



CHIPPING NORTON TOWN COUNCIL

THE GUILDHALL, CHIPPING NORTON, OXFORDSHIRE OX7 5NJ

TEL: 01608 642341 Fax: 01608 645206

Email: townclerk@chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk

Office Hours: Mon – Fri 9am – 1pm

TOWN CLERK and CEO: Katherine Jang

9th September 2025

SUMMONS TO ATTEND A MEETING OF STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

TO: All Members of the Strategic Planning Committee

VENUE: Council Chamber, Chipping Norton Town Hall

DATE: Monday 15th September 2025

TIME: 6:30pm

Katherine Jang
Town Clerk and CEO

Recording of Meetings

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Town Clerk (townclerk@chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk) prior to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

2. Declaration of interests

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct

3. Minutes

To approve the minutes of the Committee meeting held on the 7th July 2025

4. Public Participation

The meeting will adjourn for this item

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of five minutes each during the period of public participation.

5. Committee action plan

To review the ongoing committee action plan for the municipal year 2025-26.

6. Correspondence

For the committee to note or respond to any letters of correspondence

7. Chipping Norton Development

To receive any updates

8. Cemetery

- a. Memorial safety testing
- b. To receive an update about the closed churchyard at St Mary the Virgin church

9. Pool Meadow restoration project

To receive an update from Beaumont Rivers and agree next steps.

10. TVP Grant

To consider applying for the Thames Valley Police Community Fund for a Speed Indicator Device or upgrading the CCTV system at the Town Hall.

11. Neighbourhood Planning

To consider refreshing the current neighbourhood plan and next steps

12. Grounds Maintenance

To receive an update from the Assets and Operations Officer

13. Planning Applications

To receive a schedule of planning application from West Oxfordshire District Council

14. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 10th November 2025



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Minutes of a Strategic Planning Committee meeting held on the 7th July 2025 at 6:30pm in the Council Chamber, Chipping Norton Town Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs Mike Cahill, Sharon Wheaton, Ian Finney, Dom Rickard, Mike Rowe,
Sandra Coleman, Tom Festa,

ALSO PRESENT:

Katherine Jang, Town Clerk & CEO

Louise Warren, Responsible Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk

Paolo Oliveri, General Maintenance Operative

0 Members of the public were present

SPC1	Election of Chair Members received nominations for the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee for 2025-26. Cllr Finney nominated Cllr Cahill, seconded by Cllr Rowe. All in favour, motion carried. RESOLVED: That Cllr Cahill is elected Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee for 2025-26.
SPC2	Election of Vice-Chair Members received nominations for the Vice-Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee for 2025-26. Cllr Cahill nominated Cllr Rickard, seconded by Cllr Coleman. RESOLVED: That Cllr Rickard is elected Vice-Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee for 2025-26.
SPC3	Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Cllrs Keyser and Graves.
SPC4	Declaration of interests None received
SPC5	Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. RESOLVED: That the Chair signed the minutes of the Committee meeting held on the 10th March 2025 as an accurate record. One amendment -Add apologies from Cllr Finney.b. Members noted the minutes of the Traffic Advisory Sub-Committee held on the 26th June 2025. Cllr Coleman has since spoken to an OCC officer about the state of the pavements and is arranging a TEAMS call and site visit.



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	c. Members noted the minutes of the Climate and Ecology Working Group meeting held on the 23 rd June 2025.
SPC6	Public Participation None received
SPC7	Committee Action Plan Members reviewed the committee action plan and priorities for the municipal year 2025-26. To keep sports pitch provision – Members agreed that the Town Council should look for opportunities to increase pitch provision in town. The Town Clerk to receive the S106 spreadsheet from the S106 Officer and circulate with Cllrs. Members agreed to invite the S106 officer to visit the town.
SPC8	East Chipping Norton Development No updates received. Members discussed the open consultation for the Local Plan 2041.
SPC9	Cemetery a. Members received a quotation for the repair of the Colonnade. Total cost including labour and materials £1,795.60 Cllr Coleman proposed, seconded by Cllr Festa. All in favour, motion carried. RESOLVED: That members agreed for the work to take place at the Colonnade as proposed. b. Members received and considered an application for a memorial bench or tree. Members discussed the proposal and agreed that a tree would be preferable to a new bench. Members noted that the applicant would be required to pay for any upkeep and replacement of the tree if required. A small plaque in front of the tree was agreed. Members agreed that there is a small gap in the flower bed at the Millennium Garden that the Town Clerk would offer the applicant. Cllr Coleman proposed to approve the request as outlined above, seconded by Cllr Festa. All in favour, motion carried. RESOLVED: That the request for the new memorial tree is approved for the Millennium Garden. c. Members received and considered a request for an additional memorial. Cllr Rickard proposed to agree the £50 fee due to the unusual circumstances, seconded by Cllr Finney.



