

OWSLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



September 2026

Owslebury.org

WELCOME

Who could have predicted that after the wettest winter in more than a decade, we would be enjoying the driest, sunniest, and hottest summer on record.

We hope you've been enjoying our Throwback Thursday posts, where we share old photographs of Owslebury and highlight interesting stories from the village's past and present. If you have a picture you'd like to share and be featured, please contact the Clerk.

We are delighted to welcome our new Councillor, Elise Smith, who brings a wealth of experience and plenty of enthusiasm to the role. We also say goodbye to Cllr Baldwin and Cllr Mahmood, and extend our sincere thanks for all their support and hard work over the past few years.

There is currently one councillor vacancy on the Parish Council, if you would like to become a councillor please come to the next meeting to see how meetings work or contact the Clerk.

We would like to thank all those that have been involved in decorating the postbox. It is great to see all the different themes throughout the year. My personal favorite was the world cup theme.

Did you know that the Council have an instagram account you can follow: [Owslebury_Parish_Council](#) and you can sign up to the Owslebury Information Service (OIS) which delivers an email to registered users on such matters as traffic, flooding updates, official notices, information, and not-for-profit events in the area. If you would like to sign up please contact the Clerk.

In this edition there is an overview of the Owslebury Recreation Ground Project. Please get in touch or attend a meeting if you would like to learn more.



The Parish Council welcomes all residents to attend both the Full Council Meeting and the Pavilion Meetings. These meetings are usually held on the second Monday of each month. The Pavilion Meeting begins at 6:00pm, followed by the Full Council Meeting at 7:00pm.

Although these meetings are held in public, they are not public meetings. Each meeting includes an opportunity for public participation, during which residents may speak on items listed on the agenda. Up to 15 minutes is allocated for public participation, allowing a maximum of three speakers to address the Council for up to five minutes each.

Residents who wish to speak at a meeting are encouraged to contact the Clerk in advance and confirm which agenda item they would like to discuss.

We encourage all residents to attend Council meetings to observe the discussions first-hand and gain a clearer understanding of the work being undertaken on behalf of the community.

HAMPSHIRE LOCAL COUNCIL ASSOCIATION

VILLAGE OF THE YEAR



The Parish Council has entered the Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) Village of the Year competition.

We are delighted that Owslebury has been shortlisted. The judges visited at the end of August, with the Clerk and Councillors will guiding them around our beautiful village and highlight the many wonderful things our community does to make Owslebury such a special place to live.

The winner will be announced at the presentation evening on 23 September.

TRAFFIC & SPEEDING IN THE VILLAGE

The Parish Council has recently purchased two new Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) to help address speeding within the village. These were funded through a grant awarded from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Emerging Needs Fund.

The new SIDs are equipped with solar panels, allowing the batteries to operate for longer periods without manual recharging.

Following a review of the current SID locations, the Parish Council has identified seven additional potential sites. Hampshire County Council (HCC) has been asked to grant permission for the SIDs to be installed at these locations so that we can gain a more accurate understanding of traffic flow and vehicle speeds throughout the village.

At its June meeting, the Parish Council agreed to establish a Traffic Management Working Group to develop a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan for the parish. We hope the group will include residents, representatives from the school, Grows, and other local businesses.

The purpose of the group is to explore practical ways to make our village roads safer. This will include reviewing data from the Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and supporting regular Community Speed Watch sessions to build a clearer picture of traffic volumes and vehicle speeds through the village. The information gathered will be shared with Hampshire Highways (HH) to support discussions on potential speed reductions on Longwood Road, improved road markings, and pedestrian safety measures, including designated walking routes where appropriate.

If you would like to join the working group, please contact the Clerk.

COMMUNITY AWARDS

The Parish Council hosted its very first Community Awards during the Annual Parish Meeting. The awards were created to give residents the opportunity to recognise individuals who make an outstanding contribution to village life across the following categories:

Community Champion

Volunteer of the Year

Good Neighbour

Environmental & Sustainability

It was wonderful to see so many residents attend and support this new initiative. We were also incredibly fortunate that Marwell Zoo kindly donated five pairs of tickets for the award winners – thank you to Marwell Zoo for their generosity.

The evening began with drinks and nibbles, giving residents the chance to chat and catch up before the meeting began. The Waitrose biscuits proved especially popular!

