

Title:	District Councillor's Report for:	
Chinnor District:	Aston Rowant, Chinnor, Sydenham and Towersey	
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Date:	09 APR 2024	

Our joint District level activities at a glance:

- 20 FEB 2024 Planning Committee
- 22 FEB 2024 Full Council meeting
- 29 FEB 2024 Community Grants Panel
- 11 MAR 2024 Watlington Site visit for Planning
- 13 MAR 2024 Planning Committee
- 14 MAR 2024 Friends of the Earth
- 17 MAR 2024 Chinnor Litter pick
- 19 MAR 2024 **Planning briefing on NPPF (see below)**
- 23 MAR 2024 Lewknor Litter pick
- 25 MAR 2024 Joint Scrutiny meeting
- 03 APR 2024 Planning Committee

Planning Briefing on National Planning Policy Framework Changes

This was especially interesting in terms of the land supply requirement, which was previously set at 5 years. Housing targets are now moving to a more advisory position, rather than a mandatory annual submission requirement, depending on the status of an area's Local Plan. Land supply is a much discussed debate when we talk to people at the doorstep, so I hope you will find this information to be useful:

The addition of paragraph 76 means that Local Planning Authorities will no longer be required to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply if

- their adopted plan is less than five years old, and
- that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of housing sites when examination concluded.

There are transitional arrangements of a new four year supply test, which is relevant if the LPA has published a Reg 18 or Reg 19 version of emerging Local Plan (like South and Vale's Joint Local Plan). This applies for two years from the December 2023 NPPF update.

The relevant paragraphs in full read as follows:

76. Local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if the following criteria are met⁴⁰: a) their adopted plan is less than five years old; and b) that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.

77. In all other circumstances, local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide either a minimum of five years' worth of housing⁴¹, or a minimum of four years' worth of housing if the provisions in paragraph 226 apply. The supply should be demonstrated against either the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against the local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old⁴². Where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years⁴³, the supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of 20% (moved forward from later in the

plan period). National planning guidance provides further information on calculating the housing land supply, including the circumstances in which past shortfalls or over-supply can be addressed.

226. From the date of publication of this revision of the Framework, for decision-making purposes only, certain local planning authorities will only be required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of four years' worth of housing (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) against the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old⁸⁰, instead of a minimum of five years as set out in paragraph 77 of this Framework. This policy applies to those authorities which have an emerging local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19 (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) stage, including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. This provision does not apply to authorities who are not required to demonstrate a housing land supply, as set out in paragraph 76. These arrangements will apply for a period of two years from the publication date of this revision of the Framework

There will also be weighting against major speculating developments in areas with a Neighbourhood Plan of 5 years old or less, as long as the NP contains policies on and allocation of housing land.

Great British Spring Clean - Litter Picking and Fly Tipping

We took part in Chinnor and Lewknor's "Great British Spring Clean up" campaigns, in collaboration with our colleague Cllr Georgina Heritage (Haseley Brook ward) and we're very aware of the great efforts of residents around the district in this initiative. Through our own involvement and correspondence from other parishes, we have become especially aware of the problem of bulk fly tipped items of waste retrieved by residents from roadside banks and hedges. Cllr Georgina Heritage has been very proactive in reporting piles of "heavy duty" waste to a waste recycling officer and they should now have all been collected. She has also requested more information from Biffa regarding their policy on waste clearance from certain areas in the district deemed to be inaccessible for health and safety reasons, yet which volunteer residents have been accessing for the parish spring cleans. Cabinet member Cllr Sue Cooper (Benson ward) has been supporting us with this and, as a first step, arranged a meeting with a senior manager from Biffa to address the ongoing litter and fly tipping problems along the banks of the main roads and B4009 in particular, with the hope of establishing a longer-term strategy.

April's Extra Garden Waste Collections

Residents who are subscribed to the district council brown bin garden waste service in South Oxfordshire or Vale of White Horse can have extra garden waste collected for free, on their normal collection day only, **between 15 and 26 April**.

