
Supporting communities in rural Oxfordshire since 1920

www.oxonrcc.org.uk

ORCC's Mission Statement

To enable rural communities across Oxfordshire to be more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

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Keeping up to date with ORCC News

The ORCC News Bulletin is sent to you every two months - to let you know about our recent work, future events, funding and general information. For daily news updates visit the ORCC website at www.oxonrcc.org.uk. **Note to Village newsletter editors** - we hope you will include ORCC news in your publications, so please see www.oxonrcc.org.uk if this Bulletin does not coincide with your own production deadlines.

You are welcome to reproduce any of the information included and ORCC requests that you acknowledge the source of the material.

Do we have your email address? ORCC can send this newsletter to you electronically.

To unsubscribe or change your details, email orcc@oxonrcc.org.uk

Let us know your views – ORCC would like to receive readers' comments and feedback on this newsletter.

To make a complaint about any of our services, please ask for a copy of the Complaints Policy and Procedure. Large print and alternative formats available on request.

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

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ORCC NEWS

'Infrastructure support' or 'neighbourliness' - *it's just what people do!*

We are currently in discussion with Oxfordshire County Council about future funding for what they call 'Infrastructure support' – i.e. the kind of 'behind the scenes' help that ORCC routinely gives to communities, as well as the more structured/formal 'volunteering' that people do and which is generally supported by OCVA and the two local Volunteer Bureau. We are keen to get across the message that there is a huge amount that happens in communities that people don't think of as 'volunteering' and that certainly doesn't depend upon volunteers brought in from outside.

The County has asked for information about this. We will be producing some general evidence, but there is such a huge tapestry of local community effort across rural Oxfordshire that it's pretty impossible to quantify.

What do you think? Can you help us by telling us about what happens in *your* community? How do you support vulnerable people? How do you provide services that might otherwise have to be provided by the Council? How does your community keep people *involved* and active? Are you a 'volunteer' or do you see yourself as just taking part/helping out? If all the things that go on in your community stopped tomorrow, what difference would it make?

Let us know what you think – contact details are on the front of the Bulletin.

Know someone who could help us to quantify community effort?

We are looking for someone who would be willing to spend a few occasional days (up to 5) as soon as possible doing some "quick and dirty" "unacademic" research on numbers of local voluntary and community groups per community. The aim would be to produce a guesstimate of the average amount of community participation involved per community and then as a total for the county.

This would mean contacting a few key organisations, such as OFWI and Oxford Diocese, to see if they have any available data and then "trawling" community websites. Work could be done at home or in the ORCC office.

If you or anyone you know is interested in finding out more, please contact Meryl Smith, Deputy Chief Executive, on 01865 883488 or meryl.smith@oxonrcc.org.uk

Your views are wanted on what kind of support services are needed to encourage voluntary and community activity and self-help

A County Council public consultation process is now underway via an online questionnaire and a series of consultation meetings during July (which have only just been announced).

The County Council is reviewing the way in which it funds organisations like ORCC and Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA) to provide a range of support services to encourage voluntary, community and faith organisations to achieve their aims and aspirations (otherwise known as "infrastructure support").

The County Council wants the views of local voluntary and community groups and community members on what kind of support they would like to have in order to design its future single contract for services.

The consultation ends on 12 September 2011. To have a look at the consultation document which sets out the background to the proposals and to access the online response questionnaire, go to the OCC website: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk or

[Oxfordshire County Council Consultation Portal - Infrastructure Support for Voluntary and Community Organisations in Oxfordshire - Consultation Homepage](#)

The local consultation meetings are as follows (venues to be confirmed):

Oxford - Wednesday 20 July 10am-12 noon

Banbury - Thursday 21 July 2pm-4pm

Abingdon - Wednesday 27 July 2pm-4pm

September date to be confirmed

If you are interested in attending one of these meeting, email compact@oxfordshire.gov.uk or phone the administration team on 01865 328281 to let them know your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices for dates. You will be sent confirmation of the date and more information about the venue.

There is a short briefing about this on the ORCC website.

Bulk oil buying scheme - an ethical social enterprise

Regular readers will now know about ORCC Trading Ltd's Community Oil Buying Consortium that makes the most of customers' collective buying power to get the best price on heating oil. Since we started the scheme last November, we've got 25 local co-ordinators in place, and have ordered 215,900 litres of oil, saving our members a massive total of £13,595. This impressive saving is thanks to our volunteer negotiator, Chris Pomfret, who is now also buying for groups across the country.

