

# **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.