

# **District Councillor Update for Hendreds Ward – March 2026**

**Clr Sarah James**

## **Sarah's latest news in Hendreds Ward**

I continue to support residents with issues they bring to me. Residents and Parish Councils are always welcome to get in touch on [Sarah.James1@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.James1@whitehorsedc.gov.uk) or 07811 085661 (WhatsApp or phone).

## **Mather House Planning Application**

Planning application [P26/V0216/FUL](#) seeks a change of use for Mather House, East Hendred, from Bed and Breakfast accommodation to a shared dwelling for up to 32 residents in 18 bedrooms with shared facilities. The usage requested is for a House of Multiple Occupation or HMO.

I am aware of a lot of concern from residents about this application and I have spoken to the planning officer to let them know about these, as well as encouraging people to respond to the planning application. I have also asked for this to come to Planning Committee rather than be decided by officers.

## **Our budget Amendment enables up to £2m more of Disabled Facilities Grant to be awarded this year**

I proposed an extra £22,500 in Vale's Council budget this year so that the council can get more Disabled Facilities Grant awarded to help residents. The Council has a £2m underspend for these grants from previous years. This money was doing no good for residents because the Council couldn't process enough grant applications. I'm so pleased that this amendment was accepted and we will be able to get this money out to residents who need it.

Disabled Facilities Grants help people to adapt their homes for health reasons. You can find out more from this online leaflet -

<https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/sites/2/2025/03/home-adaptations-leaflet.pdf> . Do share this with anyone who may benefit.

## Compost Give-away

Saturday 7 March – 9am to 11am – Howbery Business Park, Benson Lane, Wallingford, OX10 8BA

Sunday 8 March – 9am to 11am – White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre (overflow car park), Audlett Drive, Abingdon, OX14 3PJ

The councils' friendly Waste and Recycling Team will be on hand to answer your composting questions and share top tips for greener living.

How it works:

- Bring your own bags and spade.
- Collect up to three bags of compost per household.
- Available while supplies last.

## 'Connecting Local Action' event for community groups and town/parish councils

The event will showcase different examples of climate action and sustainable food growing, with presentations and stands from local projects, and opportunities for discussion.

There will be plenty of time to network, with refreshments provided and a chance to hear from the council on key areas of work, including updates from the Climate & Biodiversity team, and the South & Vale Food Action Plan. Officers from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils will also be on hand to talk funding, nature recovery and more.

### **Connecting Local Action in Vale of White Horse**

11 March 2026, 5pm - 7.30pm  
Vale and Downland Museum  
19 Church St, Wantage, OX12 8BL

Presentations from [Sustainable Wantage](#) and [Future Flood Resilience Group](#).

Booking and more information can be found here: <https://connectinglocalaction-vale.eventbrite.co.uk>

Places are limited, please book your place by Wednesday 4 of March.

## Harwell Campus Vision 2050 Consultation

“Your responses will help us refine the vision, which we will publish later this year. We will also be running public consultation sessions over the coming months, with opportunities to engage online and in person to help shape the Vision.”

No clear deadline on this consultation which is found at <https://www.harwellcampus.com/future-vision/>

## Local Government Reorganisation in Oxfordshire – Consultation open to 26<sup>th</sup> March

<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/oxfordshire/>

This is the Government’s own consultation on the 3 proposals that have been put forward for new unitary councils in Oxfordshire.

## Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) consultation open to 19<sup>th</sup> March

<https://www.oxfordshireleaders.org.uk/partner-projects/oxis>

This consultation comes from Oxfordshire’s committee of council leaders and it is on Oxfordshire’s long-term strategic infrastructure plan, including prioritised projects and recommendations.

## Living in a rural area in Oxfordshire – Health survey

Oxfordshire County Council would like to find out from residents about living in rural Oxfordshire and what helps – or makes it harder – to stay healthy and well. They want to understand local challenges and ideas for improving health and wellbeing. The survey is open now and closes **1 April**. [Take part in the Oxfordshire rural living health survey.](#)

## New garden waste permits

Existing garden waste permits will expire on **31 March**. To continue receiving fortnightly collections from **1 April** and to avoid any interruption to their service, residents will need to buy a new permit.

New permit sales will open mid-February.

**Buying a permit:** The vast majority of our 69,000+ customers will be able to buy their permit via their 'MyAccount'. [Buy or renew a South and Vale garden waste permit](#).

**Offline Support:** Residents who need assistance, should call the Customer Services team on **01235 422422**.

## Recycling Bins – no change

Vale residents will be keeping one bin for mixed recycling. Lots of areas are introducing separate bins for different types of recycling, but Vale has confirmed it will be sticking with one.

## Signposting for Parish Councillors and Residents:

### Cost of Living Help

[Cost of living advice and support from Vale of White Horse District Council](#).

This page summarises help from the district council and other sources.

The Community Hub can also point people to a range of help:

- Tel: 01235 422600
- Email: [communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk)

### Help with energy bills

Better Housing Better Health is a free service for Oxfordshire residents to help you keep warm and save money on energy bills - [Better Housing Better Health – free energy and heating advice](#) or ring 0800 107 0044.

### Rural Services Network's Latest Funding Digest

A digest of funding opportunities which may be useful to rural councils and community groups. This is updated every month. [Rural Services Network – monthly rural funding digest](#).