Members say:

'... the scheme is so good as it is a true win-win situation for all involved.'

'... it also helps us to be able to order a minimum of 500 litres whereas previously we tried to wait till we needed 1000 litres to avoid paying even higher costs per litre.'

If you want your community to be able to sign up, you need a volunteer local co-ordinator. The job is simple - once a month you ask members in your area if they would like to order oil, and then let us know. No handling money and no negotiating prices. In return you get free membership worth £20. Further details of the local co-ordinator's role are available from Christine Bartle on oil@oxonrcc.org.uk.

ORCC Trading Ltd is now offering the following services ~

Payroll Management:

- No set up fee
- No extra charge for year end processing
- No extra charge for amendments/starters/leavers
- Fees reviewed annually

Book-keeping:

- Fixed monthly fee based on your requirements
- Fees reviewed at agreed intervals

To request a quote, tel. 01865 883488

Communities are invited to give their views by 30 September to a revised approach to providing library services across the county

Having listened to the feedback it received about the future of library service provision, the County Council has revised its proposals for how the service should be delivered in the future. The Council now says it will guarantee that every single one of the 43 libraries will continue to receive support in the form of free access to a suitable building, to book stock, to the library stock management system, and the expertise of County Council employed library staff. In addition, every library will have the self-service equipment that already operates at some Oxfordshire libraries installed.

However, in the case of 21 rural libraries this offer will need to be achieved with the help of volunteers who will be asked to assist OCC staff in operating the library. The proposed ratio of volunteers to staff in 5 of these libraries is one-third to two-thirds and in the other 16 two-thirds to one-third.

The County Council is now conducting a public consultation on these proposals, which will run until 30 September 2011.

An ORCC briefing paper is available on our website – www.oxonrcc.org.uk

ORCC would encourage individuals and communities to make a response, whether or not your community has its own local library. The views of library users – current and potential - all over the county will be useful.

The County Council stresses that no decisions have yet been made. Details gathered during the consultation will be taken into account before final decisions are made the end of 2011. Change would be phased in over a three-year period. No changes to the current network would happen in the 2011/12 financial year.

People can have their say through the following channels:

- Completing the online feedback form on the County Council website (<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraryserviceconsultation>)
- Sending back the FREEPOST feedback form at the back of the consultation document - available at all libraries and council offices
- Going along to a library service consultation event (details to be published on the OCC website in due course.)

Digital TV Switchover Advice Points

Oxfordshire, parts of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire will begin switching to digital-only TV on 14 September 2011. The two-stage process will complete two weeks later on 28 September. This means the existing analogue TV signal will be switched off and replaced with a new, stronger digital TV signal.

Switchover is happening so that Freeview services (digital TV through an aerial) can be extended to people who can't currently get them. Any analogue television left unconverted will no longer be able to receive TV programmes after the switchover. If you already have Freeview, you will need to re-tune your TV on the day of switchover

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council will be running advice points in Didcot and Witney to help with any questions you have about switchover, including re-tuning, equipment and the Switchover Help Scheme.

The advice points are taking place from **10am to 4pm** on **14th, 15th, 28th and 29th September**.

- Didcot - Cornerstone Arts Centre, 25 Station Road, Didcot
- Witney - The Corn Exchange, Market Square, Witney

If you have a question about the switchover or what you need to do, please pop in to one of our advice points and we will be able to help.

Affordable Housing news

The latest Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership development was opened by the Prime Minister at Blackditch, Stanton Harcourt on Friday 17 June

Cottsway Housing Association, a member of the Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership, completed a development of 16 new affordable homes in Stanton Harcourt in June.

The development is the latest completion by the ORHP. ORCC's Rural Housing Enablers were involved throughout the process, from undertaking a Housing Needs Survey to measure local affordable housing need, through to consultation with the Parish Council and local residents.

The Prime Minister officially opened the development, which will house those with local connections to the parish. The homes are an outstanding example of the high eco-standards that ORHP developments are built to. The technologies used in the homes include:

- Hemp - the fastest growing crop on the planet after bamboo. Hemp absorbs carbon dioxide as it grows and so is carbon positive, absorbing more carbon than it produces.
- The construction material made from hemp creates breathable walls, providing better indoor air quality.
- All homes have ground source heat pumps, which extract heat from the ground for under-floor heating and hot water.
- A rainwater harvesting system will recycle rainwater to flush the downstairs toilet.
- Photovoltaic panels have been installed on the roof to provide carbon-friendly solar power.
- Windows are triple glazed to minimise heat loss.