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	<p>RESOLVED: That the request for a discounted memorial permission is agreed, considering the unusual circumstances of the memorial.</p>
SPC10	<p>Grounds Maintenance</p> <p>Members received a written update from the Assets and Operations Officer.</p> <p>Interim report requested from Assets and Operations Officer regarding the grounds maintenance vehicles.</p>
SPC11	<p>Planning Applications</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>APPLICATION NO: 25/01293/CLP</p> <p>PROPOSAL: Certificate of lawfulness (Alterations to include the construction of a rear dormer, insertion of skylight to front roof slope, remedial works to roof to include replacement of slate tiles, alterations to fenestration to include the addition of a first floor side window and replacement windows throughout)</p> <p>LOCATION: 7 Toy Lane Chipping Norton Oxfordshire</p> <p>No comment</p> <p>APPLICATION NO: 25/01137/HHD</p> <p>PROPOSAL: Erection of a detached garden room</p> <p>LOCATION: 76 London Road Chipping Norton Oxfordshire</p> <p>No comment</p> <p>APPLICATION NO: 25/01334/FUL</p> <p>PROPOSAL: Works to include new shop front and Internal alterations to shop, replacement of single storey extension to create a 2 bed dwelling, conversion of upper floors of no.18 to create a 2 bed maisonette with Improvements to existing maisonette at no.17. Associated works including engineering operations and landscaping. Town and Country Planning Act</p> <p>APPLICATION NO: 25/01335/LBC</p> <p>PROPOSAL: Internal and external works to include new shop front and Internal alterations to shop, replacement of single storey extension to create a 2 bed dwelling, Improvements to existing maisonette at no.17 together with associated works including engineering operations and landscaping. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act</p> <p>LOCATION: 17 - 18 High Street Chipping Norton Oxfordshire</p> <p>No objection – Members supportive overall of the application as a whole.</p>



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	<p>Members noted that this shop is liable to flood, which is also highlighted in the consultee comment. Put provisions in place should this disrupt business for the pharmacy as it is a vital community service. Members raised some considerations for material access and deliveries.</p>
	<p>4. APPLICATION NO: 25/01454/CLP PROPOSAL: Erection of vehicular and pedestrian gates. LOCATION: 17 - 18 High Street Chipping Norton Oxfordshire</p> <p>No comment</p>
	<p>5. APPLICATION NO: 25/01324/ADV PROPOSAL: Re-branding of two fascia signs and a hanging sign LOCATION: 14 High Street Chipping Norton Oxfordshire</p> <p>No comment</p>
	<p>6. APPLICATION NO: 25/01450/HHD PROPOSAL: Erection of a single storey rear extension LOCATION: 6 Ellis Lane Chipping Norton Oxfordshire</p> <p>No comment</p>
	<p>7. APPLICATION NO: 25/01327/FUL PROPOSAL: Erection of a two and half storey building within existing hotel complex comprising 49 hotel rooms, fitness centre and spa facilities together with associated access, infrastructure and landscaping LOCATION: Cotswolds Hotel And Spa Southcombe Chipping Norton</p> <p>No objection - Members raised concerns about additional lode on sewage and drainage – requested that Grampian conditions are applied. On the whole members raised that the additional employment could be a positive addition to the town. The planning application does raise cycle routes into town, and if a cycle path and cycle facilities could be included in the plan that would be encouraged.</p>
	<p>8. APPLICATION NO: 25/01376/FUL PROPOSAL: Single storey extension to existing conference room LOCATION: Cotswolds Club Chipping Norton Southcombe Chipping Norton</p> <p>No comment</p>



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	<p>9. APPLICATION NO: 25/01337/FUL PROPOSAL: Erection of 2 agricultural barns LOCATION: Land North West Of Raffles Oxford Road Southcombe</p> <p>No comment</p>
SPC12	<p>Date of next meeting 15th September 2025</p>

The Chair closed the meeting at 7:40pm.

