

District Councillor Update for Hendreds Ward – June 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 or 07811 085661 (WhatsApp or phone).

Vale of White Horse District Council Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Council agreed the membership of the Council's committees. Alongside my roles as your ward councillor and as leader of the Green group, I am also a member of the Planning Committee and of Joint Climate and Nature Advisory Committee.

I was pleased to speak in support of two motions at the meeting. The first was on Chalk Stream Protection and we have several in Hendreds Ward. The second was calling for targeted consultations on aspects of the SESRO reservoir to fill gaps in the previous, inadequate public consultation which skipped over several very important issues. These details should be transparently shared with the public for their views ahead Thames Water applying for a Development Consent Order to build the reservoir.

Harwell Campus Luminarium

I was pleased to visit Harwell Campus to see their temporary light sculpture, the Luminarium. It also gave me the opportunity to talk to Campus directors about their recent Campus Vision consultation, raising both positives and negatives that I hear from local residents.

Ardington and Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan

There is an opportunity to view and comment on the Ardington and Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan until 2nd July. More information can be found on the Vale website here - [Ardington and Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan - Vale of White Horse District Council](#) .

Reservoir Timeline

Council officers have shared the following indicative timeline with councillors in the SESRO Members Liaison Group. This liaison group allows us to hear directly from officers engaging in the reservoir process where the Council has a role as a consultee. It also allows us to relay to officers the concerns and impacts from our wards to inform their work.

- 12th May 2026 – RAPID Gate 3 Results
- November 2026 – Development Consent Order (DCO) submission by Thames Water
- Nov – Dec 2026 – DCO acceptance (the Planning Inspectorate agree to hear it).
- 56 days after submission (likely January 2027) - RAPID Gate 4 submission.
- Jan – Mar 2027 – Pre-examination phase of DCO
- Apr 2027 (for minimum 6 months) - DCO examination
- Late 2027 to early 2028 – DCO recommendation and decision.

Great Western Park Health Centre

Woodlands Medical Centre who will run the Health Centre have now appointed a developer to build it, following the re-tendering exercise earlier in the year. That developer is Apsley Henley Med Ltd. They will develop the existing planning permission. Work must begin by 02/04/2027 as a condition of that permission.

NHS Thames Valley Integrated Care Board updates on the health centre are posted on this website - [NHS Thames Valley - Improving our estates](#) .

Enforcement action – landscaping in Milton Heights

A breach of condition notice has been served by Planning Enforcement on the Russet Drive / Bartlett Place / Comice Way estate in Milton Heights.

The action is to replace all trees, shrubs and hedges that are missing or of an incorrect species, have died or have been seriously damaged or destroyed with an equivalent number of new trees or shrubs of the same species shown on the soft landscaping plans (P18/V0386/FUL) by 30/08/2026.

The notice is published here - [Enforcement Breach: VE24/49 - Online Register](#)

Consultation: What benefits should communities expect from new renewable energy projects?

I previously seconded a motion to Vale Council calling for better benefits for communities hosting renewable energy developments, so I'm pleased to see that the

Oxfordshire councils are proposing a temporary policy on this. This policy would ask developers of new alternative energy projects to provide financial contributions and shared ownership opportunities that benefit local communities in Oxfordshire.

There is a consultation open until 15th June on the proposed policy. Please do consider responding. It's available here - [Consultation on a Draft Interim Policy for Community Benefit Contributions and Community Shared Ownership for Low Carbon Energy Projects in Oxfordshire | Let's Talk Oxfordshire](#) .

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 29th 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

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.](#)