving at least 500,000 residents. Unitaries must then combine to form a Combined authority serving a population of around 1.5 million, likely to be overseen by an elected mayor.

Government will make the decision on the direction South Oxfordshire will take, however an initial proposal for "Ridgeway Council" has been submitted on behalf of South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire Council, which would see the three areas combined. This has been developed due to the demographic and economic similarities and historic ties between the areas.

Following the government's request that Oxfordshire authorities submit interim proposals together, the County Council has submitted an outline proposal for the Ridgeway Council and North Oxfordshire Council to the government, alongside two other options being developed in Oxfordshire which include a county-wide Oxfordshire proposal.

There will be opportunities in the coming months to hear the views of our communities before the final proposal is submitted, and the councils will also continue working positively and collaboratively with the other authorities in Oxfordshire.

### SODC Budget 2025-26

The council met in February and approved its 2025-2026 Budget. Diligent financial management ensured that SODC could deliver a balanced budget and marks the first time in nine years that the council has not needed to transfer funds from reserves.

Major funding will be made available to support the purchase of more affordable housing across South Oxfordshire. Having already committed £10 million to provide more safe, secure and compliant housing, purchased under the Local Authority Housing Funding (LAHF) schemes, the district council has now

committed to make a further £10 million available to support the council's long-term ambitions to meet local housing need.

The budget also includes funding to secure the future of the council's Community Hub on an ongoing basis. This valued service provides practical support and advice for those with cost-of-living concerns or who are finding life difficult.

The councillor grant budget will increase by 50%, to £7,500 per councillor, while the Capital and Revenue grant schemes for voluntary organisations will continue. This is something we're particularly happy about at SODC, since many councils are not in a financial position to offer such grants programmes.

The council will continue to fund an ongoing programme to improve leisure centres, including major decarbonisation & refurbishment projects at Thame Leisure Centre, such as solar panels, a sauna and gym equipment replacement. TLC opening hours will be maintained despite the high cost of energy, which renewables will help with.

Council tax for services provided by South Oxfordshire District Council were set at £151.24 for a Band D property. This means just £2.91 per week for a wide range of services including waste and recycling collections, community support, leisure services, parks and play areas, housing and planning services, environmental health and licensing.

### **Joint Local Plan**

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils worked together to produce a Joint Local Plan (JLP), which aims to help meet their local communities' need for affordable housing, jobs and infrastructure while tackling the climate emergency. Following a series of public consultations, the plan was submitted to Government in December 2024 for the examination stage.

If successfully adopted, the plan will replace the existing Local Plans for both councils.

In the new Plan, the councils have shown that there are enough new homes in the pipeline already. This means that there is no need to build on any extra new greenfield sites over the next 15 years, beyond what has already been allocated. Only one area of expansion has been earmarked, which is on the brownfield land owned by the Ministry of Defence at Dalton Barracks near Abingdon.

Crucially, the plan also sets out new firmer environment policies so that development is net zero carbon and delivers twice the national level of biodiversity net gain to help with the recovery of nature.

By completing and submitting the Joint Local Plan to an accelerated timetable, it will be tested against the previous housing numbers and government policies set in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023, rather than the new (higher) housing numbers and new policies of the new NPPF 2024. Although the Joint Local Plan was not required to meet the new higher housing numbers, and once adopted the housing numbers will be pinned to those in the Joint Local Plan for five years, the new NPPF does require us to calculate housing land supply differently, straight away. A key government change is that all authorities must now demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, regardless the age of their local plan. This reversed the changes in the previous NPPF, which had withdrawn the 5 year land supply test for councils where their plan was less than five years old.

## Haseley Trading Estate

For the Haseley Brook ward, one of the major topics over recent months has been the announcement from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse councils that they are the new owners of Haseley Trading Estate and, subject to planning, the site will be used as a vehicle depot for waste and street cleaning fleet. This is something I was admittedly nervous about initially, particularly as I was concerned that local residents may assume the estate is intended to be a waste transfer station. It's very important to me that our residents can feel assured of transparency and our parish councils are fully informed. With this in mind, I contacted Andrew Busby, Head of Development and Corporate Landlord, who made direct contact with parish councils in Haseley Brook.

To clarify, the new site would be used as a depot for parking vehicles and for vehicle maintenance. There would be no storage or disposal of waste. The current vehicle depot in Culham is due to be redeveloped for new homes and the existing contract and lease expires in 2026, and the councils have spent a very long time searching for a suitable new location to ensure statutory waste collection services are not interrupted in any way.

The plan is to redevelop and retain one of the existing buildings and make improvements to the site, which will include improving the screening with planting, and managing the adjoining woodland which has suffered some neglect in recent years. They will also be reviewing their vehicle movements to keep the impact on the surrounding areas as minimal as possible.

The new owners intend to be good neighbours and show respect to the surrounding villages. I am nonetheless highly conscious of and sensitive to the concerns of our local communities, and I will work with residents to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns are responded to. If residents have any questions about the intentions for Haseley Trading Estate I am very happy to offer support and assist in getting them answered.

## Other Highlights

- Almost 49,000 residents are now signed up to the new garden waste permit scheme in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts. This kind of scheme is offered successfully by many other local authorities, including in neighbouring West Oxfordshire. The permits help the waste collection crews identify which bins should be emptied. This will ensure that only households that have paid for the service have their garden waste bins emptied and the changes are part of the councils' ongoing work to improve the efficiency and value of public services.
- We were pleased to partner with Soha Housing, Thame Community Land Trust and Thame & District Housing Association to deliver 49 affordable homes in Thame and Wheatley, largely funded by Section 106 affordable housing grants from developer contributions.
- A strategy for the future of sports and leisure facilities was approved, and action plans will be created to work with sports clubs, town and parish councils, national governing bodies, leisure providers and other organisations to allocate funding and support projects going forward.
- Work has been ongoing to bring empty homes back into use, including working with owners and reviewing council tax on empty properties.