Residents can put out a maximum of up to four additional sacks of garden waste per brown bin subscription, next to their brown bin. To be eligible for collection, the extra waste must contain only natural garden waste, such as cut grass, plants or branches and be placed in standard sized (60L) sacks or in boxes / containers totalling no more than a standard bin full. Where possible, please use cardboard boxes as these are much more environmentally friendly than plastic sacks. Please note that crews will not be able to collect builders' tonne waste bags. All the garden waste collected will be taken to a facility near Wallingford where it is composted. The compost will then be sold on to local farmers for use on their farmland. More information about garden waste collections can be found on the [South Oxfordshire garden waste page](#)

Retrofitting Measures

There are new webpages to help residents who want to retrofit energy-saving measures to their properties but are unsure if they need planning permission. This specially created online guide offers information, whether people want to add simple insulation, solar panels, air source heat pumps or cladding to their properties. They can be found at www.southoxon.gov.uk/retrofitting-rules

EV Car Clubs

As the EV car clubs continue their trial period at our car parks in [Abingdon](#), [Henley](#) and [Wallingford](#), SODC is keen to hear from drivers who have used them. If you are a member of the EV car club or know anyone who is, please get in touch via the climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk as South and Vale councils would like to share real life experiences with other would-be EV car club users. Now is a good time to sign up as there are free membership and driving credit offers at some sites.

Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership Charter

A new initiative will put community at the centre of decision making when South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils buy goods and services. The councils have pledged their commitment to Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership's (OIEP) charter, which means that when the councils agree contracts, they will assess what support the supplier can offer the local community, as well as the value for money of the contract. The council will look wherever possible to buy goods and services from local organisations, including SMEs, social enterprises, and cooperatives. The councils will be ensuring they meet their pledges by monitoring progress through quarterly reports, which are available for the public to view.

Council Car Park Fees

New fees for car parks in South Oxfordshire are being introduced from April 1. The car park fees are being simplified and rounded to the nearest whole pound, while all car parks will continue to have a period of free parking. This means some of the fees are being reduced by up to 16 percent while other will see modest increases. Parking permits rates have also been frozen. The additional parking income from the rises means SODC can match the cost of managing and running our car parks, otherwise we'd have to divert funding from other council services to subsidise car parking. All funds from car parking fees and permits are invested back into providing the service and making improvements to car parks, highways, public conveniences and public open spaces, as well as developing infrastructure to encourage active travel – such as cycle paths and bike storage. Parking for the first hour remains free in all Didcot, Thame and Henley public car parks. There is a growing body of evidence that shows the number of car parking spaces available is a bigger factor in encouraging people to a town centre than the price of parking. Research shows that customers value the certainty of being able to park when and where they want to, and convenience is a quality for which most people are willing to pay. It also shows that while business owners believe that as cost increases, footfall decreases, in fact, the towns/cities with the highest footfall generally have higher than average parking charges. Furthermore, fair car park charges can help ensure that parking spaces frequently turn over, increasing overall footfall.

Title	County Councillor’s Report
Author	Cllrs Kate Gregory and Nigel Champken-woods
Parish	Aston Rowant Parish Council
Date	April 2024

New special schools

The county council is planning two new special schools in the Didcot area to serve southeast Oxfordshire. One will specialise in educating children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) needs. Another special school is due to be built within the Valley Park development, and will specialise in educating children with Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and other need.

Taking on potholes

OCC is launching a £7m programme this spring to refurbish nearly 100 roads across the county this spring from 8 April to 3 June. It is the biggest surface dressing programme for 20 years. The £7m is made up of £2.6m from the department for transport and additional budget for highways agreed in the 2024/2025 budget.

Money for cycling and walking

Oxfordshire has been awarded £2.384 million for improving walking and cycling infrastructure. The award will be used for expansion of the school streets programme countywide and projects in Abingdon and Witney.

Tenants welcomed into supported housing

Adults with learning disabilities and autism have moved into new accommodation in Witney, purchased by OCC. A further four homes are planned, including in Horspath.

*****GRANTS AND COST OF LIVING*****

Councillor Priority Fund

Applications to the Councillor Priority Fund are still open. This is a fund of £15,000 to be used over two years on projects in Thame, Chinnor, Tetsworth and surrounding villages

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

Hardship fund: OCC’s hardship fund (Resident Support Scheme) was launched in June. Phone: 01865 804171

Home Upgrade Grants: OCC & its partner AgilityEco is reaching out directly to households who will qualify to benefit from Home Upgrade Grants (to improve energy efficiency for ‘off-grid’ homes)

Community Capacity Grants: The Community Capacity Fund will open for grant applications from 6th September. Grants of between £5.000 and £20.000 are funded by OCC and applications processed by Oxfordshire Community Foundation. Grants are given to projects that “support people to live well in their community, remaining fit and healthy for as long as possible”