

Ufton Parish Council – May 5th 2026

District Councillor Report from Susan Ostrander

Headlines:

1. Planning matters:
 - a. South Warwickshire Local Plan Update
 - b. Restoring Housing Land Supply
2. LGR Update
3. Community Climate and Nature Fund
4. New Social Housing Allocation Policy Approved

1a. South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP)

I would like to provide an update on progress with the South Warwickshire Local Plan, which will guide future development across the District. There are several good reasons to work with a plan such as this:

- Allows the Councils to manage where development occurs and preventing unplanned development (particularly relevant as neither SDC or WDC have 5-year housing land supplies)
- Provides the best opportunity to deliver the infrastructure that communities need in a timely manner
- Maximises the ability to deliver community facilities and benefits including through s106 agreements and CIL.

Following the Preferred Options consultation held between January and March 2025, the Consultation Statement has now been published. This document summarises the feedback received and highlights the key issues raised by residents and stakeholders. It will inform the next stage of the Plan's preparation.

The next formal stage will be the Regulation 19 (Publication) version of the Local Plan. This will be the plan that is submitted for examination in December. The current timetable is as follows:

- 19th and 20th May – briefing to Town and Parish Councils to introduce and explain how best to respond to the consultation.
- 28th May 2026 – The Joint Committee for Warwick and Stratford District Council meet to discuss the Regulation 19 document

- June 8th 2026 – Stratford District Council will debate and vote on the Regulation 19 ‘plan’ (The equivalent at Warwick DC will be on 1st June)
- 11th June – start of 6 week consultation (see below)
- December 2026 – Submission of the Plan for independent examination

Residents will have a further opportunity to comment on the Regulation 19 plan (consultation), although this will be more focused on the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan.

Work is also continuing to refine potential development sites. A number of additional submissions and boundary changes have recently been published, including a potential new settlement to the east of Danzey rail station. These can be viewed via the interactive map, and any sites taken forward will be included in the next round of consultation.

In addition, further technical work has been published in relation to the Stratford Relief Road, including reports on longer-term highway capacity.

Further information can be accessed via the following links:

South Warwickshire Local Plan website: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/>

Interactive map of sites: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/interactive-map.cfm>

Technical evidence (including transport studies):

<https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/evidence.cfm>

Stratford-upon-Avon transport studies: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-building/transport-studies.cfm>

1b. Restoring Housing Land Supply

You will be aware of the ongoing position regarding the District’s five-year housing land supply and the implications this has for planning decisions, including the increased risk of speculative development and appeals.

Work continues to strengthen the Council’s position by bringing forward deliverable housing sites and supporting a more plan-led approach to development. To accelerate this, a recent decision has been taken to appoint external project management support.

A six-month contract has been awarded to Keystone Project Solutions to oversee the “boosting land supply” project. This will provide additional capacity to coordinate work across the Council, maintain momentum, produce regular progress reporting, and ensure risks are actively managed.

This additional resource is intended to support more effective delivery and improve the Council’s ability to demonstrate a robust housing land supply, which remains key to strengthening its position in planning decisions.

2. LGR Update

You will be aware that the way local government is structured is set to change following the publication of the Government's *English Devolution White Paper* in December 2024. This sets out proposals to move towards fewer, larger councils, replacing the current two-tier system of county and district councils with single-tier unitary authorities responsible for all local services.

In response, Stratford District Council, alongside the other Warwickshire districts and boroughs, submitted an interim proposal in March 2025 outlining options for how local government in Warwickshire could be reorganised.

Following further consideration, Stratford District Council formally supported a proposal in November 2025 for the creation of two unitary authorities across Warwickshire—one covering the north of the county and one covering South Warwickshire. This proposal has been submitted to Government, and we are currently awaiting a decision, which is expected in July.

Subject to Government approval and the timetable proceeding as planned, elections to a shadow authority would take place in May 2027, with the new unitary council coming into effect from April 2028.

I will continue to keep the Parish Council updated as further information becomes available.

