

**Monday 5th September 2023****Monthly Parish Update****Vale of White Horse District
Councillors****Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne and
Cllr Debra Dewhurst**

Hello from Hayleigh and Debra

August is a strange month for the council, things slow down as officers and councillors take their summer holiday time and children are off school. We've still been busy responding to queries from residents and parish councils. We've had a number of queries about planning applications this month, that we've helped with, including calling one application into planning committee after concerns from residents and parish councillors. Debra has been responding to queries about the Abbey Meadows Outdoor Pool in her role as cabinet member for Leisure Centres and Community Buildings, and has been digesting the details of the energy audit taken at the pool, to assess whether it could be made more energy efficient and thus reduce the running costs. September is going to be a busy month. We have a briefing to update us on the status of the Valley Park planning applications, we have five parish council meetings to attend, and a briefing on the waste contract, as well as our individual council commitments.

We have continued to push for updates on the Great Western Park Health Centre. This is the latest information we have been permitted to share:

The Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care Board (ICB) is responsible for healthcare services in Oxfordshire, including the Vale. The district council has been working hard over the past few years to help overcome a series of legal challenges that have caused delays in the ICB bringing forward a health centre on Great Western Park.

The district council has had some constructive conversations with Taylor Wimpey, the housing developer for Great Western Park who went through some organisational changes earlier this year. These have centred around the challenges facing the health centre and they continue to be helpful. During those ongoing discussions with Taylor Wimpey, the council have also made progress on play areas and allotments, to assist the developer to ensure they can be opened for residents to use.

The district council are currently working with a number of partners to tackle issues related to the delivery of funding and leasing arrangements for the land and any future building, and they have recently taken some steps that should simplify and speed up that process as they progress next steps. At the same time, the ICB continues to work with the local medical practice, Woodlands Medical Centre, to expand their current facility at Woodlands Road in Didcot.

The council is currently looking at what it can do to provide more regular updates to the community about the hard work they're currently doing to try and help partners like the ICB deliver the health centre that Great Western Park and Didcot badly need.

We would urge parish councils to contact the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to ask for updates as the process is currently in their hands.

If you have any concerns, 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, either via email:

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

Community Support

Support for Ukraine

The council's [support for Ukraine](#) webpage continues to provide information and guidance for Ukrainian nationals and their hosts. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils, as part of the Oxfordshire system which includes local authority, health and voluntary sector partners working closely together, are supporting people seeking refuge across several schemes. These are Homes for Ukraine, Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme, Afghan Citizens Resettlement scheme, UK Resettlement Schemes, the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa scheme and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Private landlords needed to host guests in Oxfordshire

Are you a private landlord in Oxfordshire with a vacant property? As guests start to rebuild their future and look for more independence, we are looking for landlords who can support their next step. If you would like to informally discuss what is involved, please email the central housing team:

Oxfordshirehousingcapacity@southandvale.gov.uk

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 Monday to Thursday, 8.30am-4.30pm on Fridays (and closed on bank holidays)

Local News

Valley Park Update

This section of our report provides an overview of the current live planning applications for Valley Park. There are often several live applications relating to the development, however those labelled 'RM' i.e. 'Reserved Matters' are typically the most noteworthy as they request planning permission for specific parcels of housing on the development. Residents can provide comments on these applications. Applications labelled as 'DIS' i.e. 'Discharge' relate to specific conditions from the outline planning permission and are not usually open for public consultation. The current live planning applications for Valley Park are listed below along with an update on the status of each provided by the Vale planning officers:

Applications Under Consideration**P22/V2624/DIS – Surface and foul water drainage**

No change - This application has not progressed since the last update i.e. we have requested cross sections for the proposed swales and attenuation basins and asked the applicant to address the Vale drainage engineer comments together with demonstrating that the drainage scheme can be accommodated with other proposed infrastructure e.g. footways and cycle ways and meet the Strategic Design Code expectations. Responses are awaited.

P22/V2744/RM – 246 dwellings

Amended plans were received on 4 July and have been subject to consultation. Following a review of the amendments officers have provided further feedback to the applicant. A key issue arising for this parcel of development is that parts of the site are in flood zones 2 and 3 and therefore, could be susceptible to fluvial flooding. Condition 36 of the outline planning permission excludes built development from flood zones 2 and 3 but the proposed plans show housing in these areas. Taylor Wimpey claims this part of the site should not include flood zones 2 and 3 and has produced flood modelling seeking to demonstrate that flood zones 2 and 3 should be deleted from the Environment Agency flood map and recategorised as flood zone 1 which is suitable for housing development. This flood modelling was received by officers on 31 August 2023 and will be added to the file shortly and shared with drainage engineers (ours and OCC's) and with the Environment Agency and their comments requested.