Cllr Astrea Hurlock opened the meeting with a report highlighting the Parish Council's achievements over the past year and thanked the many volunteers and village groups for their continued hard work and support across the village. Cllr Paul Simmons then spoke about the excellent work being carried out by GrOws throughout the year.

The following residents were nominated for this year's awards:

Community Champion

Penny Harvey
Paul & Penny Bowes
Miranda Sprot
Siobhan Hand

Volunteer of the Year

Dave Greenslade
Liz Manship

Good Neighbour

Adam Kirtley & Siobhan Hand
Cathy Fox

Environmental & Sustainability

Paul Simmons
Belinda Smith
Owslebury Litter Team

Congratulations to the very deserving winners:

Penny Harvey – Community Champion
Dave Greenslade – Volunteer of the Year
Adam Kirtley & Siobhan Hand – Good Neighbour
Paul Simmons & Belinda Smith – Environmental & Sustainability



The Parish Council would like to thank everyone who took the time to submit nominations and all those who attended to support the Community Awards. We hope this will become a valued annual celebration of the people who make our community such a special place to live.

HILLY CLOSE PLAYGROUND

The Council have recently had a playground inspection which has highlighted a number of issues with some of the equipment which the council has appointed a contractor to fix.

These pieces of equipment will be up and running as soon as possible.

We hope that this has not caused too much of an issue for residents over the summer holidays.



EMERGENCY PLAN



The Emergency Plan working group have completed the Emergency Plan. A Copy is available on the Website to view.

The Emergency Plan sets out how the community will respond to major incidents such as severe weather, power outages, or emergencies affecting the residents of Owslebury. It identifies local resources, key contacts, vulnerable individuals, and volunteer roles, helping the village coordinate support until official emergency services arrive.

An accompanying set of appendices (to be held by the Parish Clerk and Emergency Group) will provide a village map showing the areas covered by the plan, contact details for key locations and resources, confidential directories for the Emergency Group and essential personnel and a provisional list of vulnerable residents.

The Emergency Group will continue developing operational arrangements and prepare communications inviting volunteers to act as community representatives. Residents who may need additional support during an emergency will be able to join a confidential register, with clear guidance on data use, access, and amendment.

OWSLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

Owslebury Parish Council has updated its annual Action Plan, first developed from the village-wide survey carried out in 2024. The plan sets out the priorities residents identified for improving local services, facilities, and community wellbeing, and it is reviewed each year to ensure progress and reflect any new issues raised by the village.

The latest version includes ongoing projects, completed actions, and areas where further resident input will be sought. All residents are encouraged to stay involved and follow the Council's work. The full Action Plan is available to view on the Parish Council website.

If you have suggestions for future priorities, please contact the Clerk.

GROWS UPDATE



GrOws – Green Owslebury: Local Action for a Greener Parish

For those who have moved to Owslebury or Morestead since GrOws was established in 2022 and for those of us that need a reminder, we thought it was worth reintroducing ourselves.

GrOws (Green Owslebury) is a working group of Owslebury & Morestead Parish Council, made up mainly of local residents together with at least one Parish Councillor. Our purpose is to organise practical local action on climate change, encourage more sustainable living and help protect and increase the biodiversity of our local environment.

Our Terms of Reference give us a deliberately broad remit: to provide useful information and guidance to residents and the parish council, organise projects promoting sustainable living, protect our local environment and biodiversity, and work with other individuals and organisations to bring about positive change.

What does that mean in practice?

Quite a lot! Over the past few years GrOws has developed a number of different strands, and there is plenty more to come on each of them:

- Wildlife, biodiversity & pollinators – including our pollinator surveys, No Mow May/Let it Bloom June, wildlife walks, tree planting and projects with local organisations.
- Waste, recycling & reuse – looking at how we can reduce what we throw away and make better use of resources.
- The Repair Café – helping residents give household items a second life rather than throwing them away. In 2025 alone, 295 items were repaired, with a reported CO₂ saving of 3,124.
- Sustainable homes & energy – sharing practical information about retrofitting, energy efficiency and lower-carbon homes.
- Transport & traffic – including sustainable transport and supporting initiatives such as Speedwatch. Our April Climate Café resulted in 16 people signing up for Speedwatch.
- Young people & education – including working with the school on OWLS (Owslebury Wild Learners).
- Community events & Climate Cafés – bringing people together to learn, exchange ideas and, importantly, turn some of those ideas into action.

