

SODC ward councillors' report

Shiplake – 17th June 2024

General Election

A general election has been called for the 4th July and so this report is written during the “Pre-Election Period”

South Capital grant scheme goes live this July

Voluntary and community organisations in South Oxfordshire will soon be able to apply for up to £75,000 in funding for projects that help improve people's quality of life – as SODC prepare to launch the new 2024/25 round of the Capital Grant scheme in July.

SODC have a total budget available of £320,000 to award for capital projects that:

- improve economic and community well-being
- provide infrastructure that meets local need
- protect and restore our natural world
- take action on climate

Organisations can request a minimum of £5,000 and a maximum of £75,000 but no more than 50 per cent of their total project costs – with a total project value of at least £10,000. Details on timings and application information will be on [the SODC grants web page](#).

‘Everyone Active’ grant scheme now open

A new round of the Everyone Active grant scheme has been launched.

The grant scheme, run by SODC, aims to help fund projects that help communities become more active and sustain activity. SODC is providing £50,000 in funding for community organisations to apply for, with a maximum grant of £1,000. Applicants will need to show that their projects will help communities to become more active or sustain activity.

More information about the grant scheme can be found at southoxon.gov.uk/grants or contact the council's Community Enablement team on 01235 422405 or grants@southandvale.gov.uk. The closing date for applications is midday 22 July 2024

Rural England Prosperity Fund Grants

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse based organisations have until 1 July to apply for funding under the councils' latest rounds of Rural England Prosperity Funding (REPF).

REPF offers up to £75,000 of capital funding for projects that help to support the rural economy and rural communities. Funding categories are:

- Capital grants for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas
- Capital grants for growing the local social economy and supporting innovation
- Capital grants for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups

Funding can be used for a variety of projects, from farm diversification, business infrastructure & equipment, to community energy schemes and much more. For full details, organisations are encouraged to visit the councils' websites at:

Link:-

www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/business-and-economy/advice-for-businesses/rural-england-prosperity-fund/

For enquiries, please contact the councils' Economic Development team via:
business.support@southandvale.gov.uk .

Funding advice session

SODC are holding a funding advice session at Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot on Thursday 20 June from 1pm-5pm. If you have a project you'd like to discuss, have any questions about eligibility or the application process for this scheme or our other upcoming grant schemes, you can book a face-to-face meeting with us. If you are unable to attend in person, we can arrange a phone call, or Teams chat on an alternative day. Email at grants@southandvale.gov.uk or call 01235 422405.

Thames Water reservoir consultation

Thames Water has launched a 12-week consultation on the proposed South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO). The consultation is available here: <https://thames-wrmp.co.uk/sesro> and runs until 28 August 2024.

Thames Water is also running a series of consultation events across the district during this period:

- Sutton Courtenay Village Hall - 27 June: 2 - 8pm.
- Royal British Legion, East Hanney - 29 June: 10am - 4pm.
- Abingdon Guildhall – 1 July: 11am - 5pm.
- Loyd Lindsay Rooms, Wantage - 5 July: 11am - 5pm.
- Didcot Civic Hall - 9 July: 2 - 8pm.
- Milton Hill House, Steventon – 15 July: 2 – 8pm.
- Marcham Centre – 18 July: 2 - 8pm.

For more details and to confirm attendance visit <https://thames-wrmp.co.uk/news/events>

Green spaces consultation

Land use experts at [LUC](#) are supporting SODC to gather information to understand how people use green spaces in the district.

During June LUC is asking residents to complete a short online survey to understand how residents use green spaces in their local area. This ranges from parks, playgrounds and churchyards to natural spaces like woodlands and meadows. The survey runs until Sunday 30 June 2024. Please take part in [LUC's short survey here](#).

New partnership to tackle crime in rural areas

A new crime fighting partnership is hitting the fields and farms of rural Oxfordshire.

The Rural Crime Partnership is bringing together Thames Valley Police, West Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire, Vale of the White Horse District Councils and the Community Safety Partnerships to tackle crimes such as fly-tipping, burglaries and theft in rural areas. There will also be more support for local communities on crime prevention as well as an increase in the gathering and sharing of information about rural crime.

Initiatives include:

- New covert cameras to be used by the Police's Rural Crime Taskforce alongside off-road bikes to target criminals in hard-to-reach areas.
- Working with farmers to improve security. Farms will be eligible to sign up for security checks and will be given DNA marking kits for agricultural machinery.
- A new Rural Crime Advisor will work to promote rural crime prevention.
- New surveillance equipment will help district councils catch fly-tippers and tackle hot spot areas.

Find out more about the Rural Crime Partnership at yourvoice.westoxon.gov.uk.

Pride festivities at Cornerstone Arts Centre

Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot invites everyone to join in with its Pride this June with a variety of events designed to celebrate and showcase the LGBTQ+ community.

From 13-15 June, there will be something for all ages to enjoy, including drag cabaret, free family-friendly crafting, life drawing, and yoga.

For more information about the shows and workshops, [visit the Cornerstone website](#).

Creative fun for kids at Cornerstone Arts Centre's Youth Activities Open Day

Cornerstone Arts Centre is offering a wide range of fun, low-cost taster activities for kids this July – including art classes, drama and street dance.

The Arts Centre, in Didcot, will open its doors to families on Saturday 6 July for a Youth Activities Open Day. Children from ages 2 to 12 will be able to sample the range of classes available at Cornerstone, which is managed by SODC. The open day will run from 10am to 3pm. Specific timings and booking information can be found on Cornerstone's website: cornerstone-arts.org. Booking open now!

New Cabinet Members confirmed at South Oxfordshire District Council

Councillor David Rouane, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council has confirmed details of the council's new cabinet, as follows:

- Councillor David Rouane – Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Communications and Legal and Democratic Services
- Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers – Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Hub and statutory Deputy Leader
- Councillor Robin Bennett – Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, and Deputy Leader
- Councillor Pieter-Paul Barker – Cabinet Member for Finance and Property Assets
- Councillor Sam Casey-Rerhaye – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
- Councillor Georgina Heritage – Cabinet Member for Communities
- Councillor Sam James-Lawrie – Cabinet Member for Environment
- Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson – Cabinet Member for Planning

The new Chair of Council is Kellie Hinton from Henley and the new deputy is Katherine Keats-Rohan from Wallingford. The outgoing Chair – veteran councillor David Turner from Chalgrove was universally lauded for his long contribution to the district.

SO Charitable Lottery raises £139,000 for good causes in South Oxfordshire

Over £100,000 raised by the SO Charitable Lottery has been used to support 81 Voluntary and Community sector organisations across South Oxfordshire.

The SODC scheme is a weekly lottery that benefits communities and organisations in the district by raising money for good causes.

Residents who take part in the lottery, can either support a charity or group of their choice or donate to the central community fund, these funds are distributed to local organisations and community initiatives which have a beneficial impact on the local community.

- Tickets cost £1 a week and give you a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize each week!
- For each £1 ticket sold 60p will go to good causes in South Oxfordshire

There is more information about the SO Charitable Lottery on the SODC website.

Mike Giles & Leigh Rawlins

District Councillors