

EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DULY CONVENED AND HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2021

1. ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST:

Present were Chairman I. Duff, Vice Chairman D. Button, Councillors P. Dixon, J. Elliott and D. Rickeard, County and District Councillor Jane Murphy and District Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson.

Apologies were received from C. Gover and C. Shaikh.

In attendance were L. Lloyd (Clerk) and two members of the public.

I. Duff indicated there is 1 vacancy for a parish councillor.

2. PUBLIC FORUM AND QUESTIONS: Caroline Hunt and Felicity Topping of the Hagbournes and Upton Group for Sustainability (HUGS) attended the meeting to speak on matters relating to item 6.b. Please see attachment 2 for full details.

Following the discussion, D. Rickeard suggested that a document circulated to councillors prior to the meeting should be tweaked slightly and included in the Parish Magazine to raise awareness and encourage responses from a wider range of residents. This suggestion was agreed. HUGS will send details to D. Rickeard to potentially include. A-M Simpson asked C. Hunt and F. Topping whether they would consider speaking at SODC's and Ecological Emergencies Advisory Committee (CEEAC). She confirmed that she would send CEEAC information on HUGS to gauge interest in this suggestion. A-M Simpson also noted that the new Chair of DGT Resident Sounding Board is Councillor Liz Leffman, who is the Leader of Oxford County Council.

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14TH OCTOBER 2021: The minutes of the meeting on 14th October 2021 were approved by Council and signed by I. Duff.

4. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: A-M Simpson confirmed that she had circulated two reports earlier today and invited comments or questions - please see attachments 3 and 4 for the full reports.

The November update from Oxfordshire County Council was circulated earlier today by J. Murphy, who confirmed the grants available: £5,000 District Councillor Grant, £15,000 County Councillor Priority Fund, £75,000 SODC Capital Grant for larger building projects. Please see attachment 5 for the full update.

5. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

2019-04-03 Main Road 20mph speed limit: I. Duff confirmed that a speed survey has been carried out on Harwood Road to ensure it could be included in the 20mph limit. The report is pending. OCC have confirmed that EH is still high on the priority list and there is now an £8M funding pot for metal signage which will hopefully cover all or most of the East Hagbourne signage. I. Duff also confirmed that the intention would be to have the 20mph limit commencing where the current 30mph zone starts near the cemetery on the west side of the village.

2020-10-01 Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) Application: L. Lloyd confirmed that the final report is now with OCC. However, there are several further stages to the process that are out of the Parish Council's hands. It was agreed that this action will be removed from the agenda and reported on when OCC provide further feedback.

2020-11-01 Dangerous Trees on Footpath 197/8: L. Lloyd confirmed that she had emailed Hugh Potter at OCC who has clarified that he is not the right contact and passed the enquiry on to Jackie Smith (Countryside Access Officer) and James Hammond (Tree Officer). Further progress is pending.

D. Rickeard noted that the Greenmere track tree works are still outstanding due to contractor illness and a new date is still pending. It was agreed that this should be added as an action to follow up at the next meeting.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION:

- a) **Deanfield development site adjacent to the village hall:** I. Duff confirmed that planning matters are slowly moving forward. Deanfield have provided a draft unilateral undertaking to the council for the financial contribution for the drainage works which should be approved this week. Once this is approved, the S73 and reserved matters application approvals should follow. Once the reserved matters are approved, a further S73 application for approval of aesthetic improvements is likely to be required. The hoarding for the site frontage should be installed soon and the parish council will be informed when the final plans for this are agreed. The digger on site is involved in reptile relocation including slowworms and common lizards. D. Rickeard reported briefly on the environmental report from Deanfield, and suggested that additional swift bricks should be included in the site plans. A letter has been drafted and it was agreed that D. Rickeard would send this directly to Peter Blades.
- b) **Finding the right balance between village tidiness and wildlife:** See public forum item 2.
- c) **Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty:** I. Duff confirmed that following the recent review of AONB Boundaries including the Chilterns AONB, David Johnston (MP) made an enquiry as to why the North Wessex AONB was not included in the review. He received a response from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) indicating that while not included in the initial designations, Natural England is open to receiving extension proposals for consideration. L. Lloyd has emailed Natural England to establish what is the process to apply for an extension to the AONB and is awaiting a reply.
- d) **Oxfordshire County Council: Actions and assistance within the parish:** I. Duff reported on developments following the meeting between himself, J. Murphy and P. Fermer of OCC which has opened up lines of communication regarding several ongoing concerns. I. Duff is particularly keen to chase for copies of the maps showing verges, gutters and drains in the parish. The central section of the road to Blewbury was briefly discussed and J. Murphy suggested sending her some photographs so she can report it on FixMyStreet. J. Murphy noted that there is now a 'virtual drive through' option to help deal with complaints which allows much quicker recognition of issues.
- e) **Proposal to switch to Unity Trust Bank including approval of the £6.00 monthly fee, and to close the existing Barclays accounts:** D. Rickeard noted that Unity will likely require a formal resolution to change banks and that L. Lloyd should confirm the wording if this is the case. D. Button proposed, P. Dixon seconded and council resolved to proceed with the proposal. It was agreed that L. Lloyd will complete the online application process, with authorised signatories as per the current Barclays Bank Mandate.
- f) **Royal British Legion – to consider a donation of up to £100.00:** I. Duff asked for views on the donation amount for RBL this year. Last year's donation was £100.00 and the council resolved to make a donation of £100.00 again this year, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 (S137) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- g) **To consider whether to hold a Parish Meeting in 2021:** I. Duff asked whether a parish meeting prior to the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) next spring would be beneficial to the community, and whether this should include a discussion on the Deanfield development. D. Rickeard said that the Deanfield development and the subject of biodiversity in the parish will attract different clientele so should be kept separate. The biodiversity discussion should start now with circulation of the document referenced in item 2 with input from HUGS to prepare for an informed discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was thus felt that there would not be any parish meeting on this before the APM, but there could be a separate meeting to discuss the Deanfield development as soon as they have a clear timescale for building after the plans have been accepted.