As the cooler months approach, don't forget that GrOws has a simple-to-use infrared camera available to borrow, which can help you spot where heat is escaping from your home and identify where draught-proofing or additional insulation could make the biggest difference to your energy efficiency – to borrow it, simply contact us at greenowslebury@gmail.com.

GrOws isn't intended to be a closed committee. We invite residents of Owslebury and Morestead to attend meetings, get involved and become members. You don't need to be an environmental expert – just interested in helping make our parish an even better and more sustainable place to live.

So please come and meet us. GrOws meets at 7pm in the church on the third Monday of every month, and we also hold Climate Cafés in the Parish Hall twice a year, each focusing on a particular local environmental theme.

There is much more planned, so keep an eye on the village newsletter for updates and details of the next Climate Café theme – and, even better, come along and get involved. Email us to be added to our WhatsApp group at the address above.

OWSLEBURY RECREATION GROUND

Exploring the future of sport, recreation and community life at Owslebury Recreation Ground.



For well over 100 years, Owslebury recreation ground has been an important part of village life. Following the loss of the former pavilion, residents, volunteers, the sports club and the Parish Council have been exploring how the facilities once available on the site could be restored and improved for future generations.

We know many residents have questions about the project and how it has evolved. While discussions have taken place through the Pavilion Committee, Parish Council and public meetings, we recognise that information has not always been easy to find or brought together in one place. As the project develops, we felt it was important to provide a clearer overview of the journey so far, the ideas being explored and the decisions that still lie ahead.

Like everyone else in the village, Parish Councillors are residents who care deeply about Owslebury and its future. Our shared goal is to create opportunities that support local sport, improve health and wellbeing, strengthen community life and help Owslebury flourish for generations to come.

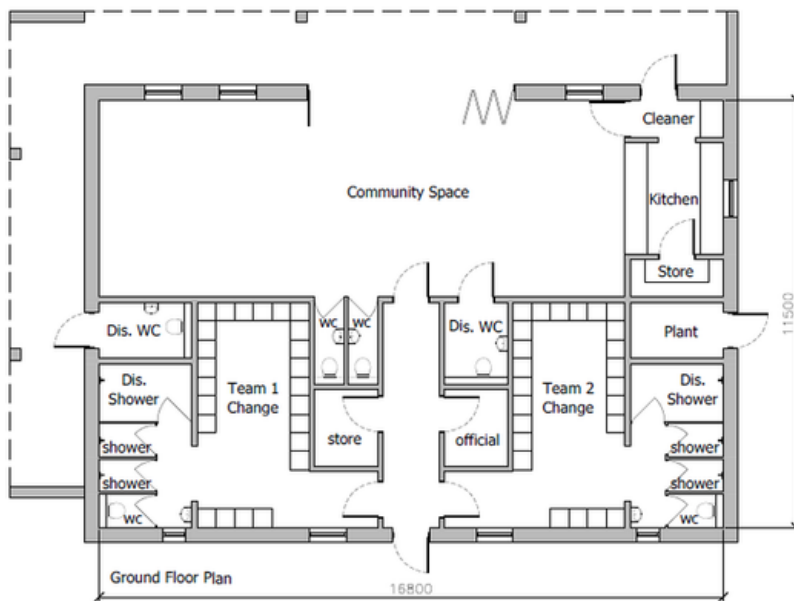
The project has progressed through the Parish Council's established decision-making process, public meetings and professional assessment, and has now reached the Pre-Application stage. A Pre-Application is an early discussion with the planning authority that helps identify what may be suitable for the site, what issues need to be addressed and how the proposals could be improved before significant time and money are committed. It is not a planning application or a final decision. Once that advice has been received, the Council will share the findings and provide further opportunities for residents to understand the proposals, ask questions and help shape the next stage.

What is being explored?

The current concept includes:

- Modern changing facilities
- Accessible toilets
- Storage for sports equipment
- Flexible community space
- Kitchen and refreshment facilities
- Improved cricket and football facilities
- A half MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) providing flexible space for activities such as football, basketball and other informal sports
- Padel courts offering a fun, sociable and accessible sport for different ages and abilities, while also generating income to help support the wider facilities.
- Landscaping and biodiversity improvements

Internal Floor Layout



The proposed pavilion layout shown in the picture follows a traditional and practical layout, shaped by guidance from Sport England, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and The Football Association (FA). Providing the recommended changing, accessible, storage and community facilities will help the Club meet governing-body standards and strengthen its eligibility for potential grant funding.

