

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2024**

Monthly Parish Update

Vale of White Horse District Councillors

**Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne and****Cllr Debra Dewhurst**

## Hello from Hayleigh and Debra

It's finally February! At the start of this month, Debra with the Western Valley Parish Council organised a meeting with Thames Valley Police officers and Police and Crime Commissioner, in order to discuss the issue of dangerous and illegal parking on Great Western Park. The parish council is planning to implement some solutions to deter people from doing this. If you see illegal parking, dangerous driving or crimes being committed, then logging the activity on the police website - <https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-us/> or calling 101. This allows the police to build a base of evidence to take action. Of course, if an emergency, always call 999.

As mentioned in our last update, the Joint Local Plan 'preferred options' is [open for consultation](#) and will run until 11.59pm on Monday 26 February 2024. The Joint Local Plan sets out a strategy for both Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council areas in terms of the housing (type/location), infrastructure and employment – amongst other things. Once adopted, all planning applications that are determined by our council will be following the policies within it – so it's important we get it right! Visit [southandvale.gov.uk/JLP](https://southandvale.gov.uk/JLP) to find out more and have your say.

The previous plan committed both districts to delivering a large amount of housing which, for the most part, are carried through into the new plan but there are no new allocations for housing sites.

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](https://www.facebook.com/CllrHayleigh) & [www.facebook.com/Debra4BlewburyAndHarwell](https://www.facebook.com/Debra4BlewburyAndHarwell)

Please get in touch with any issues or concerns via email  
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## 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](mailto: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](#)

## Local News

### Health Centre Update

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November, Cllr Debra Dewhurst attended the Health Overview Scrutiny meeting in order directly address Dan Leveson – Place Director for Oxfordshire in order to ask him where the hold up is in submitting plans for the healthcare centre on Great Western Park. We have still not had answers to those questions though the Integrated Care Board (ICB) – the body responsible for healthcare services in Oxfordshire, has recently published a new webpage to [update on plans for the GWP health centre here](#).

We know that The Vale of White Horse District Council are currently working closely with the ICB on progressing the health centre plans and with the housing developer, Taylor Wimpey, on measures to take transfer of this site in anticipation for lease to the local medical practice, Woodland Medical Centre, though we are concerned with the apparent delay from the side of the ICB in submitting plans.

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) publish a monthly newsletter: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKBOBICS/bulletins/38854d6>

### 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 and parish councils can provide comments on these applications during the consultation period. Officers look at these comments and (where considered relevant to planning matters) seek to address them with the developers. 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 Decided

#### **P23/V2835/NM – revision to condition 10 (framework plan) of the outline planning permission**

The words highlighted were added to the condition so that it now reads:

"With the exception of the access works and associated infrastructure, **foul pumping station(s), electricity sub stations, telecommunication cabinets** and primary streets as defined on the illustrative access and movement plan no development shall be commenced, or any reserved matters application approved in a Framework Plan Area identified in condition 9 until the Framework Plan covering that area has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Each Framework Plan shall include the details of: a) Permeability and road hierarchy (including location of key secondary roads); b) Public transport accessibility (including bus routes and bus stop locations); c) Location of residential built development; d) Location of community infrastructure (details of which are to be provided in Development Briefs in accordance with Condition 8); e) Guidance on scale, materials, building heights/ lines/ layout and features; f) Parking strategies including on plot and visitor parking; g) Integration of foul water pumping station(s), electricity sub stations and telecommunication cabinets. The details in reserved matters applications shall be substantially in accordance with the approved Framework Plans."

#### **P23/V2813/DIS - approval of details reserved by condition 3 (ecological construction management plan (ECMP)) of the reserved matters approval under application P23/V0667/RM**

Condition 3 was imposed as the ECMP submitted with application P23/V0667/RM did not include contact details for a project manager, site manager and ecological clerk of works. These details have been added.