7. ITEMS FOR REPORT:

- a) **Planning Applications: P21/S4413/HH** I. Duff confirmed that 1A Fieldside have submitted an application. He has spoken to neighbours who have no concerns with the plans and proposed a parish council response of 'no objection' which was agreed.
- b) **East Hagbourne Sport and Recreation Committee:** D. Rickeard noted that work is progressing with the minor playground repairs that were picked up by RoSPA. D. Button confirmed that billing is still slightly behind due to recent computer issues.
- c) **Cemetery Committee:** D. Button reported that the Diocese have requested further information before the tree works at the cemetery can take place. A List B application is required in order to carry out any work to the tree line. L. Lloyd has requested further details from BGG in order to make the

application. It was agreed at the recent Cemetery Committee meeting that there will be no fee increase for 2022/23 as the finances are looking healthy.

- d) **Employment Committee:** Nothing to report.
- e) **Butts Piece Allotments:** Nothing to report.
- f) **Community Speedwatch:** Nothing to report.
- g) **East Hagbourne Community Support Group (Coronavirus):** Nothing to report.
- h) **Didcot Garden Town:** Nothing to report.
- i) **Flood Group:** Nothing to report.
- j) **Oxfordshire Growth Board:** It was noted that this item should be re-named Future Oxfordshire Partnership for the next agenda. There is a meeting at the end of the month and P. Dixon confirmed he will attend and report on this ahead of the next Parish Council meeting.
- k) **Neighbourhood Plan:** Nothing to report.

8. Correspondence:

L. Lloyd reported the following points have been raised this month:

A Harwood Road resident has queried when the car park hedges are being cut this year. BGG have already been chased for a date and the hedges should be done within the next 2 weeks.

L. Lloyd asked whether any councillors wished to propose specific arrangements for the Queens Platinum Jubilee next year to allow budget planning. I. Duff noted that typically the council would consider contributing to any public events organised by the wider community rather than organising something specific and it was agreed that this would be the appropriate arrangement for the upcoming Jubilee.

D. Rickeard reported that he has replaced the sticker on the defibrillator at the village shop and noted that the one at the village hall is also missing. L. Lloyd confirmed that she has been in contact with South Central Ambulance Service who confirmed that the postcode stickers are no longer a requirement as the caller location can be traced using their phone. It was agreed that it should be clarified whether having the cabinet location code or the postcode on display is of greater potential use.

9. Finance.

a) Expenditure and receipts since the last meeting and account balances:

a) Payments since last meeting: **NB: Payments pending are shown in yellow and are not included in the account balance shown in c)**

