

## **District Councillor Report – Sam Casey-Rerhaye, June 2022**

### **Joint Local Plan 2041**

A quick reminder about the Joint Local Plan initial consultation (joint with the Vale council) asking you about the issues that you think the local plan should cover:

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/local-plan-2041/>

**The deadline is 23<sup>rd</sup> June** so please have a look at soon as possible – I'm impressed with how the consultation has been set out, little 'council-speak' and lots of graphics making it a simple to understand.

### **Councillor Community Grant**

Round one of the 2022/23 councillor community grant scheme is now open until midday on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Grants of up to £5,000 per councillor can be awarded to town and parish councils and 'not for profit' groups.

Decisions may be made collectively in wards with multiple councillors.

**See [southoxon.gov.uk/grants](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants) for more information.** Please ask me for details and/or contact the community enablement team via [grants@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:grants@southandvale.gov.uk).

### **Proud to celebrate Pride**

June is Pride month, and the District Council will be celebrating in several ways. We'll 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 districts.

Cornerstone Arts Centre is celebrating #PrideAtCornerstone with events including a FREE art drop in on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June from 11am to 4pm where everyone can add to the Cornerstone Pride flag. **More information and tickets available via [cornerstone-arts.org](https://www.cornerstone-arts.org)**

### **Boiler Upgrade Scheme opens**

As you know, changing how we heat and insulate our homes is a very important priority for me and my fellow councillors, and of course it is particularly important now with huge hikes in the cost of energy.

The Leader of the District Council, Cllr David Rouane, has written to the government calling for a strategy for mass-retrofitting of homes – the second letter the Council has written to the government on this.

He has said that any plan should empower local authorities and ensure constant and long-term funding to ensure they can make sustained, significant progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from residential properties.

You can read the letter in full on the District Council's 'Correspondence' page: <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/about-the-council/official-correspondence/>

There is a new scheme just announced by the government:

The Boiler Upgrade Scheme which is to help improve the energy efficiency of homes, reduce energy bills and cut emissions in the long-term. The scheme is now open for people to apply for the following support when replacing their oil or gas boilers:

- £5,000 off the cost and installation of an air source heat pump
- £5,000 off the cost and installation of a biomass boiler
- £6,000 off the cost and installation of a ground source heat pump

You can find out more about the scheme via **the government's website**, - look up 'boiler upgrade scheme'

### **New county-wide food strategy**

We have worked in partnership with other Councils, community groups, and Oxfordshire County Council to help them implement a new food strategy.

The proposed strategy aims to make food in the county more affordable, resilient and sustainable. You can read about it on the County Council's website: <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/food-strategy/>

### **Winners of NatureSpace Consistency Award**

Good news for the Planning team who have won a Consistency Award in the 2022 NatureSpace Annual Awards! Out of the 50 local authorities participating, the South and Vale joint award is one of only three council awards in England to receive it.

The team was awarded for their professional approach to provide information on how to create high-quality habitats for great crested newts when dealing with planning applications and developments.

### **Great Western Railway Community Investment**

Useful to know - Great Western Railway has opened an investment fund that aims to support projects that benefit communities and areas of social need across their network. Community, voluntary and local

authorities can **find out more and apply up until midnight on 27<sup>th</sup> June via their website.**

To contact me:

[Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk)

01235 635566