SIGNED _____

DATE _____

Agenda item 5 – Committee action plan

For committee to review for the new municipal year

Action	Who's involved?	Budget	Commencement	Completion	Notes/Comment
Undertake an audit and needs assessment of sports provision across the Town and then feed this into WODC's planning needs assessment	CNTC/ Staff / Clubs/ Associations/WODC	N/A	Sep-21	Ongoing	WODC's sports and pitch provision strategy has been approved and is in the public domain (Jan 2022). For the Town Council to be proactive to seek opportunities for new pitch provision in the town.
Promote active travel and transport in the Town	CNTC/Transition CN/Working group/TAC		Ongoing	Ongoing	LCWIP in progress. A Cycling Action group has been established by the Traffic Advisory Sub-Committee. Rusty Riders initiative has resumed after their winter break (1 st session on the 8 th March 2025). To continue throughout the Spring and Summer months. LCWIP has now been signed off and approved.
Delivering the East Chipping Norton Development Vision Statement	CNTC/OCC/WODC//working group/Community First		Ongoing	Ongoing	Part of the ECN site is registered as an ancient scheduled monument. This has been appealed. The outcome of this appeal will be decided by Historic England in due course. The Chipping Norton Community Land Trust has been set up as a formal group independent of the Town Council.
Restoring the town's municipal and memorial benches	CNTC staff/contractors	£500 from Street Furniture budget	July 24	March 25	The metal benches in town are now part of the works schedule. TBC this year.
Reducing HGV's in the town centre	CNTC/OCC/TAC/working group	n/a	Ongoing	Ongoing	Working with OCC to help identify safer HGV routes.
Pedestrian and Road Safety	CNTC/OCC/TAC	n/a	Ongoing	Ongoing	OCC consultation on London Road/New Street junction commenced June 2024. Proposed improvements for Albion Street junction have been approved but installation has been delayed to FY 2026. SID for Churchill Road is installed and operational.
Improving access and biodiversity at Pool meadow Large Project	CNTC/Approved consultants	24/25 EMR £25,000	2020	Sept 25	Feasibility study complete. Awaiting final reports to support the planning application. Historic England has requested additional archaeological work to be undertaken. An in-person update to be provided from Beaumont Rivers at this meeting.

Improving access, information and biodiversity in Chipping Norton Cemetery	CNTC/Contractors	£4000 from repairs and maintenance budget	Ongoing	Ongoing	<p>New regulations approved. New noticeboard has been installed.</p> <p>Second stage memorial safety testing complete - safety works complete. Awaiting final section safety testing.</p> <p>Wildflower meadow complete. Yellow rattle growing well. Traditional Wildflower mix has been sewn to enhance the wildflower area.</p> <p>New Commonwealth War Grave signage to be installed Sept 2025</p>
Encouraging cycling and active travel: Rusty Riders Initiative	CNTC/Community/OCC	n/a	March 2024	Ongoing	The Rusty Riders cycling clinics will encourage people to bring their bikes to be checked using the public bike repair station at the leisure centre; to receive proficiency training and to take part in a group ride.
Improving Air Quality: Clean Air Day	CNTC/WODC	Needs to be identified	Sept 2023	TBC	<p>The Council promotes clean air initiatives as part of the clean air day campaign</p> <p>https://www.actionforcleanair.org.uk/campaigns/clean-air-day</p>
CCTV for Chipping Norton	CNTC/WODC/TVP	TBC	June 2024	Ongoing	<p>WODC and TVP plan to upgrade the CCTV across West Oxfordshire. This includes planned installation of five cameras in Chipping Norton at key locations designed to prevent crime.</p> <p>For the Town Council to liaise with TVP regarding progress.</p>
Community Safety and supporting local businesses	CNTC/TVP	n/a	May 2024	Ongoing	CLr Sharon Wheaton has been approved by Council as the CNTC/TVP liaison in order to meet and share information about local crime and community safety.
Town Centre flower beds	CNTC/WODC/OCC	TBD	May 2024	May 2026	<p>The Town Council own the beds along Middle Row and by the Town Hall. A budget should be set aside beyond the scope of the current GM contract which includes only minimal maintenance.</p> <p>WODC own the other beds and there may be opportunities for CNTC to take them on with permission.</p>
Pesticide Free Chipping Norton Grounds Maintenance team	CNTC/Landowners/Clubs	N/A	May 22	Ongoing	Three-year action plan coming to an end. This needs to be re-evaluated now that our in-house grounds maintenance team is in place.
Climate & Ecology Working Group	CNTC/Stakeholders	N/A	May 2024	Ongoing	To receive quarterly reports and recommendations on how to improve the Council's sustainability practices

Item 6: Correspondence

Hi Katherine

Just went to unlock church and the graveyard just looks so loved and cared for. Please thank the team very much. We have a system now where I have a call on my personal phone and can make sure the gate is open ready for the lawn mower, so all is working very smoothly and we are so grateful for that.

Kindest regards

Yvonne

Yvonne Champion

Church Administrator and PA to James

St Mary's Church Office, The Branch, 16 Market Place

Chipping Norton, OX7 5NA

Hi,

Once more I'd like to compliment the man, don't know his name, who currently mows and strims the grass in the Worcester Road Cemetery.

As a frequent visitor to the cemetery - my late wife, various family members and friends are buried there - it's years since I have seen the cemetery looking so tidy and smart. "Well done, that man".

I am not the only person who thinks this way, several people visiting the cemetery have spoken to me about it and we're all in agreement.

It's not only what he does, it's the way he does it, with respect for where he's working and the care that he takes.

Hang on to him !.

Yours Sincerely

Paul [REDACTED]

Sandra,

The Cemetery looks great just what I remember when I was a councillor. It's a pleasure to walk round it again.

Best regards

Richard

This report is to note only.

Item 7: Chipping Norton Development

Please see the following correspondence from Cottsway regarding the future of 15 'Orlit' properties in Cotswold Crescent and Walterbush Road.