An average two-bedroom home costs over £1000 a year in water usage and the cost of heat and power. With the measures noted above, Cottsway is hoping to reduce running costs to around £200 per year.

Other ORHP developments are on-site in Blewbury, Langford, Hornton and Hanborough. And it is hoped that the public support the Prime Minister has shown to the Stanton Harcourt development will be mirrored across Oxfordshire and beyond.

Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership Conference

As part of the National Housing Federation Rural Housing Week (11- 17 July) Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and the ORHP held an Affordable Rural Housing Conference at Stanton Harcourt.

Topics included:

- Introduction to the Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership.
- Why affordable rural housing is vital to saving our villages and protecting our rural way of life.
- The role of the Rural Housing Enabler.
- Building affordable rural housing – the process from start to finish, including a recent case study.
- The impact of the proposed Localism Bill.
- Who will live in these homes and how can they be protected for local people?
- What can, and does, go wrong – and what can we learn?

For more information about Rural Affordable Housing contact Tom McCulloch
tom.mcculloch@oxonrcc.org.uk

Oxfordshire Community Shops Network

Wootton Community Shop

There was a warm welcome from the committee of the Wootton Community Shop to the twenty five members of the Oxfordshire Community Shops Network at their meeting on 22 June 2011. The members, representing twelve local community shop projects, met up to share expertise and good practice ideas.

After visiting the community owned shop in the village, they took part in a discussion on 'Managing the Management Committee' facilitated by Jane Barker, ORCC's Village Shops Development Worker, followed by an open discussion on issues as diverse as the withdrawal of the cheque guarantee card and local bread and cheese suppliers. Many thanks to the Wootton team for their friendly hospitality.

The Oxfordshire Community Shops Network is made up of people who are involved in both established and developing community-owned shops in Oxfordshire, whether management committee members, managers, steering group members or volunteers. We meet twice a year to discuss issues and share ideas. Meetings start at 7.30 pm with an opportunity to look around the host shop beforehand and we aim to finish by 9.00 pm. Meetings are friendly, informal and free with the emphasis on discussion and making contact with others.

Oxfordshire Village Shops Handbook

The Oxfordshire Village Shops Handbook has recently been updated and reprinted.

The new Handbook provides village shopkeepers with a wealth of information on all aspects of running a shop from general retail advice to trading legislation and has been produced by Jane Barker, ORCC's Village Shops Development Worker, in response to the many queries and issues raised by rural retailers in the county. If your shop has not yet received a copy, please contact [Jane Barker](mailto:jane.barker@oxonrcc.org.uk) at ORCC.

For more information about Village and Community Shops contact Jane Barker jane.barker@oxonrcc.org.uk

Non-emergency Patient Transport Consultation

Oxfordshire NHS is looking to make savings in many areas of their service and the non-emergency patient transport is one of those services. A consultation is running until 31 July to gather the public's views over the proposal to cut £200,000 from the transport service, which costs the NHS approximately £3million a year. The NHS hopes to do this by reinforcing the eligibility criteria and ensuring that patients who may be able to use 'walk on' transport do not receive the service. However, the proposed cut in the service will likely put further pressure on the **voluntary car schemes** in Oxfordshire and will have a disproportionate effect on vulnerable people in rural areas of Oxfordshire who have little to no access to public transport services.

If you would like to read more about the consultation and/or would like to put forward your comments, then please go to the consultation webpage:

<https://consult.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/consult.ti/PatientTS/consultationHome> or contact Judy McCulloch on 01865 334363 or email: judy.mcculloch@oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk

Big Carbon Challenge Competition Winners Announced!

And the winners are...

In January 2011, ORCC and Climate-X, in conjunction with the Oxfordshire Rural Housing Partnership and Cottsway Housing Association, launched **The Big Carbon Challenge** - a carbon reduction competition.

There were six entrants from community groups, which competed to drive down the carbon emissions of their competition group. Entrants were trained in the *Carbon Conversations* method of low-carbon living and undertook a range of climate action activities in their communities.

The judges were very impressed with the number and quality of events that entrants organised and the other community groups they involved. Some worked with the local school and the village Age Concern group, some ran community composting days, seed swaps, swap shops, bicycle repair workshops... Others held a green fair.

All in all the competition was a fantastic showcase of the means and methods that can be used to get all the community involved in working to a common end, which is really what carbon reduction initiatives are all about - generalising the message.

And the winners were!