The building is intended to support much more than organised sport, with flexible spaces that can benefit the wider community. Its design will be developed in line with relevant South Downs National Park Authority guidance, using recycled and low-impact materials wherever practical. The aim is to create a sustainable, village-scale pavilion that complements its rural setting and serves Owslebury for generations.

Please note, at this stage the proposal remains under development and may change following planning advice and community feedback. No decisions have been made at this stage.

The Journey so far and next steps

The proposals have developed alongside real progress on the recreation ground, with volunteers and local partners already creating more opportunities for sport and improving the site for the village.

2022 – Listening and exploring

The village-wide consultation received 154 responses and helped identify residents' aspirations for the recreation ground. The Council, Sports Club and project architects began exploring options for replacing the missing pavilion facilities.

April 2023 – Children's cricket returns

Working with Active8 Minds, the Club introduced All Stars and Dynamos, bringing children's cricket back to Owslebury after around 20 years.

2024 – Adult cricket comes home

Adult players brought their matches back to Owslebury after playing elsewhere, supporting the Club's revival and re-establishing the recreation ground as their home.

Early 2025 – Padel creates a new opportunity

The rapid growth of padel changed what might be possible. As a fun, accessible sport with the potential to generate regular income, padel offered a way to help fund the pavilion and support the wider sporting facilities.

This prompted the Parish Council, Sports Club and project architects to revisit the project and explore a broader sports and wellbeing concept. Padel was not the purpose of the project, but it offered a potential financial engine that could help unlock it.

FA children's football skills sessions were also introduced, creating another opportunity for local children to use the ground.

2025 – Sharing and refining the proposals

The emerging ideas were presented to the village in January and September. Following feedback, planning considerations and affordability reviews, the proposals were scaled back into a more focused, village-scale scheme.

November 2025 – Public oversight and transparency

The Parish Council established a dedicated committee to oversee the recreation ground project. Public meetings have been held each month, with agendas, supporting papers and minutes published so residents can follow the discussions, decisions and progress of the project.

2026 – Growing the Club and improving the ground

Working together, the Parish Council, Sports Club volunteers and local contractors installed picnic benches, tidied and improved the ground and added the new Sports Club sign.

The Club now supports two men's midweek cricket teams, social and children's cricket, FA football skills sessions and rounders—all with very limited facilities.

Alongside the project architects' continuing work, the Parish Council sought specialist planning, landscape and environmental advice to test and develop the proposals properly.

June 2026 – Testing the next stage

The Parish Council submitted the proposals for pre-application advice. Professional planning, landscape and environmental advice is now helping to test and refine the scheme before decisions are made about what happens next.

CURRENT STAGE

Pre-application advice being sought and reviewed

Pre-application advice is an early-stage consultation with the Local Planning authority (The South Downs National Park - SDNP) It helps establish how the SDNP is likely to support the proposed development, what issues need addressing, what may be feasible and appropriate for the site before significant time and money are invested in developing detailed proposals or submitting a planning application.

This is not a planning application, and no final decisions have been made.

What happens next?

Once we receive the pre-application feedback, we will share the findings with residents and invite the community to discuss the proposals, helping ensure any future application is informed by professional advice, local knowledge and community feedback.

How The Project Will Be Financed

As work continues on the pre-application process for the proposed new facilities, many residents have asked how a project of this scale might be funded. The Council must first complete the pre-application process, refine the proposal and confirm exactly what the project will include. Only then can reliable costings and a detailed business plan be produced.

However, considerable thought has already been given to the potential funding model. A project of this type is typically supported through a blend of external grants and community contributions

- Sporting and charitable grants from national bodies that support grassroots sport and community facilities.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, where appropriate.
- Sponsorship and donations from organisations and individuals who wish to support local sport and community wellbeing.
- Community fundraising, enabling residents to contribute directly if they wish.

The individuals involved in developing the proposal bring experience in building and running businesses, raising finance, managing charities, and delivering community sport. Once the scope and costs are known, that experience will be used to develop and test a credible, sustainable funding and operating plan before any commitments are made.