Dear Town Council,

Cottsway's Orlit homes and nearby garages in Chipping Norton

I am contacting you to let you know about our plans for the 15 'Orlit' properties that we manage in Cotswold Crescent and Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton, and what this means for our customers living in them.

These Orlits were built post-war in the 1940s using non-traditional construction methods, and they were only meant to last for a short timeframe. They were transferred to us by West Oxfordshire District Council in 2001.

Since then, we've carried out regular surveys and maintenance to keep them in good condition, because our top priority has always been making sure our customers have a safe, decent home.

Latest independent surveys were carried out in June 2025 and have shown that these homes cannot be kept in safe, good condition over the long term.

After looking carefully at every possible option, we have made the difficult decision to eventually sell 13 of the Orlit homes. Subject to planning consent, we also plan to redevelop the remaining two homes (semi-detached), along with nearby garage blocks in Cotswold Crescent. This would enable us to provide more affordable housing for the community.

Our proposals are in the early stages, and we aim to do this over the next five years. We will continue to survey the homes at least every six months and carry out any necessary repairs, along with safety checks, while we work with customers to find them alternative homes that meet their individual needs.

I have already contacted the Interim Executive Director – Operations at West Oxfordshire District (Jon Dearing) and I will also be contacting the Council Leader, Executive Member for Housing & Social Care, Local MP and relevant ward councillors, along with Chipping Norton Town Council.

I would be grateful if you could please disseminate this information to town councillors. I have also already contacted the Interim Executive Director for Operations at West Oxfordshire District (Jon Dearing) and I am also keeping their Council Leader, relevant Ward Members and Executive Member for Housing & Social Care informed.

What we are doing to support residents

It was important to us that our customers were the first to hear about this, so we held meetings yesterday to explain the situation to them face-to-face. Everyone living in one of these homes was invited to and we gave information on:

- Our plans and what it means for them.*
- How we will work with them to find them a better home.*
- The financial and practical support they will be offered throughout the process.*

Where households did not attend, we have followed up with a visit and information, and we will be working to keep them informed every step of the way.

For your further information, I have enclosed a copy of the leaflet that we are providing to households which has more details.

Our Housing Team and dedicated Tenancy Support and Sustainment Officers are very experienced. They will provide a tailored support service to help these customers find and move to alternative accommodation that best suits their needs and will work with relevant partner agencies as needed.

I am also contacting the people who currently rent one of our garages on Cotswold Crescent to give them advance notice of our proposals to redevelop the site to provide more affordable housing for West Oxfordshire.

I hope you find this information helpful. Please be assured that we're working closely with the affected residents and will do everything we can to make the moving process as smooth as possible.

Yours sincerely

W. Hardy



Your home, future move and how we can help

We know this news may feel daunting, so we want to explain what's happening and reassure you that we'll be here to help throughout.

About your home

Your home is one of 15 Orlit properties we manage in Cotswold Crescent and Walterbush Road. Built in the 1940s with non-traditional concrete frames, these homes were only ever expected to last a short time.

We've carried out regular surveys and repairs to keep them safe over the years, but our latest independent inspections show they can't be maintained in good condition over the long term.

After considering every option, we've made the difficult decision to sell most of these homes and redevelop two semi-detached houses in Cotswold Crescent (55 & 56) along with the two nearby garage blocks to create more affordable housing for the community.

What this means for you

- Your safety is our priority, so we'll continue to carry out repairs and safety checks, including surveys every six months (the next is in December).
- While there is no immediate need to move you out of your home at this time, we'll be working closely with you one-to-one to understand your needs and work with the relevant local authority to find you a new home that's right for you.
- We will work with you and support you from start to finish – this includes financial and practical support when the time comes to move.
- If you'd like to move sooner, we can help make that happen and provide the same level of financial and practical support.

When the time comes to move

We'll help you every step of the way - from finding your new home and arranging removals to providing financial support.

- You'll receive a home loss payment (currently £8,100, set by the government) after your move. Any rent arrears or debts will be deducted from this amount.
- We can also help with costs for removals, redecorating, fitting carpets, blinds, and curtain rails, redirecting mail connecting phone lines and more.





Your questions answered

Why do I have to move?

Homes like your Orlit property were built in the 1940s, after the Second World War, to help tackle the severe housing shortage across Britain. They were only ever expected to be a short-term solution and to last a limited time, so they're now classed under the Housing Act 1985 as 'defective'.

Your home was transferred to us by West Oxfordshire District Council in 2001, and since then we've carried out regular surveys and invested in keeping it in good condition, always putting safety first. However, because of the way these homes were originally built, they are more difficult to maintain. As the years pass, the risk of them deteriorating beyond repair increases - and is now a growing concern for us.

What about the other Orlit properties in my street that are not owned by Cottsway?

The other nearby Orlit homes are privately owned, so responsibility for these homes lies with the individual owners.

When will I have to move?

Currently, our priority is to rehome customers living in 55 and 56 Cotswold Crescent as these properties are part of our wider redevelopment plans. Moves now or in the future will be based on each person's individual circumstances and the availability of homes that meet their needs.