### Applications Under Consideration

#### **P22/V2744/RM – 246 dwellings – Taylor Wimpey first housing parcel**

Parts of this 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 plans show housing in these areas which is not acceptable. Taylor Wimpey submitted flood modelling to the Environment Agency in September 2023 seeking to demonstrate that flooding is not an issue on site and that the Environment Agency's flood maps should be revised to categorise the site as flood zone 1 which is an acceptable location for housing. The Environment Agency did not accept the flood modelling and Taylor Wimpey submitted further flood modelling to the Environment Agency in November and their response is still awaited.

Following feedback from officers on revised details submitted in December, Taylor Wimpey has now submitted revised plans which will be uploaded to the application this week (w/c 5 February).

#### **P22/V0604/RM – infrastructure for Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey first housing parcels**

Following the response from this council's drainage engineer to amendments submitted in December, the applicants submitted revised drainage details which were added to the file on 30 January 2024 and reconsultation with the drainage engineer undertaken. A response is awaited.

#### **P22/V2624/DIS – approval of details reserved by conditions 23 and 24 (surface and foul water drainage) of the outline planning permission**

Further details were submitted and added to the file on 12 January 2024. The details seek to address comments raised by the council's drainage engineer and their response to this latest submission is awaited. OCC as lead local flood authority has no objection. Thames Water has no objection.

#### **P23/V0659/DIS – approval of details reserved by condition 33 (Travel Plan) of the outline planning permission**

No change - Officers understand that the developers have approached OCC directly to discuss the content of the travel plan and we expect a revised travel plan submission once those discussions are concluded.

#### **P23/V2664/DIS – approval of details reserved by condition 10 (framework plan) of the outline planning permission**

This application seeks to revise the currently approved Framework Plan covering Taylor Wimpey's first housing parcel, to reflect their current reserved matters application submission (application P22/V2744/RM). This proposal will only be acceptable should the Environment Agency decide parts of this site are no longer considered flood zones 2 and 3.

### **New Application**

#### **P24/V0237/DIS - Discharge of condition 10 (Framework Plan) in relation solely to Parcel 2 of the overall development on application P14/V2873/O**

This application relates to that part of the Valley Park site shown in the attached plan. Officers need to consider the details.

## **Climate & Environment News**

### **Successful recycling districts urge residents to reduce and reuse before recycling**

Residents in South Oxfordshire are officially the best recyclers in the country, with residents in the Vale a close third, according to a [government league table](#) published by The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

### **Energy champion training available**

On the energy-saving theme - please spread the word that we have a small number of places for FREE energy champion training on **Wednesday 21 February from 10am to 4.30pm** at the District Community Centre at Great Western Park. This is for members of local community groups to help provide energy advice to residents.

Low Carbon Hub will provide the training which will enable those attending to be confident to:

- talk to people about their fuel bills
- provide clear advice on energy saving measures

- discuss climate change issues and how these relate to energy use
- help run an energy advice café, a stall at a community event or one to one advice
- be part of a growing community of Energy Champions and Advisors, offering support to those in need across Oxfordshire

More info here [Energy Champions: Watt's the buzz?](#)

If anyone would like to attend this training, please email [didcotgardentown@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:didcotgardentown@southandvale.gov.uk) (Please note that numbers are limited, therefore, we are only able to offer one place per organisation on a first come, first service basis).

### **[Get ready for The Great British Spring Clean](#)**

We are once again supporting the [Keep Britain Tidy 'Great British Spring Clean'](#) with litter pickers, high-viz jackets and bags available for loan to community litter picking groups and individuals, from Friday 15 March to Sunday 31 March.

Equipment is limited and it's first-come-first-served, so bookings should be made as soon as possible by completing and returning the booking form and declaration document available on [South's litter picking webpage](#) and [Vale's litter picking webpage](#) to [waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk). We must receive completed forms at least two weeks before a litter pick takes place.

### **[Tell us about nature recovery near you](#)**

We're working in partnership to develop a local nature recovery strategy with and for the county. It will allow us to have a shared ambition to recover nature across Oxfordshire.

