

**Newsletter
March
2022**

OLD WINDSOR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



**Old Windsor Ward
Borough Councillors**

Lynne Jones

Neil Knowles



Who are Old Windsor Residents Association (OWRA)?

OWRA's purpose is to serve the whole community of Old Windsor Ward by being dedicated to obtaining value for money and improvement of local facilities and services, the quality of life and the environment in and around Old Windsor. To work with the Borough and Parish Councils to strive to influence all matters of local government in the Ward of Old Windsor and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in keeping with the interests and concerns of local residents.

Our committee is a small group of residents who work hard to deliver the objectives of the Association and we have had a core of excellent members who support us during the elections and at events over the year.

Lynne and Neil are committed to being the voice of Old Windsor Ward residents within RBWM. They will continue to challenge and influence decision making in the best interests of residents in our Ward and residents across the Borough. They will use their experience to encourage further transparency & financial stability at RBWM and to ensure Old Windsor Ward is a great place to live.

As with all organisations we would welcome residents who would like to be more involved, whether that is being a committee member (attending 4 meetings per year and contributing your views) or helping with newsletter/leaflet deliveries in your road.

We cannot do this without you and your views are important to us.

Please contact Lynne Jones, Email: Jonesy.lynne@sky.com Tel/Text 07939376182

OLD WINDSOR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING

7.30pm on April 25th 2022

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Your chance to hear from our Councillors Lynne Jones and Neil Knowles, enjoy a complimentary drink and ask any questions you have, regarding the latest financial challenges, flooding and local issues such as schools, traffic and local services.

At Old Windsor Club, St. Lukes Road

Our **Annual General Meeting will follow from
8.30 p.m**

**OLD WINDSOR
OWRA
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

Find us on

Facebook - Old Windsor Residents Association
Website - Owra.org.uk - Twitter - [@OldWindsorRA](https://twitter.com/OldWindsorRA)

Old Windsor Parish

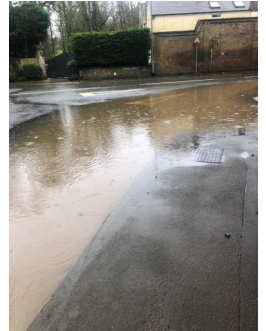
When we put out our Newsletter in February 2020 little did we know what the next two years would bring. The Covid pandemic changed our lives. All the plans that we made ,individually and as a community , were put on hold while we adjusted our priorities.

Cllr Lynne Jones, Jane Dawson (Chair of the Parish Council) and Debra Dulake (OWPC social worker for Older People) set up and ran the **Covid support network** in Old Windsor Parish. With an army of volunteers from the Old Windsor Community this supported over 100 vulnerable residents. Thank you to all who volunteered to be paired up with a vulnerable person/family, donated and delivered we couldn't have done it without you.

We are told that the promised '**A308 review**', started in early 2019, is now in draft form. Our concerns regarding the ever increasing traffic along the Straight Road, and how we can mitigate against it, were put on hold until this full review has taken place. We wait, with interest, as to the findings of the draft study.

As the A308 bisects our village residents have told us their concerns around certain junctions, traffic management along Burfield Road/St Lukes and the pollution levels.

Local flooding issues are always in our minds and we have kept an eye on river levels. Unfortunately RBWM , due to financial challenges, did not honour its commitment to partnership funding of the **River Thames Scheme** and it has progressed without section 1 (Datchet to Egham). In August 2010 the Environment Agency Flood Risk Management Strategy Report stated that there was no viable alternative and we are convinced that there are no short term measures that will protect the village in the way the Jubilee River protects Maidenhead and Windsor. RBWM was not willing to borrow the £40m to protect home in Old Windsor, Wraysbury and Datchet but were willing to borrow that amount to build a new Leisure Centre in Maidenhead. Drainage works have taken place at the Burfield Road/ Priest Hill junction and a soakaway installed at Meadow Way to alleviate the issues we have seen regarding standing water. Parish Councillor Malcolm Beer is in talks regarding the area outside the Post Office on Straight Road.



Old Windsor Library was recommended for closure in last years savings proposals but due to intense lobbying and the Parish Council agreeing to subsidise the library costs it has remained available to the residents. It is a case of 'use it or lose it'. Opening times are Wednesdays 2.30pm to 5.30pm and Saturday 10am to 1pm
It is available for private hire, Phone 01628 683878

The Tapestries came under threat from the freeholder wishing to sell the site. The first we knew about it was when residents expressed their concerns on receiving a letter that indicated they would be served with notices to quit.. Old Windsor Parish Council immediately submitted a request, and evidence, for the building to be listed to English Heritage. Thankfully this was successful and the threat of a developer acquiring the site was averted. Simultaneously your borough councillors were in discussion with RBWM regarding the situation with the residents and ultimately buying the site The borough were outbid but we were pleased that the new owner honoured the existing tenants' contracts.