The remaining 13 Orlit homes will be considered on a case-by-case basis. We'd like to start working with you now so that, when the time comes, we can help you find the most suitable alternative home. If you decide you'd prefer to move sooner, we'll be here to fully support you through that process.



Will I have a choice about where my next home is?

Yes, of course!

We'll do our best to find you a home that's right for you - ideally close to friends or family, if possible. We may need to suggest different locations too, as it will depend on which homes become available.

Do I have to stay in a property owned by you?

Not at all – although we would love it if you did stay with us.

To help you find a new home, we'll register you on a website that shows all the properties currently available in your preferred area. We'll go through it with you one-to-one so you can see the homes you're eligible for, and if there's one you like, we can register your interest (this is called bidding).

Even though we're the largest local housing provider in West Oxfordshire, you might find a home with a different social landlord. Don't worry - we'll support you throughout wherever you choose to move

I'd like to move out of West Oxfordshire, can you still help me?

Yes, we will help you with your application for a home anywhere in the UK. If you want to stay in social housing though, you'll likely need to have a close connection to the area you want to move to. For example, a close family member already living there.

Who gets priority if my neighbour and I are interested in the same property?

We'll consider both of your needs and the properties available. If your needs are similar, priority will usually go to the person who has been a tenant the longest.

What will happen to my tenancy rights?

You'll keep the same tenancy rights you have now if you move to another Cottsway home.

Can I turn down properties I'm offered?

We'll work with you to ensure potential homes closely meet your needs and are in areas in which you have expressed an interest, and we want you to be happy – you can choose not to accept a property.

When will redevelopment work start on the land currently occupied by the garages and 55 and 56 Cotswold Crescent? Can I request to move into the new development?

We don't have a timescale yet, and any plans would need public consultation and approval from the local planning authority. Because of this, it's too early to know exactly how many homes or what type might be built on this land in the future.

You can express an interest in moving back at a later date if suitable housing is built, but redevelopment of this site could take several years, and there's no guarantee you'll be able to return.

I rent a garage on Cotswold Crescent – what does that mean for me?

Our plans are in the early stages so we don't have a date for when the site will become unavailable yet, but we'll keep you informed as our proposals progress.



What if I decide I want to move now?

We will support you if you decide you want to move sooner, whether this is now or sometime in the future.

Anyone who decides to move sooner than we plan will still be eligible for the financial and practical support detailed on page 1, including the home loss payment (currently £8,100).

What if I refuse to move?

Our latest independent inspections show that these properties can't be maintained in good condition over the long term. This means that they will eventually become unsafe and uninhabitable.

Our main concern is finding you another home that you're happy with, in your preferred area, and we will do everything we can to support you along the way. If you don't engage with us on this, we may have to take formal steps, which could mean you miss out on the financial and other support available – and we really don't want that to happen.

We're here to work with you, listen to you, answer any questions and help you through this change - and make your move as easy as possible.



Getting in touch

We appreciate you are likely to have many questions at this stage, and we have done our best to answer the most obvious concerns.

We will be in touch with you individually soon, but if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Gill Lee, one of our Tenancy Support & Sustainment Officers - no question is too big or too small. Alternatively, please speak to your housing officer.



01993 890000



contact@cottsway.co.uk



Gill Lee

Item 8a: Memorial Safety Testing

The Council's Admin and Customer Services Assistant has undertaken Memorials Safety Testing training over the summer months and is now qualified to test the routine safety and integrity of our memorial headstones. In the past, the Council outsourced this testing to an external contractor (Memsafe).

The Council is due to have another tranche of memorial safety testing this winter (November-December) for both the Worcester Road Cemetery and closed churchyard at St Mary's. The Council may consider taking the next tranche in-house or continue with the Council's external contractor.

If the Council wishes for the Admin and Customer Services Assistant to take on this piece of work, this may require her to take on a number of hours in addition to her current part-time role – to be scheduled in with her line manager.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council considers whether to continue memorial safety testing with the external contractor, or to take this testing in-house to be undertaken by the Admin and Customer Services Assistant.

Item 8b: Closed Churchyard at St Mary the Virgin Church

The Town Clerk has had conversations with the Ministry of Justice, Oxfordshire Diocese, and the SLCC Burials Advisor (email attached) among others, regarding the closed churchyard at St Mary the Virgin Church. As it stands, the legal responsibility for maintenance needs to be clarified and fully evidenced. Please see the email below for further information:

Dear Katherine

Thank you for taking my call this morning and for the additional information which has helped me respond to your enquiry to SLCC Advisory Service.

I would commend you in acting so promptly to deal with the safety hazard cause by the collapse of the monument/vault in St Mary the Virgin Churchyard and your further investigations to establish what needs to be done to ensure both contractors and visitors are safe in and around the unstable ground area. In this respect whoever carries out further works above and below ground will, as you say, need a Faculty from the Diocese and likely planning approval.

