

**Monday 11th November, 2024**

Monthly Parish Update

Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne and**Cllr Debra Dewhurst***Vale of White Horse District Councillors*

Hello from Hayleigh and Debra

We were privileged enough to lay a wreath at Harwell's remembrance service on Sunday 10th November. Remembrance Sunday is a solemn occasion that reinforces the importance of peace and the costs of conflict, reminding us of our shared history and the courage of those who have served. The service in Harwell is a well organised and attended event taking place each year. Thank you to the RBL volunteers and members of the community who put everything into it to make it what it is.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions for us as councillors, please do email us. As a reminder, council meetings are held in public and if you wish to address council or committee, you can contact Democratic Services ahead of time. If you need more guidance on this, please let us know!

We use these monthly updates to keep you updated on our activities and general council news. We also post on our councillor Facebook Pages:

www.facebook.com/CllrHayleigh & www.facebook.com/Debra4BlewburyAndHarwell

Please get in touch with any issues or concerns via email

hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and debra.dewhurst@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Community Support

Community Hub

The Hub can offer support and direct people to help on a range of things including Cost of Living, food support, etc. If you are struggling financially or just finding life difficult, the community hub can help. Whether it's practical support or just advice, please get in touch:

- **Call:** 01235 422600
- **Email:** communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

The office hours are 8.30am - 5pm Mon to Thurs, 8.30am-4.30pm on Fri (and closed on bank holidays).

[Find out more about the community lottery on our website](#)

Defibrillator Grants

The Department of Health and Social Care is offering a £500,000 Community Automated External Defibrillators (AED) Fund, aimed at increasing the availability of defibrillators in public places where they are most needed. The fund will provide 1,100 new defibrillators and cabinets. To participate, match funding of £750 is required for a defibrillator with an external locked cabinet, or £660 for a defibrillator with an internal cabinet.

Please note, the fund is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, so early application is encouraged.

- For public access defibrillators, applications can be made at: www.defibgrant.co.uk
- For internal defibrillators, applications can be made via: <https://londonhearts.org/apply-for-a-defib/>

BOB ICB stakeholder newsletter

[The October issue of the BOB ICB stakeholder newsletter](#) has just been published, with the latest on health and social care across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West.

Local News

Valley Park

Planning applications for Valley Park continue to be received and worked on by the planning officers at the Vale. We encourage residents and parish councils to review these and respond with their comments. The officers use these to negotiate with the applicant and make amendments.

Applications Decided and Approved

P24/V0733/RM – Persimmon's second phase of housing development which is immediately south of their first phase

This application was approved on 23 October under delegated authority.

P24/V2060/DIS – Discharge of condition 10 (Framework Plan)

This application sought to discharge this condition in its entirety and was discharged on 7 October 2024.

Applications Under Consideration

P24/V0470/RM – 284 dwellings – Taylor Wimpey's second housing phase (Dahlia)

Amended plans were received in September, however officers still have concerns regarding the design and layout of the scheme and further amendments are required to address this. These are expected to be submitted first week of December, and an extension of time has been agreed until 31st January.

P24/V1099/RM – seeks approval for the road leading south from the Science Bridge roundabout and connecting to that part of the road associated with application P24/V0549/RM which is mentioned below, and for green corridors including Cow Lane.

No changes since last update - The key issue we have with this application is that it includes watercourse crossings, and we need to know how the watercourses are proposed to be bridged, and the position and characteristics (angle, road alignment, etc.) of this crossing are likely to be influenced by the design of the crossing. The submitted plans appear to indicate that culverts are proposed. The details of the number, location and design of watercourse crossings are required to be approved under Condition 28 of the outline permission. An application to discharge condition 28 (P23/V2247/DIS) was refused and this is subject to an appeal. As such, it will not be possible to determine the application until outcome of the appeal is known, to ensure that the assessment of one does not prejudice the other. There are also a number of technical objections that will need to be addressed through the submission of amended plans/additional information.

The appeal hearing and site visit took place on 22 October 2024 and the council are hoping to receive the Inspectors decision in a few weeks. This will then enable the above application to progress.

P24/V1369/SOB – request for DoV

Proposed changes to public art and proposed changes to sports provision, and also looking to add in that any future S73 application does not require a DoV. Katherine Pearce is the case officer.

P24/V2073/RM – Primary School

The application is currently out for consultation. The target decision date for this application is currently 1 January 2025.

Southern Water consultation

Southern Water is currently consulting on its draft Water Resource Management Plan – [find out more here](#). The proposals include the Thames to Southern Transfer Project, which will require a new pipeline to transfer water from Oxfordshire to Hampshire and will be reliant on Thames Water developing the South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO) near Abingdon. The consultation is open until 4 December.

Climate & Environment News

[People in Oxfordshire urged to have their say on local nature recovery](#)

Oxfordshire residents, landowners, businesses, farmers and other organisations are being offered the chance to help shape the priorities for recovering areas of nature and wildlife across the county.

