

## Neighbours

Following the last PC meeting, many parishioners sent me questions and points to be forwarded to Chris Aramini-Brant, who is our district councillor, with regard to the issue of fly-tipping and changes to the system for visiting the tip at Alkerton. I did this and the response from him was as you can see below.

It is a lengthy response, but for those who have a concern about this local issue and who raised questions, I felt it was difficult to precis, so I am sending the whole email. I will keep you informed of any further progress.

Cllr Carol Shenton.

## Response :

Following the concerns raised by residents at the Wroxton and Balscote Parish Council meeting in July, I have now received responses from both Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. I wanted to update the Parish Council on what I have found out and, importantly, what happens next.

Firstly, thank you to everyone who raised questions at the meeting. There was clearly considerable concern about fly-tipping locally, particularly around the A422 and Alkerton, and about whether the situation has worsened since the introduction of the booking system at Alkerton Household Waste Recycling Centre.

I promised at the meeting that I would take those concerns directly to both councils, and I have done so.

On fly-tipping enforcement, CDC has confirmed that it records detailed information about incidents, including locations, types of waste, enforcement activity and outcomes. Officers use this information to identify patterns and trends and to target enforcement activity.

There was particular concern about the published government figures showing no prosecutions in 2024/25. CDC has explained that prosecutions are pursued where there is sufficient evidence and a realistic prospect of success, and that the nationally published data inevitably reflects historic rather than current enforcement activity. CDC has also confirmed that it has recently secured a prosecution relating to a 2025 incident, resulting in a £3,500 fine.

CDC has confirmed that the significant fly-tipping at the A422 lay-by has been investigated and that cameras have been deployed there, with further camera

enforcement planned. Elsewhere in the district, camera evidence has recently resulted in £1,000 Fixed Penalty Notices being issued.

I recognise residents' frustration when fly-tipping occurs and there does not appear to be an immediate prosecution. Unfortunately, identifying rubbish is very different from obtaining sufficient evidence to prove who actually deposited it. Nevertheless, I will continue to support robust enforcement wherever the evidence allows it.

The important outstanding question is whether there has actually been an increase in fly-tipping around Wroxton, Balscote and Alkerton since the HWRC booking system was introduced.

Residents have provided strong anecdotal evidence and clearly feel that the situation has deteriorated. However, at present we do not have sufficient evidence to say that the booking system has caused an increase in fly-tipping. I think it is important that we establish the facts rather than either dismiss residents' experiences or assume a connection without the evidence to support it.

OCC has therefore suggested bringing together the available data and arranging a meeting involving myself, OCC's Head of Countryside and Waste and, where useful, CDC officers and other local members. I welcome this and will be taking it forward. I want us to look specifically at what has happened locally, whether there has been a measurable increase and whether there are particular factors affecting the area around Alkerton.

On the booking system itself, I share a number of the concerns raised by residents.

I have told OCC directly that I believe the current booking process is overly complicated and needs to be made significantly leaner, quicker and more user-friendly. As the local county councillor, my responsibility is to represent residents and raise concerns when I believe something is not working as well as it should.

OCC has confirmed that a review of the booking system is underway and is due to report in December. User feedback will form part of that review, and I have been assured that opportunities to contribute will be shared with me so that I can make sure residents and the Parish Council have an opportunity to feed into the process.

I also remain happy to arrange for OCC representatives to attend a future Parish Council meeting. However, I think it would be more productive for us first to examine the

local data and have the proposed meeting with officers. We can then come back to the Parish Council with evidence and a clearer understanding of what is happening locally.

So, from my perspective, this isn't the end of the matter. There are now three things I want to see happen: continued and targeted enforcement against fly-tipping locally; proper analysis of the evidence to establish whether fly-tipping has increased around Alkerton and what may be driving it; and meaningful consideration of residents' experiences as part of OCC's review of the booking system.

I hope this demonstrates that the concerns raised at the meeting have been taken seriously. Where the councils are taking effective action, I will support that action. Where I believe things can be improved, I will continue to say so and push for those improvements on behalf of residents.

I will keep the Parish Council updated as this work progresses.

Best wishes,

**Cllr Chris Aramini-Brant**

**Deputy Leader**

**Executive Member for Planning & Enforcement**

Councillor for Cropredy, Sibfords & Wroxton Ward