

District Councillor Report – Cllr Sam Casey-Rerhaye, August 2023

HIF1 roads and bridges planning application

The planning committee at Oxfordshire County Council turned down the application (presented by the Highways Department of the same council) for the roads and bridges that are proposed to run from the A34 Milton Roundabout through Didcot to Culham and Clifton Hampden, coming out on to the B4015 just north of Clifton Hampden. They voted 7-2 to reject this. The meeting was held on 17th & 18th July.

On 25th July the Secretary of State (SoS) Michael Gove wrote to the County Council to call in this application and has appointed a planning inspector to hold an inquiry on the decision and make a recommendation to him.

This means that at the moment, the planning decision has not formally been issued so any planning applications in South Oxfordshire will be judged on that basis.

Councillor community grants funding now open

The new round of funding from the Councillor Community Grant scheme has now opened. Organisations, including Town and Parish Councils, can now apply for grants from me as your local ward councillor from £250 up to a maximum of £5,000.

If you are thinking of applying, please get in touch with me first to discuss the project and then visit the **South Oxfordshire Councillor Community Grants webpage** for further details on eligibility. Applications are made online and are open until midday on Friday 20th October 2023.

For more information, contact the Community Enablement team at [**grants@southandvale.gov.uk**](mailto:grants@southandvale.gov.uk)

Improving energy efficiency online events

The climate and biodiversity team held an online event in July for town and parish councils and community groups on “Improving Energy Efficiency in Community Buildings”. Recordings and copies of the presentations are available on our website **South Oxfordshire**

The team is planning a similar webinar on Tuesday 10th October. For that event the focus will be on how town and parish councils (and other community groups) can enable more retrofitting of residential properties in their areas. Keep an eye out for more information coming soon.

‘Move Together’ nominated for an award

Move Together, the physical activity programme co-ordinated by our Active Communities team that supports people with long term health conditions, has made the final six of the national Association for Public Service Excellence awards for Best Health and Wellbeing Initiative. The winner will be determined at an awards ceremony in September. You can find out more about Move Together and how it helps residents to get active via **the South Oxfordshire Move Together webpage**

River Thames water quality updates

Anyone planning to use the River Thames at Wallingford and Henley for swimming, boating or fishing this summer will be pleased to know that the environmental charity Thames21 is doing regular water quality sampling as part of its campaign to improve water quality and gain bathing water status in those areas. The charity is publishing its water quality updates on its website. The Thames 21 website has details for **Wallingford** and for **Henley**.

Cornerstone Arts Centre events and activities

Didcot Garden Party launched on Saturday 22nd July at Cornerstone Arts Centre and more than 200 people came on the first day in spite of the rather wet weather. The party continues until 30th August with lots of activities for children, families and adults – including Community Days, family yoga, live music and comedy at Cornerstone. Check out the **Didcot Garden Party page on the South website** where you can download the free brochure for more details.

Fun for babies and toddlers

And for the autumn season, there will be classes and workshops just for those early years and their parents and/or guardians. The fun starts in September with weekly classes Baby Boppers and Story Time With Laura. These classes focus on providing tots with fantastic sensory play experiences and socialising opportunities.

Parents and/or guardians can also book children aged up to 7 on their workshop Riddle and Rhyme Time on Thursday 26th October. Join acclaimed children’s poet James Carter in an interactive session with soothing music, rhymes, and the opportunity to write a poem with the special guest at the end.

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