Payee	Item	Cheque No/Online Payment	Amount	VAT	Total	Date
Dark White Digital	October Web hosting	OP - D Button/D Rickeard	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	15/10/2021
BGG Garden and Tree Care	Parish and Cemetery cut 25/09	OP - D Button/D Rickeard	£275.00	£55.00	£330.00	15/10/2021
EHS&RC	Pavilion Hire for Parish Council meeting on 12th August 2021	OP - D Button/D Rickeard	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	15/10/2021
EHS&RC	Pavilion Hire for Parish Council meeting on 9th September 2021	OP - D Button/D Rickeard	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	15/10/2021
Express Drainage Solutions	Additional charge for asbestos clearance and extra groundworks during Pavilion Drainage job	OP - D Button/D Rickeard	£1,300.00	£260.00	£1,560.00	15/10/2021
Grundon Waste Management	Cemetery Bin Collections - September	DD	£62.47	£12.49	£74.96	22/10/2021
Laura Lloyd	October Salary	OP - D Button/D Rickeard	£673.24	£0.00	£673.24	28/10/2021
Dark White Digital	November web hosting		£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	
Terry Taylor	Eastern Gate repairs (Cemetery)		£121.00	£0.00	£121.00	
Pet Waste Solutions	Dog bin Emptying - August		£293.80	£58.76	£352.56	

JRB Enterprises	2000 Biodegradable Dog Waste Bags for the community shop		£28.96	£5.79	£34.75	
SODC	Dog Bin Emptying 22-30 September 2021		£124.20	£24.84	£149.04	
L. Lloyd	November Salary		£673.24	£0.00	£673.24	

b) Receipts since last meeting

From	Item	Amount	Date
Linda Benton	Phipps EROB and ashes interment CM076	£176.00	28/09/2021
MJ Didcock	Napper burial C088	£220.00	01/10/2021
Reeves Memorials	Edmondson memorial CM075	£87.50	13/10/2021
Set in Stone	Freemantle memorial CM070 (this should be £175.00 non-resident fee so have asked for the top-up amount)	£87.50	20/10/2021
SODC	CIL Money Receipt. P19/S1268/FUL and P20/S4487/FUL, both relating to 56 Blewbury Road	£3,307.90	27/10/2021
Co-operative Funeral Care	Cox burial D114	£176.00	01/11/2021
Set In Stone	Freemantle memorial CM070 - non-resident top up fee and Noble memorial fee CM075	£262.50	04/11/2021
L. Lloyd	Reimbursement from HM Land Registry (cheque written out to L. Lloyd instead of EHPC)	£7.00	10/11/2021
		<u>£4,324.40</u>	

c) Accumulated Account Balances (reconciled as of last bank statement through 11/11/2021)

Barclays Community Account	£9,213.61
Barclays Business Savings Account	£50,115.21
Total	£59,328.82

d) The Special Project Balances (as of 11/11/2021) are:

Planned Development Support Fund	£5,303.15
Cemetery	£10,214.69
Community Infrastructure Levy Fund	£1,905.97
Received 24/04/19 so requires spending by 23/04/24	£1,517.73
Received 30/04/21 so requires spending by 29/04/26	£3,307.90
Received 27/10/21 so requires spending by 26/10/26	£6,731.60
Total CIL money	£4,943.91
Community Projects Reserve Fund	£4,943.91
Total	£27,193.35

I. Duff queried the invoice for Pet Waste Solutions and L. Lloyd confirmed that the invoice has been amended to reflect the two missed bins towards the end of the month.

b) Review and approval of payments: L. Lloyd noted that the latest Grundon invoice for the cemetery is low due to a credit being issued after last month's high bill was queried.

The Council reviewed the pending payments and approved those without prior minuted/regular payment approval.

c) Bank Progress: See item 6.e

10. Items for report and inclusion on the December agenda:

Budget review

The meeting closed at 9.35pm. The next Parish Council meeting will be on 9th December 2021 at the Pavilion, Great Mead, East Hagbourne.

Signed.....Dated.....

ATTACHMENT 1: ACTION LIST

Action No	What	Who	Status
2019-04-03	Main Road 20mph speed limit	ID/LL	In progress
2020-11-01	Dangerous Trees on FP197/8	JM	In progress
2021-11-01	Greenmere Track Tree Works	DR/LL	Date pending

ATTACHMENT 2: PUBLIC FORUM DISCUSSION NOTES

Caroline Hunt spoke about the importance of verges and their management within the parish. She commented on the importance of taking action now to mitigate effects of climate change and support biodiversity. Verges and grassland are a store for carbon and a habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. HUGS have been involved in the introduction of owl towers, trees and hedge planting and footpath vegetation management in the last year, with financial assistance in the form of a grant from South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC). Their wildlife garden project also raised awareness in the area.

