

# District Councillor Update for Hendreds Ward – May 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 HMO status

A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licence for the property has been granted. This is for part of the property to be used as an HMO for up to 6 people. The details are now available on the District Council's register of HMOs linked from this web page - [Mandatory licensing & houses in multiple occupation - Vale of White Horse District Council](#)

The licence is for 6 people accommodated in 6 bedrooms with 1 shared living room, kitchen and bathroom. It was issued on 18/03/2026 for 5 years and is described as accommodation rooms 1-6 located on the ground floor of Mather House.

Separately, the planning application to turn this into a much larger HMO is still under consideration. It is flagged to go to planning committee for a decision, though it may remain an officer decision if the officer concludes that it should be refused. The next planning committee dates are 27<sup>th</sup> May and 24<sup>th</sup> June.

## Parking and congestion on Trenchard Avenue

Residents raised concerns with me that construction parking alongside the Greencore housing development in Milton Heights is causing real difficulties getting in and out along Trenchard Avenue. This is a particular problem during the school run when this road is busiest.

After initial engagement from Greencore, they went quiet on me. Things are somewhat better, but I'm still concerned that parking and site access is not being handled in accordance with the Construction and Environmental Management Plan that is a condition of the planning permission, and that this is causing congestion and safety issues. As a result, I have made a report to Planning Enforcement and asked them to assess the situation.

## Thames Valley Strategic Authority

The recent Government consultation on areas for producing Spatial Development Strategies placed Oxfordshire in a Thames Valley area with the Berkshires and Swindon and possibly Buckinghamshire. This area is not fixed yet, but this is a clear indication of Government's likely plan. SDS areas are planned to align with Strategic Authority areas. Oxfordshire councils have expressed an interest in being part of a Mayoral Strategic Authority because that will come with more devolved powers and funding. However, recent updates from Government suggest that Thames Valley will at least at first be a Foundation Strategic Authority with no elected Mayor. Only areas further along in the process will become new Mayoral Strategic Authorities in this parliamentary term.

The council was expecting an announcement from Government in April and had scheduled in a briefing for Councillors shortly afterwards. However, the Government announcement was pulled at the last minute and postponed until sometime after the May elections. So, no news yet.

## Full Council meetings now available online

The next meeting of the full council will be the first that can be viewed live or as a recording online. This is because full council is now meeting in Abbey House and not The Beacon where it has been possible to equip the room for this. Other Council committees already have this available. It's new for full Council because it always has to be held in a much larger room than other committees.

The meeting details and papers are available here - [Agenda for Council on Wednesday, 13 May 2026, 7.00 pm](#)

## New Planning System running

The IT system used to manage planning at Vale has been updated. FAQs and help videos are available on this web page - [Important changes to planning and land charging services - Vale of White Horse District Council.](#)

## BinDays App now available

There is now a phone app to tell you when your next bin collections will be. More information is available here - [BinDays - find out when your bins will be emptied - Vale of White Horse District Council](#)

## Climate Action Fund open for applications

Apply for funding for projects that help tackle climate change, improve resilience to heatwaves, flooding or droughts, or help restore nature in our district. Open until 29<sup>th</sup> June – lots more information available on this web page - [Nature and Climate Action Fund - Now open - Vale of White Horse District Council](#)

## 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.](#)