

PARISH REPORT JANUARY 2020

FOOD WASTE

I hope everybody had a good Christmas and wish you all a Happy New Year. At this time of year there is the annual spike in food waste, hopefully we are all putting the waste in the correct bin to be sent for processing into electricity and compost.

The December-January period is the time of the greatest collection of waste across the year including food waste. Nearly 2000 tonnes of food waste were collected in January 2019. The waste means that Oxfordshire households dispose of an average of 64 kilograms – equivalent to filling a large supermarket trolley and throwing it straight in the bin.

Waste and recycling officers believe that with careful planning, food waste at Christmas and year-round can be significantly reduced; saving both the householder and the council significantly, whilst benefitting the environment.

RECYCLING

If there is waste, we should be recycling as much as possible, we work with West Oxfordshire DC and other collection authorities to improve our recycling rate to 58%. This means Oxfordshire has been named the best performing county council waste disposal authority in England for the sixth year in a row, thanks to residents' commitment to the environment. In 2018, residents recycled or composted a larger proportion of their household waste than the previous year, while the national average for recycling fell, according to new government figures.

The District and City councils operate the kerbside collections of household recycling and waste, which Oxfordshire County Council then disposes of. We all work together as the Oxford Environmental Partnership of the Oxfordshire which has a target to increase recycling to 70% by 2025.

BUDGET

The Government now has an opportunity to find a solution to the funding of Local Government. The settlement announcement before Christmas will help this year, however a longer-term solution is required especially for Adult and Children's social care. These areas have seen a large growth in demand in recent years and account for the majority of the County council's budget. Closer working with the health sector will improve outcomes for residents but will involve changes to the current way we both deliver services. The consideration of business rates retention and addressing the fairer funding formula would be beneficial to Oxfordshire's residents as over the years we have lost out to other areas across the country.

I hope we won't have to wait too long for the much-delayed Green Paper on Social Care as it should help to deliver a long-term solution to Social Care funding. The Secretary of State for Health is keen to work cross party to help find that solution. In my role at the Local Government Association I have said that we will work cross party to help.

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