Felicity Toppin spoke about the role of parish and town councils in the sustainable maintenance of verges that are vulnerable due to efforts to keep villages tidy. Verges are a haven for wildflowers and if they are cut less often this would hugely increase the variety of wildflowers and insects. Twice yearly cuts with the removal of hay are considered optimum and could potentially save the parish council money. A survey by Inkap Journal earlier this year shows that verges are typically first cut in May which is too early for biodiversity purposes. The quality of the verge grass was also noted. If verges are cut to a height of 3-6cm with cuttings removed this would be a significant improvement on the level strimming and resultant cuttings from existing cuts. F. Topping also noted that HUGS and the parish council could work together to designate areas to be left uncut in the village for wildlife habitat, such as the roped off areas around Butts Piece. Areas near roads and pavements would need careful management to ensure visibility and sight lines for motorists and accessibility for footpath users. It was noted that other councils have cut the critical areas and left the remaining verges longer. Community engagement is needed to encourage people to take appropriate control of their verges with the support of the parish council.

J. Elliott commented that she was pleased to hear that other councils involved in wilding are still mowing key roadside areas, following issues with visibility on Blewbury Road earlier this year. D. Button confirmed that it would be very useful to have full clarification on who is responsible for maintaining the verges within the village. D. Rickeard read out comments from two MOPs who were unable to attend the meeting. MOP1 raised concerns regarding weeds growing in the gutters and on pavements, overhanging hedges, parking on pavements and fly-posting on electricity poles in the village. They also noted that residents should be permitted to do voluntary work on verges in the parish – this requires clarification and community engagement. MOP2 highlighted the difficulty of using a wheelchair on the sloping pavements along Main Road. They also queried who owns the land between the road and house boundaries, and what residents are allowed to do in these areas. D. Button confirmed that ownership and responsibility are not always clear – for example, Oxfordshire County Council owns the land in front of the New Road properties, but adjacent land owners are largely expected to maintain it. P. Dixon queried which verges are currently managed by the Parish and D. Rickeard confirmed that the current grass cutting map highlights areas maintained by BGG. It was agreed that the map would be circulated to councillors and HUGS after the meeting to aid future discussion.

C. Hunt confirmed that three cuts of the parish verges in early June, mid-July, and early September would make a big difference in terms of biodiversity but D. Button countered that this would cause significant issues for collection of the resultant cuttings, due to the steep slopes and mower types used. This has been highlighted in the cemetery this year, where COVID and staff illness meant the larger gaps between cuts left the cemetery looking very untidy. The length of the cut grass left in situ meant that the cemetery still looked untidy following the cuts. The parish council do not currently have an arrangement for the grass to be removed as it proved costly, but fewer cuts may compensate for the added cost of grass removal. The cemetery, however, requires more regular attention.

J. Elliott queried who is responsible for gutter clearing as there are saplings growing along the raised path which need removing. J. Murphy offered to report these via FixMyStreet as issues reported by district or county councillors are typically dealt with more quickly. F. Topping also volunteered to remove them if required.

I. Duff thanked C. Hunt and F. Topping for their informative contributions and confirmed that biodiversity is something that the Parish Council should consider carefully moving forward. The issue should be discussed more widely, potentially at a Parish Meeting, to ensure that the wider community are able to give opinions. A-M Simpson confirmed that she is actively involved with biodiversity and verge maintenance through OP2050 and is keen to promote a shift in general opinions within parishes. J. Murphy suggested it could be a good idea to work on a small area as a project to illustrate what can be achieved, and F. Topping confirmed that the areas in Butts Piece are currently managed by HUGS and would provide a working example for the public.

A-M Simpson noted that a biodigester could reduce costs of cutting clearance.

ATTACHMENT 3:

TITLE	DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT
AUTHOR	CLLR ANNE-MARIE SIMPSON
PARISH	EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
DATE	11 NOVEMBER 2021

New Council Leader

As you will have noted from the letters written to government ministers, a new Council Leader, Cllr David Rouane, who represents Didcot North East, was elected unanimously by Council on 7 October, replacing Cllr Sue Cooper who formally stood down as leader of SODC on that date.

The Oxfordshire Growth Board is now the Future Oxfordshire Partnership

The Oxfordshire Growth Board has officially renamed as the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. The partnership's new web address is futureoxfordshirepartnership.org and their social media accounts have also been renamed. You can view the slides from the latest quarterly briefing on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's work here:

<https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/South-and-Vale-Council-Briefing-2021-09-27.pdf>

This includes a reminder about the purpose of the partnership, an overview of the membership, and information about the current work programme.

Oxfordshire 2050 and the OxCam Arc

The consultations for the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan Reg 18 Pt2 and the OxCam Arc Spatial Framework have now closed. The council has submitted responses to both which can be found on our website page for responses to planning consultations:

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/external-planning-consultations-our-response/>

Capital Grant funding available to help good causes in South Oxfordshire

South Oxfordshire District Council is launching a new round of its Capital Grant Scheme next week, with grants available of up to £75,000 for local voluntary and community organisations and town and parish councils.