We want as many people to get involved as possible so the partnership, led by Oxfordshire County Council, will be holding a series of workshops and sharing an online survey.

If you would like the chance to have your say, please [complete this online form](#). You will be contacted by Oxfordshire County Council in the coming weeks with more information. To find out more about the local nature recovery strategy, visit the [county council's website](#).

### **[Do you know a business looking to be more 'green'?](#)**

We're urging local businesses and organisations to take part in a survey to find how best to help them find new markets, make potential cost savings as well as becoming more environmentally-friendly.

If you can, please help us spread the word. The survey, created in partnership between the councils and Oxford Brookes Business School, takes just 15 minutes to complete. Businesses, local groups, charities, town and parish councils, public sector, social enterprises and other organisations in South and Vale are invited to [have their say here](#).

## **Council News**

### **[Vale Scrutiny](#)**

The vale of white horse scrutiny committee, on which Hayleigh sits, met on 5th February to discuss plans for the Beacon in Wantage, the Corporate Plan and the Annual Budget.

These were three large and important topics for our council. The Beacon is a council owned facility and provides an amenity for the residents of Wantage, the surrounding villages and further afield. It is an important asset and a future strategy to make it more financially viable must be acted upon.

Every year, the council must set a balanced budget. The proposed budget was brought to scrutiny, for it to scrutinise the process of budget setting. It will go to cabinet next and finally full council on 21<sup>st</sup> Feb. Councils up and down the country are under immense pressure to deliver services against the backdrop of rising costs and little extra support from government. The good news is, we were able to set a balanced budget this year without a cut to services.

The Corporate Plan sets out the council's vision for the next 4 years and will go out to consultation in the coming months, so watch this space.

You can see the full agenda and public papers [here](#) on the Vale website.

**Councils seek volunteers to recommend councillors' allowances**

Are you passionate about the local area? Would you like to be involved in setting councillors' expenses and allowances that are reasonable for the work they do? By law, we are required to appoint a panel of independent people and are inviting members of the local community, the business community or voluntary organisations to apply.

The councils are together looking to fill voluntary vacancies on a Joint Independent Remuneration Panel which will commence its work in October 2024. The panel will consist of at least three members of the public supported by council officers. It will meet to help produce a report, with the assistance of officers, and make recommendations to the councils about the allowances to pay elected councillors.

**Enjoy dinosaur fun, multi-sports and much more this February half-term**

A dinosaur-themed week, multi-sports, yoga, boxercise and movie screenings are just some of the free and low-cost activities available for children and their families to enjoy this February half-term. There's more info [on the Beacon website](#).

**Barclays customers can bank on Cornerstone**

Cornerstone has partnered with Barclays Bank to become one of the bank's 'local sites' for 2024. While no money will be handled and no transfers can be made on site, Barclays employees will be available to advise customers and offer services from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday, and 10am to 1pm on Saturdays. Members of the public can prebook appointments via the Barclay's website and will meet advisors in the Flint Room.

**New classes at Cornerstone**

And that's not all that's new at Cornerstone for 2024, the centre has launched its spring season of classes promising 'something for everyone'. These range from the adult art class Art Buffet to the children's Youth Theatre classes and Street Dance. There are taster sessions so you can try before you buy. More information is available [on the Cornerstone website](#).

**Game, Set and Match! £165,500 investment in new tennis courts for Abingdon**

There's great news for tennis fans – who will soon be able to play all year round thanks to a revamp of the courts in Abingdon. Work is due to begin to install four new 3G Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) tennis courts at the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre. Vale of White Horse District Council own the centre and the land surrounding it and we have invested £165,500 from CIL and S106 funding, which contributions from housing developers. We're proud that the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre is used for professional tennis tournaments so it's really good that we're able to maintain them for competition standard. This is just one of a number of projects the council are working on to make sure that the facilities at the centre are the best that they can be.