What you first need to know is it the Parochial Church Council (PCC), Chipping Norton Town Council (CNTC) or West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) who are legally responsibility for maintaining the churchyard. The fact that CNTC since its creation as a successor to the former Chipping Norton Urban District Council, abolished under the Local Government Act 1972, has been undertaking certain maintenance works (grass cutting, memorial stability testing, tree inspections grass) does not make the Town Council legally responsibility for any and all works the Diocese decide are necessary or desirable to be paid for by your Council's community tax payers. You need to evidence whether:

1) If, as seems likely, St Mary's churchyard closed long before 1974 and the Order in Council (Closure Order under the 1853 Burial Act) cannot be traced was Chipping Norton Urban District Council previously responsible for maintaining the cemetery under earlier legislation repealed by the Local Government Act 1972. If this was the case the UDC's maintenance responsibilities should have passed over to the newly created WODC along with their other powers and duties.

2) As the Local Government 1972, prescribed the new procedure for transferring maintenance responsibility for closed churchyards to parish councils when CNTC "assumed" responsibility for St Mary's churchyard was Section 215 of the 1972 Act used to effect a legal transfer.

You say CNTC has no record of churchyard maintenance being transferred by the PCC to the Town Council and this being the case I would suggest the best way to proceed, if it is generally agreed that sometime in the distant past St Mary's churchyard was closed by Order in Council, is for the PCC to now use Section 215 (2) of the 1972 Act to evidence a legal transfer. If the PCC does so it will give CNTC an

opportunity to accept full repair and maintenance responsibility or, within three months of receiving notification, serve notice on WODC they should take over responsibility under 215 (3) of the Act. Thereafter the safety repairs and reinstatement of the collapsed monument/vault alongside an archaeological historical watch briefing whilst works are carried out can be a matter for WODC and the Diocese to discuss and agree cost sharing. There is nothing to prevent CNTC offering to continue cutting the grass and carrying out an agreed schedule of other works under some form of service level agreement whilst legal responsibility remains with WODC.

As it would appear to be the Government's intention to abolish WODC as part of the wider local government reorganisation in Oxfordshire to create a new unitary structure which will assume the powers and duties of district councils your Council and the PCC and Diocese might consider this an appropriate time to clarify which local authority will end up assuming responsibility for closed churchyard maintenance within WODC's area. A legally executed transfer under present legislation to either the Town or District Council now should avoid future uncertainty and time spent researching archives to produce documents many of which may have been lost.

Hope this is helpful.

Kind regards

In the meanwhile, the Town Clerk has engaged a heritage stonemason to provide a quotation to fix the slab above the collapsed vault, should the PCC be able to provide evidence of the s215 transfer request, which was accepted by the Town Council. The report is on the following page.

This report is to note only.

[REDACTED]
STONEMASON

[REDACTED]
LETTERER

[REDACTED]
CARVER

[REDACTED]
DESIGNER
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Katherine Jang,
Town Clerk and CEO,
Chipping Norton Town Council.

9th September 2025

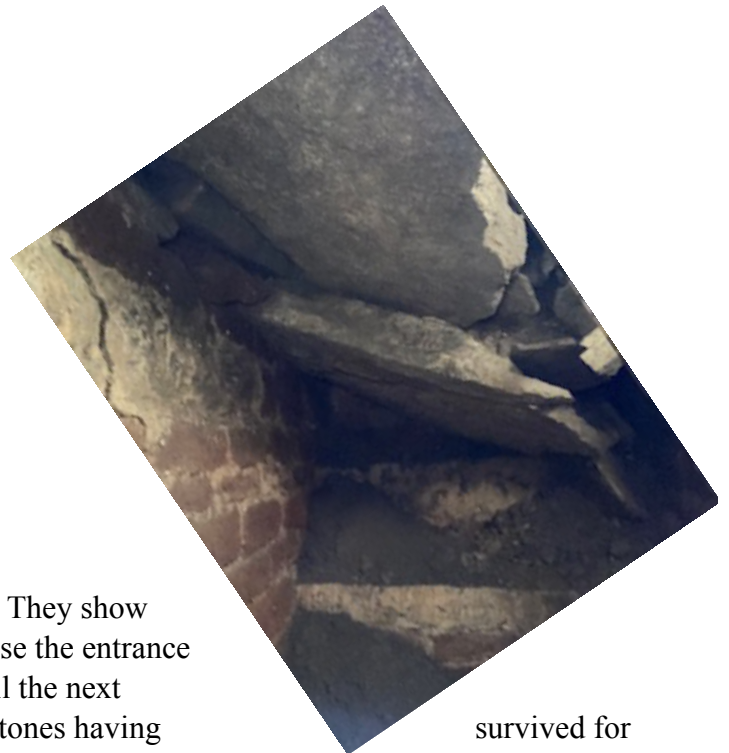
Job no 5401

Dear Katherine,

COLLAPSED VAULT AT ST MARYS CHURCHYARD, CHIPPING NORTON

Following your enquiry and our phone conversation today, I came to have an inspection of the site today the 9th of September. I entered the heras fence using a spanner on the two bolted clips and left them tightened back in place and secure.