This grant can fund up to 50 per cent of the total cost of capital projects like contributing to buying a building, replacing or making improvements to long term assets such as play areas and equipment.

South Oxfordshire district councillors recognise the impact of Covid-19 on the finances of these organisations and want to be able to help them with funding to support the opening of facilities post pandemic. Councillors also hope that this grant will enable organisations to focus on long term projects so that they can continue their work in the district into the future.

As part of their applications, organisations are asked to consider how they can enhance buildings and improve the environmental sustainability of community assets to meet local needs.

Voluntary and community organisations and town and parish councils will also need to consider how their project will contribute to at least one of the council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 priorities, such as 'protect and restore our natural world', 'action on the climate emergency' or 'improved economic and community well-being'.

Previous projects in the district that have been awarded funding from this grant include:

- Tetsworth Memorial Hall who were looking to use their grant towards funding for insulation and air source heat pumps to become even more energy efficient
- Cholsey Parish Council used the grant they were awarded for a purpose-built Happy Hub family centre
- Henley Rugby Football Club were awarded a grant to help with a community training facility upgrade

The Capital Grant Scheme launches on 1 November 2021 and will be open until noon on 17 December (2021). Applicants can find out more on the council's website, southoxon.gov.uk/grants.

Move Together

Move Together is a county-wide pathway into physical activity, designed to provide support, advice and guidance to people most affected by COVID-19, helping them to move more and improve their physical and mental health and well-being.

Support from the scheme can be as simple as being a friendly voice to speak to or one of our Active Communities Team going out with a vulnerable resident for a walk to help them get their confidence back about being outside again.

To find out more about Move Together visit <https://www.activeoxfordshire.org/move-together>

New Tree Policy

We have just launched a Tree Policy which outlines how we will support and enable communities to apply to plant trees on Council land.

The Policy for Planting Trees on Council Land supports our work to tackle the climate emergency and priorities of protecting and restoring our natural world (south) and building healthy communities (Vale).

The background to the policy included five principles on how we aim to protect, plant and manage trees on land we own through planting, caring and maintenance, supporting biodiversity, planning and development and community. The policy itself clearly identifies the process for community members to follow if they are interested in planting trees on council land.

For more see on Trees, including Tree Policy, Guide to Planting Trees, TPOs etc go to council website page: <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/wildlife-trees-and-landscape/trees/>

Concerns Raised regarding Didcot Sewage

Cllr Jo Robb, Thames River Champion, has written to Sarah Bentley, Chief Executive at Thames Water, about her concerns regarding the sewerage network in Didcot and to seek clarification on their plans to upgrade sewage treatment capacity at Didcot treatment works. For more, please see Cllr Robb's letter:

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/10/Cllr-Jo-Robb-letter-to-Sarah-Bentley-Didcot-Sewage-Treatment-Works.pdf>

Chair of Council gives ongoing support to local charities

Cllr Jo Robb is hoping to raise awareness and much-needed funds for one of her chosen charities with help of some magical elves.

The Chair of South Oxfordshire District Council is hosting a puppet show to tell the Brothers Grimm fairy tale The Elves and the Shoemaker, to help support Didcot-based Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire.

The Christmas story tells the tale of a shoemaker, who is curious to discover who is making perfect pairs of shoes each night at his workshop. Ideal for young families, the puppet show starts from 10am on Saturday 27 November in the gallery area at Cornerstone.

After the show, Cornerstone has arranged for a small arts and crafts event for the children attending.

Those attending will be able to find out more about Home-Start and hear from one of their volunteers to help encourage people to get involved with the organisation, which helps families with young children. The charity provides practical, compassionate and non-judgemental support to families through its home-visiting service, where volunteers visit families in their own homes each week. They also run two weekly parent and baby groups and provide one to one support with a skilled Family Support Worker.

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is looking for volunteers that can give a few hours each week. Anyone interested in volunteering for Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire can find out more via homestart-southernoxfordshire.org.uk or email admin@homestartso.org

Tickets for The Elves and the Shoemaker on 27 November cost £2 each or £5 for a family of four via [Cornerstone's box office](#) or telephone 01235 515144.

ATTACHMENT 4:

TITLE	DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT
AUTHOR	CLLR ANNE-MARIE SIMPSON
PARISH	EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL
DATE	11 NOVEMBER 2021 - COP26

For COP26, I have produced this special edition district councillor's report.

Councils urge global leaders to agree urgent climate action at COP26

With the effects of climate change already having a catastrophic impact across the world, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are urging the leaders attending [COP26](#) to urgently agree on significant global climate action before it's too late.