## Attachment 2

District Councillor Report  
Haseley Brook ward  
06 May 2025

Cllr Georgina Heritage



### My Meetings and Council Activity

Due to local County elections there has been limited political activity / decision-making over recent weeks, though statutory services and normal operations have of course continued as usual.

I am privileged to have been elected as County Councillor for the new Chinnor division, which includes the Lewknor & Postcombe parish, part of my ward as District Councillor. For the rest of the Haseley Brook ward, which is part of the Chalgrove & Thame West county division, I'm very much looking forward to working with newly elected County Councillor Judith Edwards (Lib Dem). I've had the opportunity to get to know Judith well in recent weeks and I have absolute confidence in her competence and conscientiousness for the residents of Haseley Brook.

As a District Councillor I have six parishes (and typically six monthly parish meetings) to serve. As County Councillor I will now have several additional parishes and I've noticed that some of their meetings coincide with my District ones. I will need to divide my time accordingly and will inevitably not be able to attend as many parish meetings as I would like overall, but please rest assured that I consider my District and County responsibilities to be of equal importance. I intend to be as responsive as I hope I have always been to questions and concerns from residents in my District ward.

Within the Haseley Brook ward, the proposed Haseley Trading Estate depot has understandably been the matter I've received most correspondence about over recent weeks, especially following the public engagement event at Little Milton on 28<sup>th</sup> April. While I'm confident of the council's good intentions regarding the site and I'm aware there was no viable alternative that would allow a more centrally located site for South & Vale, I fully take on board residents' concerns about traffic and vehicle weight implications, especially on the A329 through the village of Little Milton. I am and will continue to work with the villages to represent them on this, as well as with County Councillor Judith Edwards, to ensure these concerns are addressed.

A concern was raised that I admittedly hadn't previously considered, which is odour from the vehicles. While the estate will not be a waste transfer station and the proposal is for a vehicle depot only, I do appreciate this concern, and officers intend to look into it more fully. I believe certain fears regarding the site can be allayed - one example being visual impact - but I will work hard to get answers to the questions that have yet to be fully addressed, particularly regarding vehicle movements through villages. As I mentioned to a resident at the engagement event, it is ultimately my job to represent them to SODC (not the other way around)!

## Joint Local Plan Update

We're really pleased to advise the latest progress of the South & Vale Joint Local Plan - the dates for the start of the public hearings have been published and the first week of hearing dates will cover the following topics:

- Tuesday 3 June 2025: Matter 1 – Procedural and Legal Requirements followed by Matter 2 – The Duty to Co-operate
- Wednesday 4 June 2025: Matter 3 – The Housing Target/Requirement
- Thursday 5 June 2025: Matter 4 – The Employment Land Requirement

This stage of the examination involves our appointed Planning Inspectors (Inspectors R A Bust and C Mulloy) holding hearing sessions to hear from the Councils and other participants about whether the JLP is sound and has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements.

All the hearing sessions will be held at Bee House on Milton Park, OX14 4SB. The hearing sessions will be held in public and anyone can attend in person to watch (subject to capacity at the venue). The sessions will also be available to watch online via a livestream from Bee House.

Our [Joint Local Plan examination webpage](#) contains all the details produced by the Inspectors: the Matters, Issues and Questions ([ID02](#)), Guidance Notes ([ID03](#)) and a draft Hearings Programme ([ID04](#)).

## Solar Energy at Thame Leisure Centre

Work has begun this week at Thame Leisure Centre to install just over 150 solar panels, reducing the centre's reliance on fossil fuels and lowering its carbon emissions. The solar panels will cover large areas of the roof space at the centre including the gym and the sports hall. It's estimated that the panels will produce 69,000KWh of renewable electricity for the centre. This project follows other work carried out at the site to improve energy efficiency including the installation of LED lighting.

It's anticipated that the work to install the solar panels should be completed by early summer 2025. As most of the work will take place outside, it is expected that users will experience minimum disruption.

The project has been made possible thanks to a successful bid by SODC for just over £160,000 from Sports England with the Swimming Pool Support Fund – which invests National Lottery and government money each year.

Updated information is available on the progress of the work on the [council's leisure centre webpage](#).

## Accessible Moorings in Wallingford complete

The major project to improve accessibility at the riverside - managed by South Oxfordshire District Council, with the support and eager anticipation of the local volunteer-run charity, Wallingford Accessible Boat Club – has now been completed in good time for the summer. The package of improvements has been designed to be step-free to provide easy access to people of all disabilities

and to enhance the whole riverside as an attractive destination for residents, visitors, clubs and river users alike.

Work has covered improvements to the existing access path, roadway, ramp and moorings at the riverside – in addition to the installation of an accessible pontoon designed for river lovers with a disability.

Whilst the facility is available to all, it has been specifically designed to meet the requirements of the Wallingford Accessible Boat Club's wheelyboat, WOW-one, to enable disabled and less mobile people to have equal access to the river. To contact the club for further support or guidance, visit [www.wabc.org.uk](http://www.wabc.org.uk)

To support the Wallingford Accessible Boat Club's activities, the site includes a wheelchair accessible cabin with access to water and electricity. The ambition is to create cheerful artwork on the cabin to brighten up the area.

In a related project, a Changing Places accessible bathroom has also been created at the riverside, next to the existing toilet facilities and is now available for use.

The completion of the work times perfectly with the summer opening of the Riverside site. The campsite opened at the beginning of May and the outdoor pool and splash pad will follow later this month.