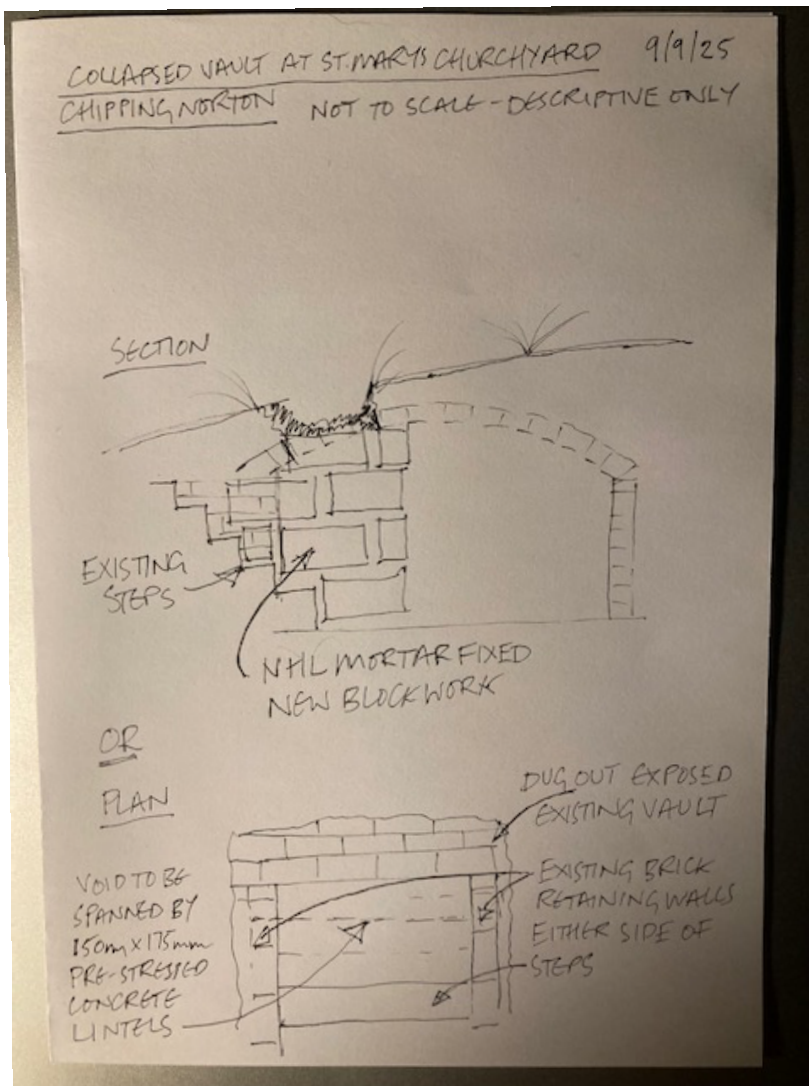
It's the one time in my life I wished I had a 'selfie stick' but by lying on the ground I took some photos to include in this report and for me to view the interior. Together with the photos you passed on to me, taken by TigerGeo, I'm confident that the majority of the structure is actually in excellent repair and that the damage does not need too much work to make it safe for many more years. That said, I've not been given access to any structural engineers reports that may have been made.



I hope that these two photos are not too confusing. They show the thin Cotswold stone slabs that were used to close the entrance down into the vault, perhaps only temporarily, until the next internment, that never happened? In any case the stones having so long, were finally broken by the weight and perhaps vibration of mowers.

survived for
repeated heavy

In order to rectify the damage the remaining section of the vault must be supported, either from below or by continuing the vault to a suitable support for the span.



Please excuse the hurried sketch, but I hope it helps to explain two possible solutions.

BLOCKS

Having cleared the fall, ensured that the concrete floor and steps provide sufficient foundation and dug out all loose bricks, together with enough soil for access, build a solid support for the existing vault using 9" concrete blocks and hydraulic lime mortar (NHL). The flexible mortar to absorb the movement and allow easy removal should it ever be required. The ground surface to be backfilled with soil and grass seed sown.

LINTELS

As above, remove all loose brickwork and enough soil to allow access. Rebuild brickwork

to the retaining walls each side of the steps to provide a continuation of the vaulted brickwork using a number of pre-stressed concrete lintels laid in NHL following the curve of the vault and spanning the void above the steps. Backfill with soil and sow grass seed.

Both these options should not exceed £2,500.00 in labour and materials and would take about a week. I will invoice for my site visit and this report (£200.00) should I not be chosen to carry out the work.

I assume that the vault owners descendants are not available to contact regarding this work.

Best wishes,

Richard

Item 9: Pool Meadow Restoration Project

Members should receive an in-person update from Jonny Ackroyd of Beaumont Rivers at the meeting, to give a project update and discuss the current challenges with the Pool Meadow Restoration Project.