The councils are also encouraging their residents to watch the proceedings closely and to find out what this hugely important climate conference means for them.

What is COP26?

Taking place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November, COP26 (the Conference of Parties) is an annual UN conference which brings together leaders and negotiators from across the world with the aim of accelerating action to tackle climate change.

The conference will focus on how countries can achieve the goals set out in:

- The Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty that commits all countries to reduce their emissions and to limit the global temperature increase in this century to 2 degrees Celsius, while also trying to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius; and

- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which established an international environmental treaty to combat “dangerous human interference with the climate system”, in part by stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.

Why is COP26 important?

We are already seeing the consequences around the world from climate change, caused by global carbon emissions, with extreme weather, flooding and major fires happening more regularly and in more places. If we do not take immediate and significant action to reduce our emissions to strictly limit the increase in global temperatures, the severity and frequency of these events will only increase. This would result in potentially catastrophic consequences for people around the world, and for our nature and environment.

At COP26 there will be significant global pressure on the leaders and negotiators to reach agreements necessary to ensure that meaningful climate action will happen as quickly as possible, setting common timeframes for achieving carbon reduction targets, and making new commitments and initiatives for delivering climate action.

The event will also play a vital role in raising awareness of the climate emergency around the world, and especially across the UK, with different campaigns and events being held across the nation to promote COP26 and bring change.

Countries review their commitments to the Paris Agreement every five years, and ahead of COP26 they are asked to bring ambitious emission reduction targets to 2030.

While delegates coordinate the global response to the threat of climate change, the event will also feature a variety of public workshops, presentations and art exhibitions, most of which will also be streamed live on the [COP26 YouTube channel](#) where people can access content for free.

What does COP26 mean for residents in South and Vale?

The commitments and initiatives reached at COP will be translated into UK policies, which will then impact our lives and decisions happening locally.

This year’s conference could result in decisions on funding for local climate action within our communities.

Agreements could be reached on policies that directly affect our daily lives, such as new initiatives on energy use, or commitments that change the way we travel, or how we should protect nature and our environment. Agreements could impact how we should plan for new developments or how we approach infrastructure.

The conference may result in decisions that will make retrofitting a realistic option for all homes. Making necessary changes to improve the energy efficiency of homes, through work such as installing insulation, replacing gas boilers or heating systems, and energy monitoring systems, could make a huge impact on reducing carbon emissions locally and at the global level.

There could also be an impact on the way we work and on our local economy, with many world leading science and technology companies based in South and Vale that will be key in the global effort to tackle the climate emergency.

How could COP26 affect the work of the district councils?

COP26 gives government at all levels the opportunity to galvanise action on reducing emissions.

In their respective Corporate Plans, South Oxfordshire District Council prioritises ‘protecting and restoring our natural world’ and ‘action on the climate emergency’, while the Vale focuses on ‘tackling the climate

emergency'. These priorities support the work of COP26 and contribute to achieving the aims of the Paris Agreement and the councils' own carbon neutral targets.

The Climate Emergency is at the heart of all council projects and ongoing work towards sustainability. Climate action is also a major consideration in ensuring the councils invest and procure responsibly and ethically.

For more information about COP26 visit [the official UK COP 26 website](#).

Council Calls for Action in Removing Barriers to Tackling the Climate Emergency

At its council meeting on Thursday 7 October, South Oxfordshire District Council agreed a series of motions aimed at boosting efforts to address the climate emergency, and to protect and enhance the natural environment and increase biodiversity.

The motions all highlight the need for government to take action to remove unnecessary barriers which are delaying or impacting measures to tackle the climate emergency at a local level. With COP26 now on, councillors believe these actions will be vital if the UK wishes to lead by example in the fight against climate change.

Levelling up, sustainability & planning

Following a motion proposed by me and seconded by Cllr Pieter-Paul Barker, Cllr David Rouane, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, has written to HM Government to call on it to:

- scrap the current proposals for planning reform and instead boost rights of local residents to engage in the planning process.
- asks the government to transform the process into one that assesses the 'climate fitness' of a district and plans for growth within the environmental capacity of that area, looking at carbon emissions, water availability and the pressing need for nature recovery at scale.
- calls for a thorough review of Building Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure require property developments to be built to net-zero standards in manufacture and use, and
- reiterates the council's belief that the 5 Year Housing Land Supply measure is flawed and inappropriate, as councils should not be held to account for the actions – or indeed lack of action – of developers, with regard to the delivery of housing on allocated or approved development sites.

Read Cllr Rouane's [letter to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#) about planning.