3. Community Climate and Nature Fund

I would like to update Councillors on the progress of the District Council's Community Climate and Nature Fund, which provides grants to local councils, community groups and charities to support projects that reduce carbon emissions and enhance biodiversity. Since its launch in November 2023, the fund has allocated £250,000 across 53 projects throughout the District, supporting a wide range of local environmental initiatives. The most recent funding round closed in April 2026, with grants awarded to the following projects:

- £2,500 to Oxhill Village Hall to install solar panels and battery storage
- £6,000 to Stratford Baptist Church to install solar panels and LED lighting
- £849 to Langley Parish Council for a community engagement project promoting more sustainable use of septic tanks
- £3,971 to Tysoe Parish Council and Tysoe Wildlife Group to support swift and hedgehog conservation
- £5,110 to Stratford Beekeepers' Association for equipment and events to help tackle the threat of the Asian Hornet
- £5,000 to Lighthorne Parish Council to install solar panels on the Pavilion

- £5,000 to Long Compton Action Group to clear vegetation and debris from Nethercote Brook
- £367 to Phoenix Players to improve insulation and install double glazing in their rehearsal space

A fourth round of the fund has now opened, with a total budget of £200,000 available. The deadline for applications is Monday 27 July 2026.

Further information, including eligibility criteria and examples of previously funded projects, can be found on the District Council website - [Community Climate and Nature Fund | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#). Alternatively, enquiries can be made directly via: climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk

4. New Social Housing Allocations Policy

At Full Council on 20 April, a new Housing Allocations Policy for Stratford District was approved unanimously, with cross-party support.

The new policy has been developed following a period of consultation earlier this year and reflects both changes in national legislation and the increasing demand for social housing locally. It also follows the decision for the Council to move away from the Home Choice Plus Partnership, with Stratford now adopting its own system, to be known as the Stratford-on-Avon Home Choice Policy.

The revised policy introduces a clearer and more locally focused framework for allocating social housing, ensuring that priority is given to those in the greatest need. In particular, it includes positive and substantive changes to better support applicants with a strong local connection, members of the Armed Forces community, carers, and those experiencing domestic abuse.

While the District has seen continued delivery of new affordable homes, demand for social housing remains significantly higher than supply. The new policy is therefore designed to make the best possible use of available homes in a fair and transparent way.

The policy will be implemented later this year alongside a new choice-based lettings system. As part of this transition, existing applicants on the housing register will be required to reapply, and the Council will contact those affected with further details in due course.

Overall, this represents an important step in ensuring that the allocation of social housing better reflects local needs and priorities.

For those who enjoy an infographic and a deeper look at why we needed this new policy please see overleaf.

SoA district housing register and allocations (12 month period ending 31/12/25)

Applicants on housing register	2,509
Number of properties advertised for letting	801
Total applicants housed	797
Homeless or threatened with homelessness	392

189	Cases of overcrowding
10	Properties in disrepair
102	Cases of harassment / violence
148	Medical disability confirmed



Properties advertised for let		Average number of bids per property
Bungalow	69	45
1 bed flat / Maisonette	125	83
2 bed flat / Maisonette	126	67
1 bed house	16	180
2 bed house	174	41
3 bed house	155	67
4 bed house	30	82
Sheltered	103	13
TOTAL	801	

Property size needed	Number of applicants	New build affordable	
		From 2019 to 2025	2024/2025
1 bed	1,650	419	71
2 bed	501	1,250	166
3 bed	253	852	124
4 bed	87	122	17
5+ bed	18	1	0
TOTAL	2,509		

SoA district Homelessness Data 2021-2025 (Data as at 31/12/25)

Homeless approaches		Homeless application Breakdown by number of dependent children					
2021	650		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
2022	802	0	427	533	594	691	750
2023	990	1	108	117	149	154	157
2024	1,098	2	64	81	100	110	80
2025*	1,097	3	23	34	40	46	40
		4+	9	19	21	26	15

Top 5 reasons for homelessness					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Domestic abuse - victim	108	147	172	156	106
Friends / Family no longer willing or able to accommodate	97	115	118	130	123
End of private rented tenancy - assured shorthold tenancy	95	124	102	127	103
Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)	72	56	60	53	53
End of social rented tenancy	37	43	17	27	45

Homeless Application Outcomes					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Main duty accepted	1	0	1	1	34
Main duty discharged	68	70	104	111	38
No duty	56	66	99	130	87
Prevented	149	105	64	93	69
Relieved	129	207	197	191	138

Please note: some 2025 cases were still in progress as of 31/12/25, so not all reasons and outcomes had been recorded.

Bed & Breakfast

40 Households of which
1 household with
dependent children



Snapshot of temporary accommodation use as of 31/12/2025

Temporary accommodation

24 Households with no dependent children
13 Households with dependent children