- The most inspiring community engagement strategy - **East Hendred**
- Second place in this category went to **Hailey**
- The group with the largest carbon reduction, 5.4 tonnes total - **Shrivenham**
- Second place with 5.2 tonnes of carbon savings went to **East Hendred**
- Special prize for ongoing work in the community - **Eynsham**

The winners shared a total of £1500 in prize money, which will give a real boost to these groups and lead to ongoing climate action work in their communities.

For more information about how ORCC may be able to help you with a climate action or sustainability project please contact Tom McCulloch tom.mcculloch@oxonrcc.org.uk

ORCC Trustees

This year's AGM will be on Monday 3 October and if you would like to stand for election to become a Trustee please get in touch. No special knowledge or experience is needed, but we are looking for people who have the ability to play an active part in the overall (strategic) running of the organisation and able to participate thoughtfully in meetings. We also want our Board members to have an interest in rural communities, and to be able to work as part of a team. Younger trustees would also be particularly welcome.

What kind of time commitment would be involved?

Board meetings are held six times a year, and start at 2.00 pm. A number of Sub-Committees meet on the same or less frequent cycles and we try to be flexible over dates/times (subject only to other members' abilities to attend). There would be other ad hoc involvement mostly by email, and/or phone, and occasional visits.

For more details contact Linda Watson, ORCC Chief Executive, on 01865 883488 or email linda.watson@oxonrcc.org.uk.

A Busy Summer for Community led Planning

As the summer sun reaches Oxfordshire, volunteers from Community Led Planning groups are taking time out of the holiday season to make progress on plans for their village.

Sandford on Thames, Nuneham Courtenay, Marcham and Tiddington all held launch events in June and July with almost 100 volunteers coming forward to help.

The *Sibfords* invited young people to have their say on a graffiti wall at their recent village fete, *Horton-cum-Studley* took advantage of the Otmoor Challenge to raise awareness about their plan and *Great Haseley* held a Big Breakfast Consultation event on a sunny Sunday morning in June.

A windy day at *Fulbrook* Plant sale saw residents completing a 'likes' and 'dislikes' activity to give their views and *Islip, North Aston, and Shutford* are all taking first steps to getting a plan started in their village.

Sparsholt are busily drafting and circulating their questionnaires and *Nuffield, Drayton St Leonard, Great Milton, Chesterton* and *Kirtlington* are moving towards the final stages of their plan after extensive consultation with their community. *Lower Heyford* are close to publishing their final plan and *East Hagbourne, The Hanneys* and *Long Wittenham* plans have all recently completed and are available to view at www.clp-se.org.uk

To keep up-to-date with all the latest plans and to find out more about Community Led Planning, visit www.clp-se.org.uk or contact Anton Nath (Vale and South) or Aimee Evans (Cherwell and West) at ORCC for more information. anton.nath@oxonrcc.org.uk or aimee.evans@oxonrcc.org.uk Telephone: 01865 883488.

Neighbourhood Planning and the Localism Bill

The new Localism Bill currently making its way through Parliament sets out proposals for the introduction of Neighbourhood Plans. ORCC is keeping a close eye on the proposals so that we can be in a prime position to support communities wanting to develop local plans.

ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) which is the umbrella organisation of Rural Community Councils has produced a useful briefing paper to clarify what we know so far about the proposals. For more information, follow the link to the briefing report on their website <http://www.acre.org.uk/Resources/ACRE/Documents/ACREbriefingNeighbourhoodPlansJune2011.pdf>

Free ORCC guide for homeworkers in rural communities wanting to get together

A free ORCC guide has been published for homeworkers interested in getting together informally with others in their community. The ORCC Business and Community Links Worker, Catharine Arakelian, has written up practical examples and experiences gathered from talking with homeworkers and visiting local community-based business groups over the last six months.

The guide is available online at www.oxonrcc.org.uk

If you are running a business from home and would like to get together with other home-based workers in your community for social interaction and mutual support, contact Catharine who is here to promote and support new initiatives of this kind: catharine.arakelian@oxonrcc.org.uk.

FUNDING

TOE2 – Communities improving Oxfordshire's Environment

Awarding Grants to Environmental Projects in Oxfordshire

TOE2 is an exciting venture developed by the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) providing support and funding for local communities wishing to:

- Promote and improve the **biodiversity** of Oxfordshire's wildlife habitats
- Encourage and develop the **sustainable use of renewable resources**
- Increase **access** to the local countryside and green spaces

TOE2 has a clear set of funding guidelines closely matched to strategic priorities in these three areas in Oxfordshire, whilst supporting the delivery of projects at the community level.

