

Title	District Councillors' Report
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Ukraine Refugees

For advice on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, particularly on housing or home visits, please contact the SODC Community Hub team. Their number is 01235 422600 and their email address is communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk. The SODC website has the latest information via southoxon.gov.uk/ukraine

Across South Oxfordshire, there are now roughly 250 homes hosting around 700 Ukrainian refugees (which includes 270 children). Work to develop a re-matching process when sponsorship arrangements break down is also taking shape across Oxfordshire together with Asylum Welcome.

Community Grants

The SODC community grant scheme for 2022 is now open to applications. There is £15k of councillor grant funding available for Thame until the end of the year. Funding can be awarded to projects or services that offer community benefits in Thame. We are particularly keen to fund projects that protect and restore our natural world, promote action on the climate emergency and improve economic and community well-being.

Joint Local Plan – Issues Consultation

There's still time for people to give their views on the issues affecting our district as part of a new Joint Local Plan. The new interactive website covers topics such as tackling the climate emergency, sustainable transport, affordable housing, high-tech jobs, and the future of our town centres.

You can also view a paper copy at Thame Library. We would especially encourage those who perhaps haven't responded to a consultation before to visit the interactive website – you may be surprised how engaging it is!

This consultation is only the first stage – the public will be able to have its say throughout the process – this stage is open until 23 June 2022.

Once finished, the councils will collate all the responses and produce a summary of responses that will help shape the next phase of the plan-making process.

Please visit the Joint Local Plan webpage:

[Homepage / Planning and development / Local Plan and planning policies / Joint Local Plan 2041](#)

EV Chargers

EV chargers have been installed in the Southern Road SODC car park, with an E-Launch event to take place in early July, when they will be available for use.

Council Tax Energy Rebate

SODC have now paid the £150 rebate to all households in bands A-D who pay their council tax by direct debit and who passed the verification checks. Some further funding will soon be available to support households on low income who do not qualify for the £150 rebate (ie properties which are in council tax bands E-H).

Market Place Toilets

The deep clean of the Market Place toilets has been completed and staff will monitor regularly.

New Chair and Vice-Chair at SODC

At Full Council on 19 May, Cllr David Turner (LibDem - Chalgrove) was appointed Chair of the District Council for the 2022/23 year. Cllr Turner has more than 40 years of experience as a councillor at parish, district and county level and has been a tireless campaigner for Chalgrove. His chosen charities are the River Thames Conservation Trust and Chalgrove and Watlington Children's Centres.

Cllr Kellie Hinton (HRG - Henley) was appointed Vice-Chair of the Council. Cllr Hinton has previously served as Chair of Licensing at SODC and was a Mayor of Henley. With experience and youth, they will be a great team.

Oxfordshire Councillor Code of Conduct

SODC unanimously agreed to adopt the new Councillor Code of Conduct, based on the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct. The new code expands on the Nolan Principles of Public Life with more detail on "Respect" and "Bullying and Harassment." The new code is also recommended for Town & Parish Councils.

Motions to Council

Two motions were agreed at the Annual Council meeting. One, brought by Cllr Ken Arlett (Henley) asks the Constitutional Review Group to explore allowing members and Parish Councils to call-in amendments to planning applications to Planning Committee.

The second, brought by Cllr Sue Roberts (Wallingford), asked Council to write to government again to press the urgency of a national retrofit scheme led by local authorities to tackle both the climate emergency and the cost of living crisis, ahead of what is likely to be a difficult winter for many.

Household Support Fund

More help is on the way for households who are struggling to afford energy, food and other related expenses. The extended Household Support Fund is opening soon for residents of South Oxfordshire.

Please signpost people who may need this support to the SODC website from July. Initially the fund will only be open to applications from residents who haven't received support in earlier rounds. To help speed up the application process, residents will be able to complete a form on the website and email it to Citizens Advice.

The Community Hub team can help people complete the forms if needed. Details on the website and through the Community Hub.

Proud to Celebrate Pride

June is Pride month, and SODC will be raising the Pride flag outside Abbey House and Milton Park through the month, to celebrate and show our support for the LGBTQ+ community across the district.

Suzanne Malcolm – Appointment

We are proud to announce that SODC's Deputy Chief Executive, Suzanne Malcolm, has been appointed to represent the District Councils' Network on a new government group, chaired by a Minister, to look at how to deliver net zero at a local level. The purpose of the forum is to strengthen engagement at the central and local levels and to maximise local opportunities for delivering net zero.

Office Move for SODC

SODC has started moving out of the rented offices at Milton Park and the new address will be in operation from September onwards. The temporary accommodation at Abbey House in Abingdon will be used by a limited number of staff until the new SODC offices at Didcot Gateway (opposite the station) are ready. The updated design for the new offices will be published as part of the planning application, expected during July.

Thame Virtual High Street

The SODC Economic Development team launched the virtual High Street app for Thame during the Taste Of Thame event in May. The ShopAppy app & website allows people to shop online at any Thame store who have signed up, with their shopping delivered to a collection point or to their house. More details at www.svbs.co.uk/shopappy-thame

YouMove Activity Scheme for Families Launched

YouMove is a new initiative providing low-cost or free activities for children and families in receipt of benefits-related free school meals in South Oxfordshire.

Activities available include cricket, swimming and badminton.

Find out more about the programme and how to register at southoxon.gov.uk/youmove

Litter Mapping Project

SODC are running a litter mapping project to pinpoint where and what type of litter is being left across South Oxfordshire. Throughout the summer, we are asking litter pickers to record the location and types of litter they find.

SODC will use this information to target those areas which need the most improvement.

To find out more and to take part visit southoxon.gov.uk/littermapping.

The Queen's Green Canopy

As part of the ongoing Platinum Jubilee celebrations, SODC want to create a record of all the trees planted for The Queen's Green Canopy across South Oxfordshire.

If any individual or an organisation in your community planted some trees earlier this year or are planning to do so later in the year as part of the celebrations, please send pictures of the trees and details of where they're planted to communications@southandvale.gov.uk.

A poster is available for printing and for more information visit southoxon.gov.uk/greencanopy.