

## Parish Council Winter Plan

After two winters that saw Sonning Common almost grind to a halt and many slips and falls needing hospital treatment, the Parish Council have created a 'Snow Plan' and purchased their own salt supplies and equipment.

The Parish Council has no salting authority over roads but does for pedestrian areas and the aim is to ensure that the core shopping areas, medical facilities, primary school & library, are safer to get to on foot. Once the core has been made safe a wider area may be considered for treatment if (volunteers please!) manpower and supplies suffice.

It still remains the responsibility of all property owners to ensure safe walking conditions over their own property between pavement and front door before opening their doors to the public. Now that the 'liability' fears that abounded before have been pronounced groundless (unless you use a hosepipe!) it is hoped that residents will maintain their own and elderly neighbour's frontages in a safe condition, as do most Europeans as a normal winter habit. A broom and a little grit salt goes a long way.

Only the main Peppard Road and our Bus route through the main village (not as far as the 'Unicorn' pub) will be salted by Oxfordshire County Council but it has been agreed with them that, should we have a particularly bad winter, the Parish Council may (and will!) endeavour to clear and salt some of the worst road slopes accessing our village from the Peppard Road 'dip' using a 4x4 towed salt spreader and a small snow plough. (More volunteer equipment welcome of course.)

On a practical note: pavements should be a minimum 4 foot wide so it will not be possible to salt pavements obstructed with overgrown hedges or with cars parked on them. These sections will be bypassed by the wheeled grit salt spreaders.

Whilst the 'Snow Plan' is essentially a well-resourced DIY local plan it will rely on a village 'Yes we can!' spirit rather than the oft heard 'Not my job mate' of the past. It's our village, we now have the resources, so let's combine our efforts and make it a safer one for everybody this winter.

Cllr. Dirk Jones

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