Heathrow operations were hit badly by the Covid pandemic and this affected the livelihoods of residents. It will take some time to see a return to previous flight numbers. We will continue to monitor noise levels through various organisations.

Borough Finances

In 2019 we informed residents that a lack of financial prudence had resulted in unsustainable budget setting in 2018/19 and put huge strain on council officers to maintain services, across the board, while having to off-set a £10.6 million deficit in the 2019/20 services budget.

To balance the accounts we have seen a number of cuts or increase in fees

- downgrading the residents parking discount scheme
- charging for parking permits
- cancellation of capital projects
- reducing the council tax subsidy for low earners
- cuts to funding for Early Years/Youth Services
- Increase in parking charges
- cuts to Library opening hours
- removal of grants to community groups.
- Reduction in Community Wardens from a promised 25 to 6



The basics of this budget is that there is no option but to **raise council tax by the maximum allowed, this year and for the next 4 years.** Despite these increases it is still necessary to find another 13 million savings by February 2026.

‘With low levels of reserves & one of the lowest levels of Council Tax... coupled with increasing levels of borrowing’it.. ‘has made the position more challenging’

‘the position... is more acute than other councils due to... low levels of reserves.... Insufficient to cover future projected funding shortfalls.’

This year’s budget was set in place by decisions made up to 5 years ago. Outsourcing..... pushing for cheaper and cheaper contracts without assessing the impact on the quality of service. The loss of knowledge and control through redundancies. Spending on projects (and running up the councils debt) without having guaranteed income that could be realised.

Our debt is estimated to reach over £230m this financial year and our borrowing cost will grow to £8.6m annually.

Being Independent we have been challenging the decisions made by the ruling Conservative administration but were ignored.

The stranglehold that the administration continues to place on the Overview & Scrutiny process, **despite two consecutive Peer Group reviews calling for change, restricts the only mechanism that enables true challenge to take place.**

Now the Conservative administration need to take responsibility for the situation they have created and not just make excuses.

You can find Cllr Jones’ response to the budget on behalf of the opposition on our Facebook page
Old Windsor Residents Association
or website
owra.org.uk

To become a member of OWRA and support our Independent councillors please visit our website **owra.org.uk**
Or contact Cllr Lynne Jones
Annual Membership £5, Direct debit available

Old Windsor Carnival

Along with all residents we were pleased to hear that the Carnival will be held in June this year. It takes a number of committed people to ensure that the Carnival is a success and due to the Covid pandemic this is another organisation that has lost members, both on the committee and to help on the day. There are over 2400 households in Old Windsor, please get involved, support the committee or we may not be seeing a Carnival next year.

Contact: Jonathan Stacey 07825 372443 jonostac@hotmail.co.uk

Lynne Jones (Leader) RBWM Appointments

Leader of the RBWM Local Independents Group
Audit and Governance Committee (Vice Chair)
Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Full Council
Member Standards Panel
Constitution working group

Other positions held
Kings Court School Governor
Parish Councillor

Neil Knowles (Nominating Officer) RBWM Appointments

Windsor & Ascot Development Management Committee
Windsor Town Forum
Aviation Forum
Full Council
International Partner Towns Committee
South East Employers—Board member

Other positions held
St Peters School Governor
Parish Councillor
Old Windsor United Charities—Trustee

Our Committee

Malcolm Beer (President)	Parish Councillor
Whing Hnoi Chan	Parish Councillor
Jane Dawson	Parish Councillor
Robert Elmes	Treasurer & Membership Secretary
Roger Perkins	Secretary

RBWM online—My Account

There are many of council services available online, allowing you to communicate with the council 24 hours a day. You now have the ability to create an online account, giving you access to many of your requests and **allowing you to track the progress**. The services available via your account are:

- Make a complaint, pay us a compliment or leave a comment
- Report a missed bin collection—Order a new bin or replace a damaged bin
- Sign up to a Green Waste subscription
- Get help to put your bins out
- Request a collection of large items
- Renew your bus pass
- Apply for a blue badge
- Apply for school transport
- Appeal a school place decision

Please visit www.rbwm.gov.uk to sign up.

You can access the 'My Account' link on the home page, below the 'Services' icons.

It is helpful to us if residents could keep an eye out for pavement defects and overhanging foliage. These issues can also be reported, along with other issues, via the RBWM website. The report –it link is again available when accessing services on the front page.

Contact details

Cllr Lynne Jones	Email Cllr.Jones@rbwm.gov.uk	Tel: 07939 376182
Cllr Neil Knowles	Email Cllr.Knowles@rbwm.gov.uk	Tel: 07890 382398