First grants awarded

TOE2 allocated its first grants in June, to two village halls wishing to operate on a more sustainable basis. An energy audit of Ewelme Village hall recommended replacing the windows to ensure the hall could become more energy efficient. The village hall management committee applied successfully to TOE2 for support towards the installation of new windows. Checkendon Village hall was also successful in their bid to increase water efficiency.

Do you have an eligible project which requires funding?

TOE2 is inviting applications for grants of up to £2,000, where this level of funding will make a significant contribution to achieving a project. We welcome applications for projects which:

- Are located within 10 miles of a registered landfill site
- Are non-profit making
- Can be delivered and completed in a short timescale

Applications submitted by

20 July will be considered at our August meeting.

30 September for our October meeting

11 November for our December meeting

For further information on applications or about working with TOE2 to fund local projects, please contact Fiona Danks on 01865 883488 or Fiona.danks@oxonrcc.org.uk or toe@oxonrcc.org.uk

Maximise your Fundraising

Increasingly organisations have to cope with short term funding, which challenges their stability and makes long term planning hard. This full day workshop course on 22nd September looks at how organisations can develop a broader income base.

Topics to be covered include: Understanding funding trends; Public sector commissioning; Exploring social enterprise; Personal budgets; Managing fixed term projects.

Trainer: Alan Lawrie. Venue: Blessed Dominic Barberi Church Hall, Cowley Road, Littlemore OX4 4JX. Tickets: £50 (£40 for OCVA members)

To book contact: OCVA, The Old Courthouse, Floyds Row, St.Aldate, OX1 1SS Oxford, Tel: 01865 251946 or admin@ocva.org.uk.

Vision for the Big Society funding opportunity

Oxfordshire County Council has for many years supported community-led planning so that local people help shape the future of the communities in which they live and work.

The ambition expressed in [Vision for the Big Society](#) in Oxfordshire is to see this approach taken up more widely, particularly in the larger urban areas and those experiencing greater levels of deprivation.

For this year, the County Council is making available one-off [Big Society Active Communities Grants](#) between £500 and £5,000 to help encourage more communities to:

- Develop greater capacity to do things for themselves and shape their community's future
- Work together as a community to identify and develop solutions for local needs
- Become more inclusive and aware of the needs of different members of their community or neighbourhood.

This is a small pot of additional Big Society funding, offering grants for a different though related purpose to those available from the [Big Society Fund](#) set up earlier this year.

Preference will be given to applications from areas identified as priorities in the County Council's [Closer to Communities](#) strategy (Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Didcot, Oxford esp. regeneration areas); those from other areas can still apply.

More details about who can apply and what kind of proposals fit the aims of the Active Communities grants are all on the website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk A check list is also included as part of the application form.

GENERAL NEWS AND EVENTS

Soha Community Gem of 2011

Soha Housing thinks that people who make a difference in their communities deserve recognition.

So the landlord is running two competitions to find the Soha Community Gem of 2011 - one for the under-20s and one for those a little older. The winner - as decided by the elected tenant representatives - is in line for £100 in shopping vouchers!

You don't have to be a Soha resident but need to nominate someone who is. Who do you know who goes that extra mile – someone who makes the world a nicer place? From community volunteers to folk who are just a pleasure to be around because they're always so helpful, tell Soha about them and celebrate together.

For more information about the competition or to nominate someone, contact Liz Roberts at Soha Housing's Resident Involvement Department on email housing@soha.co.uk or tel. 01235 515 900/ freephone 0800 014 15 45.

Rural access to broadband and mobile phone coverage, especially high speed coverage

Many rural parts of Oxfordshire have poor access to broadband (and especially superfast broadband) and/or mobile phone networks due to lack of infrastructure. Left to its own devices the private sector is likely to continue to be slow to roll out current and next generation broadband to rural areas. Some places may never get connected. Local support is necessary to change the situation.

Oxfordshire County Council and its partners are working together to solve the problem. The Council plans to use its own broadband infrastructure network (available to all schools and libraries and other OCC buildings), the Oxfordshire Community Network, to get the rest of the county connected to broadband in a project called 'Oxonline'. They will also be examining other infrastructure, such as CCTV networks, to see if they could be of use in improving coverage.

They aim to make sure everyone has satisfactory broadband and mobile access by 2015.