Dear all,

Apologies it's been a little quiet on the Pool Meadow front – we've been crazy busy and had to get three quotes for the unexpected archaeological work. This needs doing before any works are undertaken, even on the footpath surface. As usual we've tried to keep costs down as much as possible, and the expansion of the TOE grant will also help with the additional funding! They're pestering you for a form to claim it – I'll bounce it to the top of your inbox in a moment!

The best quote is detailed below, following advice from Historic England, annoyingly we do need an extra trench. The total cost is £11,834 + £2,250 (not inc. VAT) for us to manage the works from beginning to end (we need to get/assess quotes, check health and safety/RAMS, get the contractors to site, manage the works and ensure the right results, etc etc), bringing the total to £14,084.

The items on the list that we don't need are:

- *UAS Geospatial Survey - £495.00*
- *Water pump hire - £52.00 per week*

The Town Clerk has submitted a claim form to draw down an additional grant from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment, which is currently awaiting final input from Jonny Ackroyd (project reports) before approval.

The Pool Meadow EMR stands at £15,678 and any remaining funds would need to be taken from general reserves.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council considers the report from Beaumont Rivers and considers next steps for the Pool Meadow project.

Item 10: Thames Valley Police Community Fund Grant

Organisations invited to apply for share of £200,000 of crime prevention funding

Matthew Barber (Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley) has opened the second round of this year's Community Fund, providing community groups with an opportunity to support ongoing policing priorities

The Community Fund, jointly managed by the Police & Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable, helps to prevent crime and keep communities safe. Money for the scheme is created from the proceeds from the sale of items seized from criminals that cannot be returned to their rightful owners.

Community organisations across Thames Valley are encouraged to apply for a grant of up to £10,000 for projects that support one of the following priority areas:

- Protecting Communities (including crime prevention and road safety)
- Protecting People (including domestic abuse and serious violence)
- Protecting Property (including both retail and vehicle crime)

Funding requests up to a total value of £10,000 will be considered, with funding awards limited to once every 12 months for any organisation. If you have received funding within the last 12 months, we will not be able to process your application.

The closing date for this round of applications is **12pm (noon) on Monday 22nd September 2025** and applications will be considered jointly by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Chief Constable.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council considers whether to apply for this funding, and to specify the project as stipulated within the remit of the grant funding priority areas (eg. Installation of a new Speed Indicator Device, upgrading the CCTV system at the Town Hall etc.)

Item 11: Neighbourhood Planning

Background: A Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in the Localism Act 2011 becomes part of a statutory development plan, carrying legal weight in determining planning applications and can help to secure additional funding from S106 and CIL receipts when the plan is “recent and robust”. Chipping Norton Town Council currently has a neighbourhood plan in place, which was adopted by referendum in 2016. This plan is now out-of-date and does not reflect the priorities and current development pressures faced by the town.

In 2024 the Council was approached by a neighbourhood planning consultant with a view to refresh the entire current plan but was declined by the Council at that time. The funding landscape for Neighbourhood Planning has now changed significantly since that conversation, as central government has pulled funding for Neighbourhood Planning and therefore would need to be resourced through a mixture of general reserves and precept.

The Town Clerk has undertaken conversations with other Town and Parish Councils to better understand the benefits that refreshing the plan may bring. In particular the Town Clerk has had conversations with St Neot’s TC, Charlbury TC, Woodstock TC, and Eynsham TC – all of which have either refreshed their current plans or are in the midst of refreshing their plans. Specific findings outlined below from each case study:

- St Neot’s TC: Is a large TC (Pop 34,000) facing significant pressure with local development and access to local resources. They are completing a review of an existing plan, however, in the new version have re-drawn the boundaries of the plan and are including smaller satellite parishes to better reflect the burden on local services within the town centre.
- Eynsham Parish Council: Is a smaller Parish council in the midst of significant local expansion, with an additional 3,500 homes planned in the near future. The main goal within their neighbourhood plan is to stipulate housing mix requirements and a desire for net-zero housing within this specific housing development.
- Charlbury TC: As this town has a current plan in place, they have decided to renew only a portion of their plan, the “Infrastructure Development Plan”. The aim of renewing only a portion of their plan is to better reflect the current S106 requests needed to meet the town’s emerging priorities. A benefit of this approach is that the portion of the plan can be scoped much more quickly than reviewing the entirety of the plan, and that this does not need to be taken through the full referendum process.

Next steps: As refreshing the current neighbourhood plan is not within the budget for this financial year, the Town Clerk has put these steps in place so that if desired, the

quotations can be received and put in place in advance of budget setting for the 26/27 financial year in November/December 2025.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee considers whether they wish for the Town Clerk to pursue further enquiries with Neighbourhood Planning consultants, with a view for quotations and proposals to be received at Full Council (13th October), or, if they wish to pursue a different option as outlined in the report above.