

District Councillor James Barlow report on recent activities, OCTOBER 2024

Winterbrook Meadows and Highcroft

Spoken to Berkeley about issues, such as on Brookmead Drive (County Cllr Sudbury worked with OCC offices on this too) and Calvin Thomas Way relating to the build-outs. At Winterbrook they've committed to much better communication with local residents, and at Highcroft they've offered a direct email for Wallingford residents to use in case of comments / questions. I've also contacted Thames Water concerning the reports of sewage on Hithercroft Road after the heavy rains, requesting a meeting.

Walking, wheeling, cycling: James - alongside Town Cllr Mark Hoskins, and SODC Active Travel Champion Cllr Andrea Powell (Crowmarsh) and other volunteers - joined a walking tour with some of Oxfordshire County Council's travel planning team. Shortly we will start work on a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which aims to develop a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes etc for future development; a prioritised future infrastructure improvements programme; analysis and narrative to support the identified improvements and network.

Investments: As part of assessing SODC's financial situation, councillors look at how our financial reserves are invested. In October we were briefed on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors: we discussed how SODC investments can be secure, available as needed for our work and also aligned with our priorities e.g. addressing and adapting to the climate and ecological emergency. This is, suffice to say, dilemma-ridden! For organisations and individuals with savings, loans, pensions or mortgages, our choice of who to bank / invest with can help us 'make our money' work on behalf of or against the things we believe important. Our advisor shared with us <https://www.bankingonclimatechaos.org/> showing the relationship between banks and fossil fuels investment for example. www.ethicalconsumer.org also rates banks in terms of human and animal rights, climate etc. Fascinating stuff. Apparently, our choice of mortgage or pension provider is a big way to influence our own carbon footprint etc! I wonder how WTC manages this?

Apply for a Councillor Community Grant by 12:00, 29 Nov. In 2023 we supported Wallingford (WF) Rowing Club Juniors, Citizens Advice, Shedquarters, Oxfordshire Cruise Bereavement Support, WF Radio, Sustainable WF, WF 1155 and Wigod Way Family Centre – and pointed the Baptist Church to a Food and Warmth Grant. We look forward to applications so we can help the groups and organisations that continue to contribute valuably to the resilience and vibrancy of our community as we adapt to current and future challenges. Please spread the word <https://tinyurl.com/2wadvyjb>

Various consultations WTC might want to engage with

Street trading and cut plastic waste before end Tue 26 Nov 2024:

southandvale.gov.uk/StreetTrading

Council tax premium on long-term empty properties before end Tue 26 Nov:

<https://tinyurl.com/47d9thb2>

Joint Local Plan – deadline end Tue 12 Nov: <https://theconversation.southandvale.gov.uk/jlp/>

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS): <https://tinyurl.com/336kpx53> Respond by 1st Dec

And finally...

There is a national [March for Clean Water](#) on 3rd Nov in London. Given our Designated Bathing Water Status it may be worth having a WTC presence.