

ED VAIZEY WRITES...

The main issue that has dominated local headlines has been the future of local health services. Representatives from all the three main parties have been campaigning on this issue. In particular, we all want to keep our community hospitals, but we also want to prevent cuts to other services. The case is pretty unarguable. Oxfordshire receives the lowest funding per head in the country, and the John Radcliffe is the most efficient hospital for its size in the country. I have been reassured that the cuts will not effect the quality of service, but it will certainly lead to delays in operations, which is a matter of great concern. The mayors of all our towns have collected petitions, as have most of the MPs in the County. By the time you read this, we will have presented petitions to the local Primary Care Trust, the Prime Minister and Parliament.

A lack of an effective transport system is an issue that could have a huge impact on the future of our local economy. I receive many letters from businesses who are concerned about the huge pressure they face from a creaking road network. I also attended a public meeting to look at ways of re-opening Wantage Road station, which faces some pretty difficult obstacles. I managed to speak in the final debate before the Commons rose from the Whitsun recess to draw these problems to the Government's attention. The point I wanted to get across was that, as we are one of the most economically important areas of the country, the Government cannot simply leave us on our own to sort these issues out. It must have a strategy and buy in to it.

On the wider front, I have just come back from a fascinating trip to Iran. I am planning to write about it, and will include a link to the article in my next article.

ED VAIZEY

MP Wantage (Con)

MP'S SURGERY WITH ED VAIZEY

5.30-7.00pm, unless stated otherwise

July	
14	Grove Old Mill Hall, Old School Lane
21	Didcot , King Alfred Drive Community Centre
28	Shrivenham , Memorial Hall
No August Surgeries	
Contact Ed Vaizey by	
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E-mail	vaizeye@parliament.uk
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COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The county council by-election for Eynsham in May could bring forward plans to modernise the A415 from Marcham to Standlake, as Charles Mathew was duly elected as county councillor for Eynsham, which includes Standlake, the other side of Newbridge.

Charles is as keen as I am to get some relief for the people who live along this busy and narrow trunk road. So Marcham has another ally in its aim for road improvements to the A415 throughout Oxfordshire. Charles has a great knowledge of the history and problems of Newbridge, and the schemes to build a new crossing of the river there.

In the meantime, Steve Howell – Head of Transport O.C.C. has already said at the Marcham parish A.G.M. on May 24th, that he will find officer time to investigate the possible options to alleviate the problems in Packhorse Lane, we should have three or four options by the end of August.

These options will be put to the parish council for their consideration, and when Marcham have chosen the best scheme, I will pursue the county council for the funding.

It will be a fight, but that's what I was elected to do!

The reservoir is still moving along and Thames Water will make their announcement on site selection before the year is out I feel. The Reservoir Affected Parishes group are still collecting information, but much has been unearthed since the foundation in January this year. They will probably open a website, so that all of the information can be seen and the public can make up their minds about this huge possible reservoir.

I attended a meeting in Wantage civic hall recently about the possible re-opening of a railway station at Grove, and assured the public and my Liberal county council opponents, that if any stakeholder, ie Network Rail, First Great Western Trains, or even Thames Water wished to put some time and money into this project, then the county council would raise the status of the project from Low priority at present to High priority almost immediately. We have one dedicated railway officer in Oxfordshire at present, and he is busy working with Network rail on the possible re-opening of the Oxford – Bletchley line which is still intact, and has renewed government interest.

There is much talk of health service cuts from the PCTs in Oxfordshire, as they have to find £33 million in savings (cuts) this

financial year 2006/ 2007. These cuts are the result, not of an overspend, but of an underfunding of health care in Oxfordshire, due to the way in which the government has allocated funding this year. Oxfordshire has been given a settlement that places it at the bottom of the table at only 85% of the average, with other areas, notably Sedgefield, County Durham on 130% of the average. All of the six Oxfordshire MPs are united in trying to get a more equitable settlement for the county.

The county council has secured for this year only, a one off sum of money from the county budget of £1 million to help with the worst affected cases in this area.

Finally in reply to the editorial in June about fetes and fayres, I managed to purchase at the bargain price of £1.50, a jar of the most delicious damson jam at Tubney fete, all now gone...

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RED CROSS APPEAL 2006

The collection around the village last month for this worthy cause raised the magnificent sum of £343.05, well up on last year's figure of £286.98.

David Jones, the Senior Red Cross Fundraiser for Oxfordshire sends his thanks to all the villagers who contributed financially and also to those who gave up their time knocking on doors etc.

I'd like to give my own personal thanks to those who helped me out again this year and to the three new volunteer collectors. Your help was very much appreciated! I hope you will all be able and willing to help again next year.

TONY BLACKLER.

**EX-SERVICEMEN'S CLUB
QUIZ NIGHT
8.30PM
SUNDAY 2 JULY**

MISSING WHEELIE BIN

Sometime between 23 and 31 May our Brown Recycling Wheelie Bin went missing from Anson Close. Each bin is serialised and ours was number 2081.



If you have seen this bin, please ring 01865 391123 and we will come and collect. Thanks, Nigel.

To get your letter included please write to the editor by 20th month latest