The County Council would like communities to tell them what they think about broadband speeds and mobile coverage in their area. There is an online survey form to complete: [Broadband demand registration form for residents](#). This kind of evidence is important in order to make a good business case for national funding support for the Oxonline project and in order to interest commercial broadband infrastructure providers.

It would be helpful for the Council to have case studies showing how superfast broadband has made or would make a big difference to people personally or to their ability to do business.

The Council would also like to hear from communities, if they have come up with any innovative ideas for improving their high speed broadband access that they are implementing or have implemented themselves.

If you have useful feedback to give or want further information about the Oxonline project, contact Dawn Pettis at the County Council on 01865 816082; or e-mail: dawn.pettis@oxfordshire.gov.uk. Further information is also available on the County Council's website: [Broadband and mobile coverage - Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Help for business people who cannot get business finance through conventional channels

A new loan scheme for businesses in Oxfordshire that cannot access bank or other conventional finance has been launched by the Prime Minister. The Fredericks Foundation, an established charity providing funds for small businesses and start-ups, is now making its service available in this county.

Fredericks Oxfordshire lends money to viable businesses when others can't. A loan from Fredericks Oxfordshire is in fact a full package of business support - borrowers are paired up with business mentors who help ensure that the borrowing business is as successful as possible.

Why would Fredericks lend to businesses when banks will not? There are plenty of examples of people with good, viable business ideas that do not meet the banks' lending criteria such a poor credit rating or simply having no collateral. Fredericks Oxfordshire focuses on the business plan and the person behind it. By offering intensive support with the loan it is able to make a real difference to businesses that might otherwise fail.

For further details contact Fredericks Oxfordshire on 01865 893383, e-mail: tim@fredericksfoundation.net. Their website is: www.fredericksoxfordshire.org.

Hidden Britain - 'Great Country Pubs' campaign

The team at Tourism South East (TSE) is building a new campaign to support the unique rural pubs in their area. The campaign will concentrate on promoting pubs with accommodation and they are particularly keen to hear from characterful independents and free houses that would like to benefit from TSE's marketing and publicity campaign, plus access to tourist board advice and support.

Places for pubs in the campaign will be limited and the TSE team is really looking for the best their region has to offer as part of their ongoing programme to attract visitors to the South East of England.

For more information about Hidden Britain and the Great Country Pubs Campaign, contact Rachel Simpson, programme manager, at rsimpson@tourismse.com

Oxfordshire County Council approach to Community Emergency Plans

Oxfordshire County Council is keen to encourage the development of a network of simple community emergency plans and hope that you will work with them to deliver this worthwhile initiative. Preparing a simple community plan need not be onerous or complicated; as a minimum we encourage you to identify 3 things:

1. 24 hr contacts within the parish or town council that you would want emergency services to notify in the event of an incident;
2. buildings or structures that might be used as places of safety (survivor reception centres) following an evacuation; and
3. 24 hr contact details for the relevant key holders of the survivor reception centres you nominate.

Details of what might qualify as a suitable building or structure can be found by following the link below to the revised Oxfordshire County Council guidance and template. If you have this information already but have not forwarded it to us, we would be grateful if you would complete the attached form labelled 'Annex 1' and return it to the OCC Emergency Planning Unit. Ideally you should also develop arrangements for self-help during widespread emergencies such as flooding or severe weather when emergency services will be stretched and will be limited to life-saving activities.

The County Council aims to create a database of parish and town council emergency contacts and places of safety across the county that would be shared with the emergency services. In an incident in your area they would know where to put evacuees at short notice; who to contact to open the facility; and who to inform in the appropriate town or parish council. The information will also be shared with district councils but it will NOT be placed in the public domain.

For further details contact: Bethan Morgan, County Emergency Planning Officer, Oxfordshire County Council, Tel: 01865 323760 or bethan.morgan@oxfordshire.gov.uk, www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/emergencyplanning.

What you need to know: Premises, the Compact, and Public Law

Many organisations either rent or use council-owned premises. A Guide which is a short introduction on how the Compact, public law, and equalities duties are relevant and can be used where decisions are taken that affect your use of premises. It will help organisations to know where they stand, what their rights are, and how they may be able to challenge unfair decisions.

The Empowering the Voluntary Sector project brings together expertise in the Compact and public law providing advice and advocacy for organisations on a whole range of decisions taken by public bodies.

For a copy of the [Guide](#) and for Legal advice on public law issues for voluntary sector organisations contact NCVO on (020) 7520 3161 or email evsAdvice@ncvo-vol.org.uk