



Fly tipping curse

Tackling fly tipping is one of the most frustrating tasks for the Council. The Focus Team always acts promptly to any reports of items being dumped in Oxton. Some locations, such as Euston Grove and Mount Grove have required repeated visits from Biffa.

It costs Wirral over half a million pounds a year to clear up rubbish dumped in alleyways, streets and countryside.

If you spot items being dumped, please try to note the registration number of any vehicles involved and report it on the Council website, or send details to the Focus Team.

Climate change is a real threat

Sadly, some politicians are (despite overwhelming evidence) pretending that we have nothing to fear and can continue to pump greenhouse gases into the air with no consequences.

You can find facts about climate change on this QR code:



Renewable energy is expanding in Britain. It has now overtaken coal worldwide and is growing very fast in China and India as well. The cost, in floods, droughts and crop failure if we don't make rapid progress in decarbonisation will be much greater.

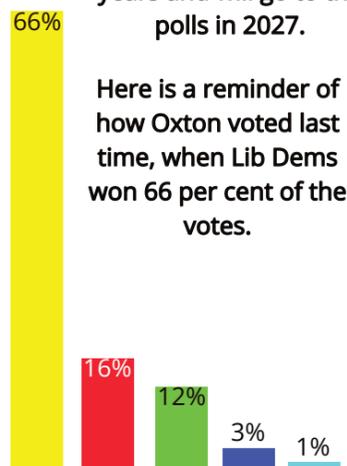
Liberal Democrats have detailed policies on the environmental problems we must tackle. This QR code will take you to them:



Join the Lib Dems: www.libdems.org.uk/join-local

No elections on Wirral this year

Wirral elects all its councillors every 4 years and will go to the polls in 2027.



Here is a reminder of how Oxton voted last time, when Lib Dems won 66 per cent of the votes.

Recognition for the Williamson



Mike Redfern has welcomed news that the Williamson Art Gallery has been awarded Arts Council England Accreditation, alongside Birkenhead Priory, and St Mary's Tower.

Mike said, "This award celebrates the professionalism and dedication of the teams who work to protect our heritage, and provide a welcome for residents and visitors to Wirral."

The Williamson (including its excellent café) is open from Monday to Saturday.

Oxton's councillors hold their surgeries there on the first Saturday and third Friday of each month, from 10:30 to 11:30 in the café.

Contact your Oxton councillors

Cllr Allan Brame	allanbrame@wirral.gov.uk	07905 487797
Cllr Stuart Kelly	stuartkelly@wirral.gov.uk	07940 545003
Cllr Mike Redfern	mikeredfern@wirral.gov.uk	07468 532015

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It is inevitable that utility companies such as Cadent, Scottish Power or Openreach will need to dig up our roads from time to time to work on underground mains and cables.

But many residents have told the Focus Team of their frustration at being held up at temporary lights when nothing seems to be happening or, even worse, when the lights are stuck on red!

Allan, Stuart and Mike, your Oxton councillors, are carrying out a short survey to gather your views on this issue.



Please visit our website (see above) or just scan the QR code to take part.

Council Tax up by almost 5%

Like almost every council, Wirral has agreed an increase of 4.99% in Council Tax for the coming year.

2% of this figure goes on adult social care, which (together with Children's Services) takes up two thirds of the budget.

The budget will only balance income with expenditure if new ways of delivering some services achieve significant savings. Your councillors will continue to monitor how changes are being implemented throughout the year.

The day-to-day budget is separate from the money spent on the shambolic Grange Road area redevelopment. Council officers assure us that lessons have been learned and a lot of effort has gone into ensuring that the next phase around Woodside and Hamilton Square doesn't cost more than the grant we have received.

Stuart Kelly highlighted how certain changes to council tax discounts and the 'minimum income guarantee' would unfairly hit disabled people of working age. The effect of these changes will now be watched carefully.

Balls Road petition

Allan Brame presented a petition signed by 278 residents asking for additional safety measures at the Palm Grove / Balls Road junction, scene of several collisions.



Highways engineers will bring forward plans to improve the junction for pedestrians and motorists.

New trees on Oxton Fields

People walking on Oxton Fields below the Arno will have noticed the new mini-orchard which was planted in February.