Get involved!

20 September 2026 - Sports Day

Come along to the recreation ground to see local sport in action, learn more about childrens sport and speak to the volunteers that are helping run Owslebury Sports Club.

Autumn 2026 – Community information evenings

During the autumn, once we have received the pre-application feedback, we intend to run some information evenings at the Village Hall where you can view the latest pavilion proposals, meet the local architect, and speak with members of the Parish Council and others involved in developing the proposals.

Dates for this will be confirmed as soon as possible.

Your feedback matters!

This project continues to evolve, and resident feedback will play an important role in shaping its future. We encourage you to attend upcoming events, meetings, explore the information available online and share your thoughts as proposals develop.

Your questions answered

Has planning permission already been granted?

No. The project is currently at the pre-application stage, which allows the Parish Council to seek professional advice and better understand what may be possible before any formal planning application is considered. No final decisions have been made, and residents will continue to have opportunities to review information and share feedback as the proposals develop.

Is this going to become a large commercial development?

No. Over the years, a number of different ideas have been explored to understand what might be possible, affordable and sustainable. As those ideas have been tested and refined, the proposals have become more focused on creating a village-scale facility that is appropriate for Owslebury and its rural setting.

Will local residents lose their access to the recreation ground?

Quite the opposite. The aim of the project is to improve the recreation ground for current and future generations of Owslebury residents. While new facilities are being explored, they would occupy where the old Pavilion site, the current parking area and where the old scout hut used to sit with the rest of the field remaining open for sport, recreation, walking and community activities.

What about the trees?

Trees, landscaping and biodiversity are very important considerations within the project. Earlier tree works were paused while further professional advice was sought through the pre-application process. The Parish Council wants to ensure any future proposals carefully balance sporting facilities, landscape character, biodiversity and the special qualities of the South Downs National Park.

Will the pavilion create significantly more traffic?

The proposal is intended to support existing sport and community activities, many of which already bring people to the recreation ground today. The aim is not to bring large amounts of new traffic to Owslebury, but to make better use of journeys already passing through the village. Traffic and parking will continue to be carefully assessed as the project develops.

Why are padel courts being considered?

Padel is a fun, accessible sport that can be enjoyed by people of different ages and abilities. As well as providing an additional recreational opportunity for residents, it has the potential to generate income that could help support the running and maintenance of the pavilion and wider recreational facilities.

Will this become a costly burden for local residents?

The ambition is for the opposite. The Parish Council is exploring grant funding and other external funding opportunities wherever possible, alongside ways of generating income that could help support the running and maintenance of the facilities.

The long-term goal is to create a sustainable community asset that supports local sport, wellbeing and village life for residents of all ages, while helping reduce reliance on future Parish funding wherever possible.



This drawing shows the proposed locations of the pavilion, MUGA, parking and padel courts on the recreation ground. The red circles identify the existing trees that would need to be removed under the current proposal

Building on what makes Owslebury special



Owslebury is already a fantastic village doing fantastic things. Our school, pub, village hall, church, sports club, community groups and village events are all sustained by people giving their time, energy and enthusiasm. Together, they create the friendships, connections and shared experiences that make this such a special place to live.

As our lives become increasingly shaped by the digital world and AI, many of us recognise the importance of balancing that with time outdoors, physical activity and genuine face-to-face connection. Having welcoming, accessible places where this can happen within our own village is becoming more important than ever.

Sport has a particularly important role to play. It helps children develop fundamental movement skills, coordination and physical confidence, as well as teamwork, communication, resilience and learning how to win and lose. Previous generations often developed many of these skills naturally through more active and independent childhoods, but those opportunities are not always as readily available today.

Sport also supports physical and mental wellbeing, creates friendships and gives people of all ages a sense of purpose and belonging. It provides regular opportunities to participate, volunteer or simply come along and feel part of village life. This is not only about competitive sport or young people. It is about helping residents of all ages lead healthier, happier and more connected lives.

For well over 100 years, the recreation ground has been one of the places where this has happened in Owslebury. The return of children's and adult cricket, alongside football, rounders, Sports Day and other activities, has shown that the enthusiasm and demand are already here, even without the basic facilities the ground once had.

