

SODC - Caroline Newton Annual Report

May 2018.

Planning

Land Supply Figure.

Under government planning rules set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), all local planning authorities should have an up-to-date deliverable five-year housing land supply.

Our latest housing completion survey shows that 967 homes were built and finished in 2017/18, a third more than the previous year's figure of 722, when the council was unable to demonstrate a five-year supply. This means that our Housing Land Supply now stands at 5.4 years.

This is good news as will help us to fight speculative development on sites which are not the most suitable or preferred, whilst continuing to deliver on housing growth.

Monitoring Progress March 2018

- Majors: 65% decided within 13 weeks against local target of 70% (national target 60%). Volume of applications in SODC is second only to Vale DC amongst comparable councils (130 together compared to the next closest of 40).
- Minors: 83% decided within eight weeks against target 75% (national target 65%)
- Others: 91% decided within eight weeks against target 90% (national target 80%) (2016-17: 1421 in total in SODC (over 2000 incl Vale).
- Appeals dismissed: 63% against our local target 74% (national target 60%)

Appeals - Public Inquiries

Results awaited

- Benson – an appeal relating to site known as BEN5 for 120 units (to the north of Blacklands Road) was heard at an Inquiry which opened on 20 February. The appeal has been recovered (called in by SoS).
- Crowmarsh – an appeal relating to a site off Benson Lane Crowmarsh Gifford for 150 units opened on 27 March and sat for 3 days. Following legal advice, we did not defend our reasons for refusal – however the Parish and a local action group appeared as Rule 6 parties. The appellants have submitted a costs claim for £225,000 and a revised planning application for the same development.
- Emmer Green – an appeal relating to a site off Kiln Lane for 245 units is scheduled to open on 27 March.
- Sonning Common – an appeal relating to a site off Kennylands Road for 90 units is scheduled to open on 10 April and will be held at Henley Rugby Club.

Forthcoming Inquiries

- Tetsworth - an appeal for a traveller site comprising 12 pitches originally was deferred in November 2017 and is now scheduled for August 2018.

- Further inquiries are scheduled for sites in Didcot, Chinnor and Shiplake

Neighbourhood Planning workshop

The next workshop for neighbourhood planning groups takes place from 10am to 3pm on Tuesday 15 May. This session will help groups prepare, carry out and analyse surveys, as well ensuring they are aware of data protection and confidentiality issues.

To book a place Neighbourhood Planning Groups should call 01235 422620 or email Jessica Wilmshurst.

Waste and Recycling

During 2017/18 the food waste trucks collected more than ten tonnes of food waste.

2016/17 SODC was second best of all comparable districts in the country in terms of proportion of waste recycled (64%) and the volume of residual waste

Cooking oil collected

We are now collecting cooking oil alongside food waste. Residents just need to empty the oil into a plastic bottle (no bigger than 1 litre) then put it in inside their food waste caddy when they leave it out for collection. We will only collect from plastic bottles and will not accept oil in glass bottles/jars or any other container.

We'll be promoting this new service to residents over the coming months.

Environmental Services

The Food Safety Team achieved 100% of their food hygiene inspection targets for 2017/18, and 95.5% of businesses have achieved food compliance with support through advice, assistance and enforcement.

We've been dealing with an unprecedented number of public health burials (burying people who die without any known next-of-kin)

First community lottery draw

More than 800 tickets were sold prior to the first So Charitable Lottery draw last weekend.

The first draw saw 15 people win three free tickets each and raised £430 for local good causes and supporting the voluntary sector.

Enforcement.

South Oxfordshire District Council has successfully prosecuted the owner of a boarding kennels in Cane End, following a number of complaints from pet owners including one about the death of a dog.

Simon Herbert pleaded guilty to running an unlicensed animal boarding establishment at Oxford Magistrates' Court on Tuesday (1/5) and was fined £300 with a contribution to costs of £700 and a victim surcharge of £30.

Housing team win silver award

SODC housing needs team achieved a prestigious silver award from the National Practitioners Support Service for the work they do to help prevent the most vulnerable people becoming homeless.

We are only one of 24 councils, out of the 326 councils in the country, to achieve silver or gold and it builds on our previous success of winning a bronze award last year.

In SODC we have 13 households in temporary accommodation, and last year prevented 96% of at-risk households from falling into homelessness.

Superfast broadband almost complete

More than 95% of homes and businesses in the SODC area can now access superfast broadband.

The latest communities to benefit from the upgrade have been Russells Water, Maidensgrove and Stonor.

Improving broadband has been a long-term priority for us and we have contributed £1 million to the second phase of the plan.

The remaining funds have come from BT, County Council, government and local enterprise partnerships.

Thames Valley Police.

Doorstep crime

Following a recent incident involving a suspicious door-to-door jewellery buyer, our community safety team has sent out the following advice from the police. Please would you help spread the guidance to your communities:

look through the door viewer or window to see who is outside
if you decide to open the door keep the door-chain on
check the caller's identity
call the organisation's phone number (by independently looking up first) to confirm their identity - remember official visitors will wait while you check
do not feel pressured into buying any items or services at the door
do not let them into your house or give them access to any private rooms
do not give them information on where valuables are kept
For more information on how you can protect yourself and others, please visit the Thames Valley Police website.

Action Counters Terrorism (ACT)

Thames Valley Police has urged local communities to help tackle terrorism and has asked for our help to spread the word.

There is a new quick and easy online form at www.gov.uk/ACT or people can phone 0800 789 321.

Grants application dates confirmed

REMINDER - We've confirmed the dates that groups can apply for community grants during 2018:

Capital grants - £811,000 available:

20 June to 30 July (round two - budget permitting)

15 October to 30 November (potential round three - budget permitting)

Councillor grants - £5,000 available per councillor: 30 May (estimated) to 3 January 2019