Decarbonisation of leisure centres

In order to achieve its own carbon reduction targets, South Oxfordshire District Council needs to be able to successfully decarbonise its leisure centres. Funding to carry out this work has been made available by the government through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. However, so far, the fund has been significantly oversubscribed and the application process made more difficult by stop-start initiatives and significant restrictions on how the money can be provided.

South Oxfordshire District Council believes it would be more effective to resource local areas to deliver their own decarbonisation strategies, meaning long-term funding to boost the future of public swimming pools, potentially decrease the long-term cost of operating pools, and contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions. This would also provide local suppliers with the confidence to invest in staff, skills and the technology.

Following a motion proposed by Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers and seconded by Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Cllr David Rouane, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, has written to the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to highlight the barriers councils currently face when applying to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund, and the urgent need for a long-term approach to decarbonising leisure centres in order to support local authorities to lead the way in the delivery of a net zero future for leisure.

Read Cllr Rouane's [Letter to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#), about the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund.

Retrofitting homes for energy efficiency

Following a motion proposed by Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye and seconded by Cllr George Levy, Cllr Rouane has also written to the government to urge it to address retrofitting as a priority. The letter highlights the need to recognise retrofitting's importance in achieving our national and international carbon emission targets and calls for adequate funding to be made available for all local authorities in any retrofit strategy.

Finally, the council calls for the government to develop long term support for householders, including changes in relevant laws, guidance and tax regulations, and to encourage businesses and the skills development needed to support retrofitting.

Read Cllr Rouane's [letter to the secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#) about retrofitting, which included a copy of the report by the [Task and Finish Group on Retrofitting Homes in the Districts](#).

ATTACHMENT 5:

COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE NOVEMBER 2021

Cllr Jane Murphy

[07970932054](tel:07970932054)

Oxfordshire County Council

Division Member for Didcot East and Hagbourne

Proud to represent residents in Didcot, Aston Tirrold, Aston Upthorpe, East Hagbourne, West Hagbourne, North Moreton and South Moreton

COUNCILLOR PRIORITY GRANT FUND

COUNCILLOR PRIORITY FUND

The fund supports councillor priorities in their local areas.

The Councillor Priority Fund is now open to new applications and will close on 31 January 2023 at 5pm.

The fund will be at the discretion of the individual county councillors to award. They each have £15,000 for 2021-2023.

How to apply

Before you apply read the [guidance notes \(pdf format, 331Kb\)](#). You should discuss your proposal at an early stage with your [County Councillor](#) and seek their support for your proposal.

Each councillor can decide how their allocation should be spent. With each area of Oxfordshire different, it's important that county councillors have the flexibility to allocate the money in the best way.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/thriving-communities/councillor-priority-fund>

FUNDING UPDATES

EU settlement scheme

The home office has announced a further £3 million to help vulnerable and at risk EU citizens apply to the EU settlement scheme (EUSS). The deadline passed for applications to the scheme over four months ago, but since the end of June there has been over 172,000 further late applications.

[funding will continue until at least the end of march](#) for many grant-funded organisations to provide guidance to vulnerable adults who have yet to apply, and for those who need support in submitting appeals. If any of your constituents fall into that category there's also some [updated guidance for late applicants](#) available online. The government has confirmed that both continuing health care and funded nursing care will remain non-chargeable to EU/EEA nationals.

The association of directors of adult social services (adass) will be hosting three final webinars on the EU settlement scheme [on 17 November, 24 November and 8 December 2021](#). These webinars will cover the latest guidance from the no recourse to public funds (NRPF) network. You can [book online](#).

Household Support Fund

The department for work and pensions yesterday confirmed details about the previously announced household support fund (HSF). This will provide £3.4 million of funding for Oxfordshire to be spent by [31 March 2022](#) on emergency support for food, utility and other household essentials. In anticipation of the scheme, we made arrangements to fund free school meal equivalent support during the October half-term for children and young people in schools, colleges and early years settings. As well as providing ongoing support to families during school holidays for food costs, we are planning to use an element of this funding to extend the operating periods of the holiday activity fund, which provides purposeful and active childcare during school holidays for those qualifying for free school meals.

An important component of the Oxfordshire approach is the provision of local emergency welfare schemes to maximise access to support. We are funding the city and district councils to deliver these emergency welfare schemes through hsf. The schemes, delivered directly by councils and in partnership with VCS advisory services, will allow all residents to seek emergency support directly with qualifying household costs. This might include support with the costs of food, utilities and clothing or for repairs or replacements of white goods or essential transport costs. Details of the schemes are currently being finalised and full information – including contact details and eligibility – will be published on the council's website next week once each scheme is ready to launch.

