

Vale of White Horse District Councillors' Report

Watchfield and Shrivenham Ward

CLLr Katherine Foxhall katherine.foxhall@whitehorsedc.gov.uk 07916 285305

CLLr Viral Patel viral.patel@whitehorsedc.gov.uk - 07448 191658

February 2026

Ward Overview

Wicklesham and Coxwell Pits application approval for commercial development

[OCC Application MW.0151/23](#)

We are writing this month with deep disappointment following the decision by Oxfordshire County Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee on Monday 19 January to approve the **outline** application for development of a Life Sciences park at Wicklesham Quarry.

Despite the site being a restored Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) containing unique fossils and valuable biodiversity, and the Vale Local Plan 2041 explicitly excluding this site from development, the committee voted 6-5 to approve the application.

Viral and Kat spoke strongly against this application, alongside County Councillor Emma Markham, raising serious concerns about the destruction of a unique ecological site, the safety risks posed by increasing industrial traffic on the already dangerous A420. The decision also disregarded core local policies in Vale Local Plan, which was particularly disappointing given the presence of Vale District Councillors on the OCC committee.

This decision prioritises speculative development over the protection of our open countryside and the safety of our residents.

The application approval is as "outline" only, and we will be watching carefully for any reserved matters application that follows.

Bloor Homes Planning Application at Shrivenham Golf club - P25/V2394/O

The consultation for this application for up to 200 homes closed in January following a huge local response and we await further information.

Day Nursery application in Coleshill

We are currently awaiting the officer's report regarding the application for a nature-focused day nursery in Coleshill. We have strongly supported his project that offers much-needed facilities for rural families and educates children on food growing and the outdoors.

We have formally asked that this application be "called in" to the Planning Committee should officers recommend refusal, but are hopeful that Highways objections can be overcome. We are keen to see this business get off the ground and will advocate for the benefits it brings to our rural community.

Coleshill Solar Farm application

We understand that the applicant for the solar farm at Old Hayes is intending to submit a package of additional information, particularly relating to flooding concerns, after which we expect a further consultation. The application will only progress to a planning committee if officers recommend approval.

A420 flooding

Kat continues to work with County Councillors and through FATAAC to raise issues related to flooding and the condition of local roads. Particularly problematic spots include the A420 (flooding in the dip at Tuckmill has improved following work by OCC), the Longcot to Shrivenham road, Kidson Trigg bridge and the railway bridge south of Longcot.

Council News

Council Budget 2026/27

The Vale of White Horse District Council will be meeting next week (11th February) to debate the budget proposals for the coming financial year. We know that council tax and local services are a priority for many.

The Green group is currently working with senior officers and cabinet members to try and add a small amount of funding to free up a historic backlog of grant funding for Disabled Facilities Grants which pay for alterations to improve accessibility in people's homes.

If any Parish Councillors or residents have specific points or concerns regarding the budget they would like us to raise during the debate, please let us know and we will do our best to raise them.

There is also still time for members of the public to register to speak at the Council meeting if you wish to make your views heard directly, the deadline is noon 10th February.

Note: Full Council will be held at Abbey House in Abingdon this month.

Consultations

Healthwatch Survey - Rural Life in Oxfordshire

Healthwatch and Community First Oxfordshire are seeking the views of residents about their experiences of living in rural areas. They are specifically looking to hear from residents in Watchfield and Shrivenham area, so please do share with residents:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/rurallivingpublic/>

Taxi Licensing Policy updates

Vale of White Horse District Councils is inviting residents, businesses and the taxi and private hire trade to share their views on proposed updates to their Joint Taxi Licensing Policy with South Oxfordshire. The policy influences how taxi services operate across both districts – from payment options to environmental targets. The survey is open until Tuesday 10 March 2026.

<https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/licensing/from-payments-to-emissions-tell-us-what-you-think-about-proposed-taxi-policy-updates/>