

# ROBERT COURTS

District Councillor  
The Bartons Ward

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## Monthly Report - June 2015

**Bus:** I attended the bus user's meeting on 23rd May 2015 with Ian Hudspeth. This was a very positive meeting; not only was the strength of feeling clear but there were many suggestions as to the way forward. Firstly, in the short term it is essential that the OCC-provided shuttle bus is supported to ensure that it remains past the current six-month period. Can I encourage all residents to leave their cars at home every now and again and use the bus to show support? Secondly, there will be a further public meeting to explore the feasibility of a community-run bus service. Local resident Chris Puttick has done a lot of work on this, but ultimately any such plan will depend upon the level of local support and involvement. Could anyone interested in being involved, perhaps someone with accountancy experience, make contact with Chris, the Parish Council, or myself?

**Local Plan:** the consultation period has closed and the plan moves towards independent inspection.

**Broadband:** I apologise for mentioning this again but it is very important and many people may have missed earlier reports. Work continues on the WODC plan, as reported here: <http://tinyurl.com/lghdygq> . Cotswold Broadband are finally in the last phase of completing contracts with the supplier so that West Oxfordshire can become the first 100% superfast broadband connected district in the UK. This involves finalising the government funding for the project, which has to comply with EU rules on public funding and State Aid. They are shortly to start on the detailed network planning which will result in a schedule of when as well as where, which I will keep you informed about.

For now, the following websites remain the place to monitor to see when your area will be connected:

- you can find out which plan (OCC or WODC,) you fall under by looking here: <http://www.cotswoldsbroadband.co.uk/who-is-doing-what?>
- you can see the currently anticipated timescale by looking here: <http://tinyurl.com/pohsa46>

**Sandford St Martin Fete:** I thoroughly enjoyed the event on 16th May, and was pleased see such a good turnout. Sadly my welly-throwing skills have not improved since last year, whilst my luck in guessing "water or wine" has in fact declined. But next year!

The **Barton Abbey NGS Open Gardens** event on 24th May 2015 was also very successful. I was glad to see so many people undeterred by the grey skies and coming along to buy plants, see the wonderful gardens, drink tea and eat the plentiful and delicious cake!

**Animal crossing warning signs** - I have been asked about the provision of signs to warn about deer crossing the road particularly on the roads to the Wortons. OCC have checked their injury accident database and there are no recorded incidents with deer (or any other incidents in this vicinity) and so they take the view that they could not justify funding deer warning signs from their lowered maintenance budget. If external funding were to be made available then they would have no objection to signs being provided subject to suitable locations being established. If anyone is interested in pursuing that please let me know.

**Potholes** - Oxfordshire County Council's online reporting service means you can upload images and locations of potholes using your mobile phone, helping to improve the county's 3,000 mile road network. See here: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/potholes>

Lastly, on a **personal** note, I will no longer serve on the Economic & Social Scrutiny Committee at WODC; I have been promoted to the Cabinet with responsibility for Housing & Communities. This is a great honour and I look forward to serving in this new role. My duties include: Parish/Town Council Liaison; Support to the voluntary sector; Community Safety Partnerships; Crime and Disorder; Neighbourhood Policing; Scrutiny of Police and Crime Commissioner; Housing Allocations; Homelessness; Sheltered Housing Accommodation; Supporting People; Safeguarding. My **surgery dates** for 2015 continue on 6th June and 4th July all at the Fox Inn, Westcote Barton.

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