

South Oxfordshire District Councillor's Monthly Report for October 2023 (Chalgrove Ward)

Fun for all the family this October half-term. A range of free and low-cost fun activities are available for children and their families during the October half-term across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Provided by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils, sessions include fun outdoor orienteering and events inside such as dance, sports, theatre and much more. For more details see the SODC website

Residents urged to 'Check it before you chuck it.' We are urging residents to 'Check it before you chuck it' as part of a drive to increase the amount and quality of recycling in the district. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have launched a new campaign asking people to check before they chuck items in their recycling bins. An estimated 3,340 tonnes – the equivalent of just over 200 double decker buses – of items that residents put in their recycling bins during 2022/23 were not actually recyclable – that's 11 per cent of all the contents of our green bins for the whole year! It can be very difficult to remove non-recyclable items out of the large loads of recycling in our collection trucks or at the recycling facility; and if it's food waste or other messy items then it could result in whole truckloads of recycling having to be rejected. I have asked if it would be possible to reprint the Green wheels Disc showing which bin to use again as I am sure many residents may have misplaced them.

New Oxfordshire wide air quality website launched. A new Oxfordshire air quality website has launched – providing up to date air quality guidance and resources for across the county. The website (www.oxonair.uk) which has been created in partnership between Oxford City, Cherwell, West Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, and Oxfordshire County Council – aims to integrate all relevant air quality-related information from all district councils in Oxfordshire under one single platform. The launch of the joint website demonstrates each Council's commitment to tackling air pollution across the County.

Man fined and ordered to pay more than £1700 for dumping carpet in a ditch near Henley. South Oxfordshire District Council has successfully prosecuted a 34-year-old man from Finchampstead in Berkshire for dumping leftover carpet in a drainage ditch in a village near Henley. Valeriu Manoli, from Roycroft Lane, Finchampstead, appeared at Oxford Magistrates Court on Friday 8 September and pleaded guilty to a charge of unlawfully depositing

waste on land at Row Lane, Binfield Heath. He was ordered to pay £1,723 in fines and costs.

Grant to help improve quality of life for people and communities.

The funding comes from the latest round of the South Oxfordshire District Council Capital Grant Scheme. The council has a total budget of £320,000. Projects can receive a minimum of £1,000 and up to 50 per cent of their total costs, to the maximum value of £75,000. The grant gives organisations a financial boost towards capital expenditure such as making improvements to buildings or play areas. Applicants must show how their projects will support the council's Corporate Plan priorities including 'protect and restore our natural world', 'action on the climate emergency' and 'improved economic and community well-being'. Organisations eligible to apply are:

Town and parish councils

Non-profit businesses and Community Interest Companies

Community-based organisations

Five Year Land Supply. While our five-year housing land supply calculation has dipped below five years at this point in time, we will continue to robustly defend South Oxfordshire against any development proposals coming forward that aren't aligned with our development plan. Our strong housing position was backed up by a government-appointed planning inspector this year, who pointed to our Local Plan, which is still less than three years old and allocates a large number of homes to deliver the housing required of us. It's worth bearing in mind that large parts of the district have additional protections against unsuitable development, including Special Areas of Conservation; Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt; Local Green Space; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest) and areas at risk of flooding. Towns and Parishes with an up-to date Neighbourhood Plan that includes housing allocations, also have additional protection. National policy sets out that where a neighbourhood plan is in place that is less than two years' old and it contains policies and makes allocations to meet its housing needs, the policies within it will have full weight if the Council can demonstrate 3 years' worth of deliverable housing sites. A good number of parishes in South Oxfordshire will benefit from this 3-year land supply test (rather than 5), or are due to shortly depending on neighbourhood plan progress. This is a great reason for towns and parishes with adopted Neighbourhood Plans to keep them up to date, and for those currently developing them to push ahead. Please do speak to our Neighbourhood Planning team for advice if you're unsure.

Our supply is currently below five years largely because the economic downturn has made housing developers hesitant to deliver housing while prices are low. We have plenty of housing allocated in our local plan – but slow delivery of homes from developers means we can't include them in our housing land supply calculations right now."

David Turner
SODC Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)
3rd October 2023