Firefighters and Oxford United FC team up to tackle discrimination

Residents should not face discrimination in any form. This is the joint message from our fire and rescue service and Oxford United football club. The two have teamed up to raise awareness and promote anti-discrimination, equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the county. Rob Macdougall, chief fire officer, recorded an interview for [oxford united's youtube](#) followers in advance of the club's home game against Morecambe last weekend, sharing his personal passion for equality, diversity and a no-tolerance attitude to discrimination. His attitude is reflected in our fire and rescue service's ongoing recruitment campaign. You can [read more about this initiative](#) in our news story.

Homecare workers to reach residents quicker by electric bikes

Homecare workers providing support to adults in Oxfordshire can now benefit from the use of ebikes free of charge to reach county residents and conduct care visits more quickly and efficiently. Care outlook, a service commissioned by us, provides care as part of our home first initiative, and has initiated the ebikes scheme. The option of cycling is available to care workers in Oxford city and minimises time wasted in traffic enabling them to provide better care to residents. It also opens up work to those who do not have a driving licence or access to their own vehicle. You can [read more about this story](#) on our website.

Reducing carbon emissions on north oxford project

As part of our commitment to tackling the climate emergency, we are working with contractor milestone infrastructure to deliver the council's first diesel-free construction project. Milestone has been using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) at the council's a40 north Oxford site, between the a34 overbridge and the Wolvercote roundabout, since construction work began in the summer. This means all construction plant and welfare facilities are powered entirely by HVO. [Read our news story](#) for more.

Oxford foster carer encourages families to help give children the best start in life

People across the county are being encouraged to consider becoming foster carers. The appeal comes from oxford resident Samantha Allen, who talks with pride about the babies – and babies with their mothers – she has welcomed into her home over the last 12 years. Samantha is helping raise awareness of a new £1,500 welcome payment introduced for new Oxfordshire foster carers. You can [read more about samantha's story](#) and the support she received from us in our news story.

New partnership to help even more oxfordshire residents find employment

People in Oxfordshire with health or disability needs who need an introduction to the world of work are to benefit from a new deal that has been struck by Oxfordshire employment. The county council run service, which this year marked its 75th anniversary, offers people with a health or disability need a path into work. It has announced a new partnership with social enterprise oxford wood recycling and supported employment service ways into work called wood to work. [Find out more](#) online.

Firefighters' water rescue training at HR Wallingford

Our firefighters are taking a plunge with a difference, participating in water rescue training at HR Wallingford's specialist large pool. The water flow in the pool can be adjusted to simulate various conditions such as currents, water speed and direction. The training involves a number of techniques. The first involves rescuing people or animals who have got into difficulty in water. The second is firefighter safety in and around water, teaching crews what to do in the event they fall in at an incident and need to rescue themselves. You can [read more](#) about this story online.

The statistics

In the seven days up to 29 October, there has been a total of 2,682 confirmed new covid-19 cases in Oxfordshire. This is a decrease from 3,426 new cases in the previous week and is equivalent to a weekly rate of 384.9 per 100,000 residents. Cases in the over 60s have decreased from 326 to 318, which is equivalent to a weekly rate of 188.6 per 100,000 residents. You can view the latest figures on our [covid-19 dashboard](#).

Cases of covid-19 by district

	Cases in 7 days up to 22/10/21	Rate per 100,000 population	Cases in 7 days up to 29/10/21	Rate per 100,000 population
Cherwell	688	453.1	563	370.8
Oxford	418	275.8	388	256.0
South Oxfordshire	1,002	696.9	634	440.9
Vale of White Horse	794	575.7	648	469.9
West Oxfordshire	524	468.9	449	401.8
Oxfordshire	3,426	491.6	2,682	384.9

Data correct as at 4pm on 2 November.

Keeping safe, testing and travel

All the details on [keeping safe and stopping the spread](#), [self-isolation](#) and [symptom-free and symptomatic testing](#) can be found on our website. You can access information on the system for [international travel](#) on [gov.uk](#)

Vaccinations

Don't forget vaccinations are now being offered to 12 - 15 year olds, as well as boosters for those aged 50 and over. [All the details can be found](#) online.

Communications campaigns

The message about the importance of regular testing continues to be delivered through our digital channels. A wider campaign, aimed at parents and their school-age children, will roll out to schools across oxfordshire next week. This will focus on the risk of respiratory syncytial viruses, norovirus, covid-19 and flu this winter, raising awareness and providing advice on how to avoid becoming unwell. We are also supporting the national campaign targeted at parents of 12–15-year-olds, which encourages them to book a vaccination for their child, on our social media channels.