Better facilities could allow more people to take part, create new opportunities for sport and recreation, and provide another welcoming place for the village to come together. That activity supports the wider village too. Thriving facilities, clubs and community groups all contribute to the continued success of our school, pub and village hall.

This project is therefore about much more than a pavilion, padel or any single sport. It is about investing in the physical and mental wellbeing of our residents, strengthening community life and building on what Owslebury already does so well.

As the proposals develop, we want people from across the village to help shape what happens next. We welcome questions and concerns, but we would also particularly like to hear from residents who are excited by the opportunities the project could create. Whether you can contribute ideas, relevant experience, practical help or some of your time, please come and talk to us.

Want to know more?

This Newsletter offers a concise summary of the Owslebury Recreation Ground project. A full range of information covering the project's development, current plans, meeting papers, FAQs, and future updates will soon be available on a dedicated page on the Owslebury Website when it launches soon.

If you require additional details in the meantime, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Modernising the Sports Club

The existing club was established before the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) structure was available. It is now being closed and the application to establish the new club as a CIO is progressing.

A CIO offers the best of both worlds: a properly governed charity that can also generate income from activities such as padel and facility hire. This income can help fund the operation and maintenance of the facilities, with any surplus reinvested in sport, the facilities and wider community benefit.

It will also provide clearer governance and financial accountability and strengthen the Club's ability to apply for charitable and sports-body grants.

Once established, the Club intends to expand its committee and formalise the working groups already developing its short- and long-term strategies.



The next Full Parish Council meeting and Pavilion Committee meeting will be held on Monday 14th of September in the village hall, the Pavilion Committee meeting from 6pm followed by the Full Council meeting at 7pm.

Please come along to observe the discussions first-hand and gain a clearer understanding of the work being undertaken on behalf of the community.

If you wish to speak at either meeting on an agenda item please contact the Clerk as soon as possible. There is a 15 minute public participation at both meetings which is limited to 3 speakers per meeting.



North East Elevation

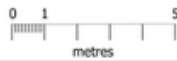
North West Elevation



South West Elevation



South East Elevation



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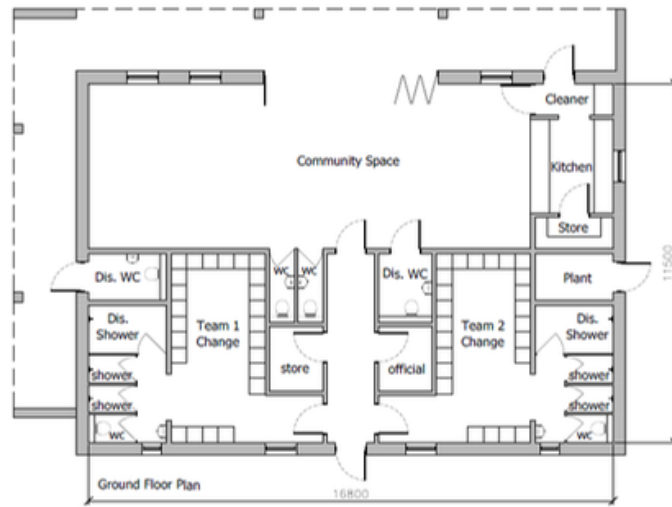
REVISIONS |

**RADLEY
HOUSE**
PARTNERSHIP | CHARTERED
ARCHITECTS

JOB | OWSLEBURY PAVILION, OWSLEBURY
 DWG | PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

G | 1:100@A3 D | MAY 2020 No | 0076/0202/REV B





All construction work to be carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations 2010. The design and construction shall be in accordance with the Building Regulations 2010. The design and construction shall be in accordance with the Building Regulations 2010. The design and construction shall be in accordance with the Building Regulations 2010.

RADLEY HOUSE
PARTNERSHIP
CHARTERED ARCHITECTS

REVISIONS |

JOB | OWSLEBURY PAVILION, OWSLEBURY
DWG | PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN

5/11/2023 A3 D | MAR 2023 No | 0078/0009/REV D



CONTACT THE PARISH COUNCIL

**to stay in touch with local news
and updates!**

Contact The Clerk:

clerk@owslebury-pc.gov.uk

Instagram:

[owslebury_parish_council](https://www.instagram.com/owslebury_parish_council)

Sign up to the email service:

www.eepurl.com/dt8C2f

Website:

www.owslebury.org



Find all the links here!

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