Comments are now being sought on Oxfordshire's draft LNRS as part of a consultation which runs until 26 November 2024. The document, maps and online survey are available at the [Let's Talk Oxfordshire](#) website.

[Free repair stations make getting on your bike even easier](#)

Cyclists in Didcot can now make fixes on the go following the introduction of some bike repair stations.

The stations include a bike stand, an array of tools including a hex key set, Philips and flat screwdriver and an adjustable spanner, and a pump with pressure gauge so that cyclists can make small repairs or tune up while out and about.

They can also be used for wheelchairs and prams as well as bikes.

[Rethink waste with a trip to a local repair café!](#)

As part of a big drive to rethink waste, residents are encouraged to check out the range of repair cafés, libraries of things, community larders, clothes swaps and other great reuse initiatives happening in their local area.

[Young winners of the council's waste trails presented with a colourful prize](#)

Students at Millbrook School in Grove have a new place to rest in the playground after the school was presented with a multi-coloured recycled plastic bench for their playground by Councillor Mark Coleman, Vale of White Horse District Council Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Waste.

[Priorities for Oxfordshire's wildlife and nature](#)

Oxfordshire's local nature recovery strategy is nearly ready, but no one knows better which natural spaces could be improved, restored, or created than the people who are around them every day. That's where you come in. Are the priorities right? Has anything been missed? The Local Nature Recovery Partnership team - based at the county council - would love to [hear what you think](#), please help spread the word.

Council News

[Full Council – 23rd Oct](#)

For the council papers for this meeting, head [to the Vale Website](#). The Reservoir ([known as SESRO](#)) was discussed at the meeting.

The leader's report to council can be found [here](#).

[Councils prevent rise in local homelessness despite an increase in demand on services](#)

As global attention turns to World Homeless Day, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire district councils have managed to keep local homeless levels low despite an increase in demand on services.

[Have your say: Councils propose updates to boost street trading and cut plastic waste](#)

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are reviewing their joint Street Trading Policy for the first time in over a decade and they want your input! Street trading has thrived in recent years and, with the current policy dating back to 2011, the councils are proposing updates to ensure it encourages the vibrant and expanding street trading scene.

The consultation runs until 11.59pm on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

[Have your say on proposed changes to council tax premium for long-term empty properties](#)

Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire district councils have launched a public survey on proposals to reduce the minimum timeframe to charge a council tax premium on long-term empty properties.

This survey is open for six weeks and will close at 11.59pm on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

Record number of visitors at Abbey Meadow pool 2024 season

In a bid to capture a final bit of that sunshine feeling, with the leaves falling and the nights closing in, Vale of White Horse District Council and its leisure provider, Better, are celebrating the successful summer season at Abbey Meadow pool and splash pad.

Complaints procedure

The way the councils deal with complaints is changing this month.

As part of the councils' commitment to providing excellent services and learning from complaints, it is important for us to look inwardly at how we deal with issues when things don't quite go to plan.

Our changes also follow new national guidance from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman, that are reflected in our refreshed Complaints Policy and Procedure.

The biggest changes we've made to our complaint process are:

- we've clarified the definition of what counts as a complaint.
- the timescales for responding to complaints are different.
- for Stage 1 complaints, we will make a reply within 10 working days of acknowledgement; For Stage 2 complaints, we will make a reply within 20 working days of acknowledgement.
- the number of stages a complaint goes through is capped at 2 – informal complaints or escalated complaint stages are no longer allowed.
- the councils will respond to all stage 1 and stage 2 complaints rather than our contractors.
- we will put more emphasis on learning from complaints and recording evidence of what steps we've taken to address issues raised.

You can read the revised policy here: [South](#) / [Vale](#)

We would ask that any complaints that come in to you as a member should be passed on to our complaints team to manage, and they will agree with the relevant service manager who is best to respond. You can email complaints@southandvale.gov.uk.

You can find more general advice about how to [deal with complaints here](#).

Festive Fun at The Beacon!

The Beacon in Wantage will get everyone in the festive mood this Christmas with something for all ages to enjoy!

The season starts on Friday 29 November, with [An Evening of Wine Tasting](#), where wine expert Brian Davis will guide attendees through wines beginning with C. Expect new flavours, perfect for adding sparkle to any holiday gathering!

For adults who enjoy a bit of seasonal creativity, the [Christmas Card Workshop](#) on Thursday 5 December, offers a relaxed space to make personalised cards for loved ones - no experience needed, just plenty of festive spirit!

On Saturday 7 December, families can get crafty at Eden's [Snowflake Decorations Workshop](#), where they can create beautiful, festive decorations—a wonderful way to spend some quality time together.

As Christmas nears, [GreenMatthews Gaudete!](#) on Friday 13 December, promises a lively evening of carols, winter folk songs, and toe-tapping tunes. With vibrant performances, this show will fill the air with holiday joy.

Wrapping up the festivities, a playful family theatre adventure awaits on Sunday 22 December. [A Winter's Tail](#) is filled with games, music, and maybe even a sprinkle of snow - it's a magical way to end the season.

For details on all events, visit [The Beacon's website](#) and make this Christmas one to remember!