

Budget consultation still open

Residents can have their say on the council's budget proposals until 19th December by visiting oxfordshire.gov.uk/budgetconsultation and completing the online survey. Comments from the public consultation will be reported to the council's cabinet on 24th January. The budget, including the council tax level, will be decided at a meeting with all county councillors on 14th February 2023.

Householders can pick up a free roll of food waste caddy liners to help deal with the extra food waste expected to be generated over the festive period.

Oxfordshire residents can pick up free food waste caddy bags

The free liners are available from the following locations during December, while stocks last:

All Oxfordshire libraries
County Hall, Oxford
Abbey House, Abingdon
Bodicote House, Banbury
The Marsh Road Depot, Oxford
Welch Way - Town Centre Shop, Witney
Bicester Green
Oxford Wood Recycling, Abingdon
The Wantage Mix
Share Oxford.

Customers who use the Home Library Service will be offered a roll of food caddy liners with their book delivery.

All households receive food waste recycling collections from their district council. Oxfordshire County Council arranges for the collected food waste to be recycled. Although most households already recycle their food waste – the council recycles nearly 25,000 tonnes of food waste annually – it estimates that a similar amount wrongly ends up in general waste.

Update on the HIF2 A40 improvements programme.

Officers have recently undertaken a thorough review of this scheme, including costs, timelines and calculating the implications of inflation.

OCC Cabinet decided on 29 November 2022, to withdraw the compulsory purchase and side roads orders from the ongoing statutory process to allow time to further review the deliverability of the scheme and consider mitigations to these cost pressures. As part of this withdrawal process, the secretary of state for transport, the funding bodies and impacted parties have been informed.

Note: the HIF1 project is a separate from HIF2.

Six traffic filters to be trialled in Oxford

Six traffic filters – designed to reduce traffic, make bus journeys faster and make walking and cycling safer – will be trialled in Oxford after improvement works to Oxford railway station are complete (these are due to be completed late 2023, with Botley Road closed while they take place).

The traffic filters will be implemented under an experimental traffic regulation order (ETRO) for a minimum period of six months. During the trial, the county council will assess the impact of the traffic filters by monitoring traffic levels, bus journey times and air quality as well as review any impacts on individuals and those with protected characteristics. A long-term decision about the traffic filters will be made towards the end of the trial based on monitoring data collected and feedback from consultation.

The decision follows extensive engagement with more than a hundred local businesses, organisations and community groups, including bus companies, hospitals, schools and universities. The county council also received 5,700 responses to a public consultation that ran from 5 September to 13 October 2022, with another 485 emails from members of the public and organisations.

A couple of notable changes to the scheme since the consultation: Oxfordshire residents outside the city will now receive 25 day passes – maximum of one vehicle per person and two vehicles per household, so a 2-adult household with 2 cars would get the maximum 50 passes.

The filters on Marston Ferry Road and Hollow Way will initially only operate at peak times 7am-9am and 3pm-6pm, only switching to 7am-7pm if supported by monitoring results.

Following Oxford Bus Company's announcement of the withdrawal of bus services to the Northway and Risinghurst areas of the city, Oxfordshire County Council has launched a tender process for replacement services.

Park+Bus at Redbridge

These great value tickets are still available for quick access to Oxford city centre – Parking + bus for one adult and up to 3 children is £4, or £5 for 2 adults and up to 3 children.

Quick action on Risinghurst buses, more bus changes expected

Changes to the city's bus network are being made from 8 January 2023 to stabilise services and provide greater reliability in the face of congestion, driver shortages and the closure of the Botley Road bridge by Network Rail. There are some reductions to frequency of services, but many routes are protected through reinvestment of resources and increasing running times to make sure passengers can have greater confidence in the network.

As part of these changes by the bus company, services city9 to Risinghurst and city13 to Northway will no longer operate. Recognising that this will adversely affect local residents, the council has acted quickly to undertake a tender process for replacement services to these areas and will announce further details as soon as possible. Earlier in the year, the council set aside up to £2.5 million over the next two years to protect previously commercial services at risk of withdrawal.