P22/V0604/RM – infrastructure for Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey first phases

Amended plans were received on 17 August 2023 and are currently subject to consultation. Officers will review the amendments in due course.

P23/V0432/FUL – temporary construction access from the A4130

No change - This application remains under consideration. OCC object as physical restrictions will be needed to prevent right hand turn movements into and out of the access, they query how visibility splays from the access along the A4130 will be maintained unobstructed, and the need for a pedestrian/cyclist refuge within the access. Harwell Parish Council objects. Their and OCC comments have been put to the applicants and their response is still awaited

P23/V0659/DIS – approval of details reserved by of condition 33 - Travel Plan

No change - OCC as highway authority has responded to our consultation and are seeking amendments to the travel plan which have been put to the applicants for consideration but no response has been forthcoming to date.

P23/V0667/RM – 172 dwellings – Persimmon Phase 1

As mentioned at the start of this email, officers are now satisfied with this application and will be circulating a report to Ward members and Max Thompson seeking authority to issue an approval under the scheme of delegation.

Application Approved:**P22/V2798/DIS – Framework Plan**

An acceptable revised Framework Plan for parcels of land in the north west of the Valley Park site which include Persimmon's and Taylor Wimpey's first housing phases was received on 23 August 2023. This Framework Plan has been approved.

Climate & Environment News

[Electric vehicle charging and hire offers across Oxfordshire this World EV Day](#)

Electric vehicle owners and hirers across Oxfordshire will be able to take advantage of a range of offers this World EV Day, which takes place on 9 September. This is an annual event aiming to highlight the progress in e-mobility and promote the shift to electrified transport. This year, the electric vehicle charging point companies will be offering deals – including free charging – for drivers across Oxfordshire. There's also the chance to join the county-wide EV car club scheme, with significant deals during World EV Day saving you money on membership and hire fees.

[Have your say on our landscapes and what's changing them](#)

A new study has launched to better understand, protect and enhance the unique landscapes across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse and you're invited to have your say. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are preparing a new Landscape Character Assessment and are calling for residents, businesses and visitors to share what they love about local landscapes and what they think is changing them. The study is being carried out by environmental consultancy Land Use Consultants (LUC) on behalf of the two councils.

[Have your say on walkways in Didcot](#)

If you scoot, cycle or walk around Didcot then we'd love to hear from you. There is a survey to so you can comment on proposals to improve various routes in and around the town.

All the information on our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (otherwise known as LCWIP) is now available to view and you can give us your views on the proposals up to 5pm on Wednesday 13 September. <https://systrald.welcomesyourfeedback.net/Didcot-LCWIP>

Council News

[Champions to promote key work being done across Vale](#)

A new group of champions have been appointed to help highlight work being done by Vale of White Horse District Council in key areas.

- **Councillor James Cox is the cost of living champion** and will work to promote the support and advice being offered by the council for those struggling in the face of soaring prices. He will be visiting different organisations across the Vale who are helping residents with advice and support during difficult times.
- **Councillor Paul Barrow is the food and farming champion** and will focus on the work being done by the district's farmers and food producers. He will help support our farming communities, listening and learning from them, to promote innovation in food production and distribution, and to encourage us all to take a second look at what makes it onto our fork.
- **Councillor Eric de la Harpe is Active Travel champion** wants people to ditch their car journeys wherever possible and choose active travel instead. This includes walking and cycling but you could also scooter, skate or wheel.
- **Cllr Katherine Foxhall is Nature Recovery champion** will champion the council's work towards nature recovery – restoring habitats, protecting wildlife and combating climate change through collective action.

Keep an eye on the Vale website for more details of our Vale champions soon!

[Didcot Garden Party](#)

This year's party has been fantastic. If you've been to one or more of garden party events or taken part in our activities, please let us know what you enjoyed and what else you'd like us to do at a future Didcot Garden Party by completing our [short questionnaire](#).

[Silver screen Saturdays at the Beacon](#)

This Autumn, Cinema at The Beacon returns with a variety of new films. Showing first on the big screen is 'Are you there God? It's me Margaret' on Saturday 16 September, see the movie adaptation of Judy Blume's classic novel, starring Rachel McAdams and Kathy Bates. And don't miss October's film 'The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry' on Saturday 7 October.

Book your tickets here www.beaconwantage.co.uk/events