

Oxfordshire County Councillor David Bartholomew **Report to Bix & Assendon Annual Parish Meeting 2022**

Introduction

I am in my third term as your County Councillor. I represent what is known as 'Sonning Common Division'. This Division comprises the nine parishes that curl around Henley, including Bix & Assendon, but does not include Henley itself. Over the last nine years I have attended most parish council meetings. For each meeting, I supply a written report in advance about general OCC matters, then follow this up at the meeting itself with a verbal report about local items. This local report is then also supplied in writing after the meeting.

Responsibilities

In addition to representing the interests of residents in the nine parishes in my Division and my place on Full Council, I am the Opposition spokesman for Finance & Investment. I sit on three committees: OCC & Employees Joint Consultative Committee; Constitution Review Working Group; and Chilterns Conservation Board.

Key County Issues

The most significant event of the year was the change in administration at OCC after the May 2021 elections; the Conservatives lost control, and the county is now run by a left-wing coalition of Labour, LibDem and Green councillors. The coalition has stated its over-riding concern is climate change. While this is unquestionably an important issue, the Conservative Opposition is deeply concerned that there has been a major shift away from addressing the core functions of the council. In recent months, the administration has become embroiled in debates about veganism, trans-gender rights, outside smoking ban and Oxford-centric anti-car measures, especially Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). The vast majority of emails I get are about Highways issues, and these don't get a mention in the administration's list of priorities which can be found here:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/our-vision-0>

Key Bix & Assendon Issues

Local matters I have been engaged on over the last year include:

- Pot holes (of course!)
- Flooding and drains
- Bix duals speed survey
- Henley to Nettlebed cyclepath
- Traffic calming
- Damaged and missing signs
- Footpaths and verges
- Vegetation clearing
- Deer incidents
- Reading Transport Strategy (including Third Reading Bridge)
- Henley HGV ban proposals

I have also assisted residents directly on an individual basis.