Stuart Kelly took part in the planting with the Council's trees manager, Nicola Wallbank, and students from Birkenhead Sixth Form College who planted a variety of fruit trees to enhance the field and attract pollinators.



Which roads are due to be resurfaced this year?

The Council's highways team has drawn up a list of roads and pavements it expects to re-surface this coming year, including some of those suggested by Oxton residents and councillors.

Hot rolled asphalt will be used on Woodchurch Road (between Arno Road and Bennetts Hill) and on Bidston Road at the junction with Wexford and Beresford Roads. On Shrewsbury Road (between Beresford and Kingsmead) they will use microsurfacing, along with Columbia Road, Charlesville, Westbourne Road, Beresford Road and Grosvenor Road. The treatment for Palm Grove, Claughton Green and Mount Pleasant will be surface dressing.

Pavements will be reconstructed in Marston Close and parts of Fairview Road.

Bus changes for Wirral

A fleet of over 100 new electric buses will be running services across Wirral from this autumn.

Buses will be back under public control, with the franchise awarded to Go-Ahead buses. The City Region Combined Authority will be able to set routes, fares, and service standards.

The new model aims for cheaper tap-and-go ticketing, better integration with rail/ferries, and improved services in currently under-served areas. Surplus profits will be reinvested directly into improving the bus network.

Stuart Kelly welcomed the change. "We are promised a cleaner, more efficient system and, if it works out as planned, the hope is that more people will use the bus instead of the car, reducing congestion and pollution."

We will be evaluating what it means in practice for bus routes in Oxton and across Wirral. Comments welcome.

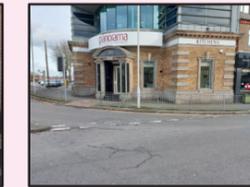
This is where solar panels should go!

Oxton Lib Dems have welcomed Sainsbury's plans to install an array of solar panels on the roof of their Woodchurch Road store.



"This is the sort of place that panels should be sited, rather than over productive farmland at Thurstaston," **Mike Redfern** said.

Remember when these were all banks?



As banks gradually disappear from our high streets, LINK has been introducing banking hubs to maintain access for account holders who can't (or don't want to) do everything online.

Councillor **Allan Brame** has made a request for a hub in the Prenton shopping area, which has not had a post office or a bank for some years.

LINK have replied saying, "We're glad you took the time to ask us to look into cash services in your area. We've reviewed your request and are happy to say it's moving forward."

"We'll now do a deeper review. We'll look at how a lack of cash services affects people and businesses then we'll work out what services are missing and suggest reasonable solutions."

Welcome increase in items that can be recycled

From April 6th, many extra items can be put in your grey bin for recycling. This includes plastic food pots, tubs and trays and cartons, including Tetrapaks. Also recyclable will be aerosol sprays (such as deodorant and hairspray), foil, and biscuit and sweet tins.

Cllr **Allan Brame** welcomed the news. "This change is long overdue. It will help improve Wirral's dismal recycling rate."

Items such as crisp packets, plastic bags, and all film plastic will still not be accepted in the grey bin. Following the plastic bags and wrapping trial carried out in parts of Oxton last year, the Council is still deciding how items like these will be collected from 2027.

Delay in the delivery of new bin wagons means that the food waste collection service will now begin in July. We will give detailed information about this nearer the time.



Community funding

Once again, the Oxton councillors were pleased to support a range of community groups by distributing money from the Wirral Together fund.

The largest grants went to support internet safety at Townfield Primary; a project by the Oxton Society to landscape land in Village Road; the Friends of the Arno for under-planting in the rose garden; and a contribution to the Christmas lights in the village.

Smaller sums went to the Callister Trust for new tables in their pavilion; Vintage Radio; Wirral Carers Alliance; an Oxton playwright to stage a new play; and Wirral Makefest for their event in Birkenhead Central Library in April.

Woodchurch Road Duckpond Lane junction

The lights at the junction of Duckpond Lane and Woodchurch Road are to be upgraded, with an improved road layout and a welcome new pedestrian phase.

Final details of the scheme are being worked on, but work is expected to be carried out later this year.

"This is good news," **Mike Redfern** said. "It should make it much safer for pedestrians crossing between Sainsbury's and the YMCA shop."