

SODC Councillor's Monthly Report July 2021

Covid-19 update. In the Vale, cases have risen but at a slower rate than South with nine new daily cases reported as of 22 June. 16 new daily cases were reported in South. As ever, go to the [OCC dashboard](#) for the latest figures. Helping to promote the benefits of the vaccination programme remains key at this time. More than 300,000 vaccinations have now been carried out in South and Vale:

- 189,370 residents have had their first jab
- 133,249 second doses have been administered

Do continue to help us encourage everyone aged 18 and over to get vaccinated. This includes the importance of people having a second dose to maximise protection from the virus and to stop the spread.

Grants paid out to help businesses 'get going again.' We have now awarded £840,450 to businesses in South Oxfordshire through the Remobilisation Grant, and £1,750,434 to businesses in the Vale. Grants paid out to help businesses 'get going again.'

Over the last three weeks, we've processed 1,449 applications for this latest round of COVID-19 government grant funding. This takes the total funding administered by our Business Support team alone to £9.8 million. For more details of available and soon to be available grants visit the SODC website

Award for support during Covid. We're sure you'll join in with the congratulations going to our Food and Safety, Licensing, and Environmental Protection teams and our Covid Marshals, who along with the other Oxfordshire authorities and Thames Valley Police won the Coronavirus category at a Regulatory Excellence Awards event earlier this month. It was for their collaborative work to support businesses and co-ordinate compliance during the Covid-19 pandemic.:

Five-year land supply maintained. Good news to share, this time on the Planning front. We can confirm that we've maintained a five-year housing land supply for both South and Vale, helping to limit the opportunity for speculative development in our communities.

Housing team remind people they can help. We're urging private tenants whose landlords are asking them to leave, or if they have started to get behind on their rent to contact our Housing Needs team on 01235 422 436. Please do help us spread the word.

New housing enforcement policy for tenants. The councils' Private Sector Housing Team is adopting a new enforcement policy to improve conditions for tenants in private rented housing. This is a sector which has grown considerably in recent years (15 per cent in South

and 22 per cent in Vale). The councils' new policy will support a more proactive and robust approach to enforcing standards for tenants. Those landlords who break the rules could face fines of up to £30,000. The Private Sector Housing Team is responsible for licensing houses in multiple occupation (also known as HMOs). Any property occupied by five or more unrelated people sharing kitchens and bathrooms requires a licence from the council. If you receive complaints from residents that their properties are unlicensed; in a state of disrepair; are cold or don't have basic precautions such as working smoke detectors then please let the Private Sector Housing Team know via e-mail on psh@southandvale.gov.uk.

Also, if you think if you think there is an HMO in your area which is not licensed, please contact the team. There is a list of HMOs on the websites which you can check on the following pages.

Letter from Housing Minister. The Minister for Housing, the Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP, has written to South Oxfordshire District Council to congratulate the council on its successful bid for funding through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Garden Communities Programme. After a competitive process, the council has been awarded £125,000 at Didcot Garden Community and £150,000 at Berinsfield Garden community to bring forward housing.

Unlicensed and uninsured taxi driver fined and banned from driving, proprietor also fined. A taxi driver from Henley has been banned from driving and ordered to pay almost £1,000 after admitting driving a hackney carriage vehicle while not licensed and while uninsured. His taxi proprietor must also pay more than £1,200 following the offences, as it was their licensed vehicle he was driving.

Latest on the challenge to the South Oxfordshire Local Plan. The council has received notification that the Court of Appeal has refused permission for Bioabundance CIC to appeal the recent High Court decision related to the Local Plan 2035. The appeal had come after the Community Interest Company's failed application for a judicial review against the Council's decision to adopt the Local Plan 2035.

Cornerstone Arts Centre to open again to the public. South Oxfordshire District Council is delighted to announce that Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot began opening to the public again in June and is promising that a fantastic line-up will greet visitors when it's fully reopened in September – a line-up that the public can help to influence by completing the consultation on line. The centre's café bar Nourish was the first part of the centre to reopen on 21 June with a brand-new menu of locally sourced baked goods and great coffee in a light, open and welcoming space for all the family to enjoy. The council aims to reopen the centre fully on 7 September.

How to manage flooding in the Thames Valley. The Environment Agency has launched a consultation into how to manage the risk of flooding across the entire Thames Valley. The public consultation runs until 20 August 2021. This is an opportunity to get involved and help shape the future of managing flood risk across the Thames Valley. For more information go to the following website:

<https://ebtk.co.uk/click/U0JrbEZhcE1JZkp6WjJ1WFVTQWt6OVd6aFowcnNRT01uSXXNBRjZZWDc0SDEyb1EyR2VtNFE3MENPUXlvaklXNDNzZURkYVYraThpUW5XRXFGRS91RXdncmZzMTU/UIJ3ckZ3PT0>

Note. We have been waiting for at least 10 years for the promised flood report and relief scheme for Chalgrove, Watlington, Cuxham & Stadhampton!

Chalgrove Airfield. You will have already heard that Homes England have withdrawn their planning application for 3000 homes on Chalgrove Airfield following a report from the Civil Aviation Authority that it would be unsafe and incompatible with the operation of the Martin Baker Aircraft Company. Homes England have said that they will submit a new application involving land which they have purchased to the North and North East of the site in late 2021 or early 2022.

David Turner
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