NEWS AND FEATURES FROM SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



Listening Learning Leading

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### The ever changing face of Didcot

Bigger, better and brighter than ever

PAGE 4



### Your waste collection calendar is here

Cut it out, stick it on the fridge. It includes your Christmas collection dates BACK COVER



### The Big Clean Up rolls on

The council's tidy-up scheme could be heading your way next

PAGE 8

## A bonus for Cholsey

Building is underway on a brand new, state of the art community facility which will help transform the village of Cholsey. South Oxfordshire District Council is supporting the project with £250,000 of funding towards its total cost of £1.1M.



Community hub: An artists impression of the new Cholsey Pavilion Images: Courtesy of project architects and builders Pinelog.

he Pavilion, which is due to be completed in March next year, will be replacing the old pavilion that burnt down in 2005 after an arson attack. The existing facilities in the village are minimal and already struggling to cope with demand.

The new Cholsey Meadows develop-

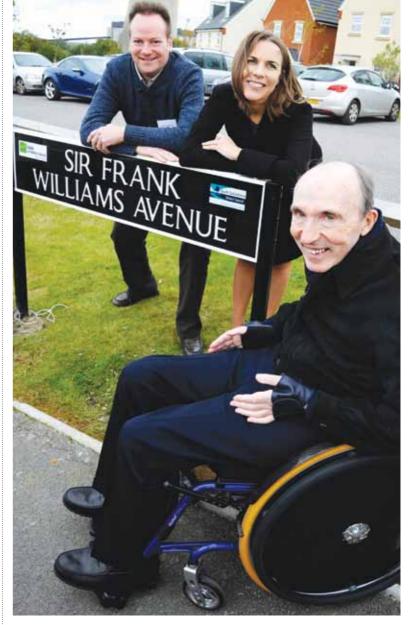
ment of 354 homes at the old Fairmile Hospital site means the village is facing even more pressure on its infrastructure. The council recognised that investment in Cholsey was vital as a result of this development, which is why the decision was taken to award the funding.

The money the council is contributing

comes from New Homes Bonus, which is a fund from the government to support areas which are affected by an increase in housing. The main purpose of the money is to help infrastructure and community facilities in these areas. The government hasn't ring-fenced this money so it can be used for other purposes, but South Oxfordshire District Council has taken the decision to use it as it was intended – extra homes in an area increase the demand on local facilities and the council wants to ease that burden and allow the families moving into the area to become a part of the existing community.

Cholsey Parish Council's project to build this facility is the first to receive New Homes Bonus funding in the district, but some others have already approached the district council for assistance with their community projects.

**Continued on page 3** 



### **GREAT WESTERN PARK IN POLE POSITION**

On Monday 15 October Sir Frank Williams CBE, Team Principal of Williams F1, unveiled the road sign for "Sir Frank Williams Avenue", the through road at the new Great Western Park development in Didcot. Sir Frank is pictured here with his daughter Claire and Didcot resident Duncan Sabiston who originally suggested naming the street after the Formula 1 legend. Turn to pages 4 and 5 for more information on Great Western Park and Didcot.

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### **Oxfordshire to gain next-gen** high-speed broadband by 2015

Dwindling download speeds? Online video streams constantly buffering? It's time to do something about it!

new project has been launched to bring the next generation of high-speed roadband access to Oxfordshire by 2015.

The OxOnline partnership which spans the private, public and community sectors, aims to bring the next generation of high-speed broadband access to Oxfordshire by 2015.

The target is to bring superfast broadband (up to 24Mbps) to areas of the county which may typically be overlooked during infrastructure improvements

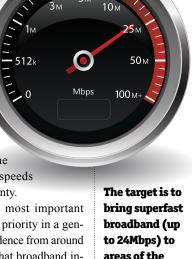
The benefits could include, boosting Oxfordshire's high-tech, high-value economy while also giving a leg-up to small and medium sized businesses through faster, cutting edge communications. It could also open up new opportunities for communities and young people.

Although the broadband infrastructure is gradually extending into more rural areas, some parts of Oxfordshire

are being left behind To help determine where the need is greatest. the requirements of both residents and business people are being sought via a survey which will help confirm the current broadband speeds across the whole county

Broadband is the most important public infrastructure priority in a generation. Growing evidence from around the world confirms that broadband investment produces a significantly higher effect on growth and employment than any other infrastructure investment

To take part in the survey visit www. oxonline.co.uk



county which may typically be overlooked during infrastructure improvements

### **Barking dogs the most** common noise complaint

One of the most frequent noise complaints received by our Environmental Health team is that of dogs barking. It can be a nuisance, especially to those with young children or shift workers who need to sleep during the day. It can also be a problem when dogs are barking into the evening.

So what can be done about it? No dog owners want their animals to disturb their neighbours, but neither do they want to unnecessarily punish their pet. We thought we'd turn to you, our intrepid Outlook reader for your hints and tips on how you keep your animals quiet.

If there is anything specific you do to quieten your dog down when he or she is over-excited and noisy, why not share your ideas with your fellow Outlook readers. Email your suggestions to communications@southandvale.gov.uk with a subject heading of 'Barking dogs' and we'll look at featuring the best ones in a future edition of Outlook.

In the meantime, you can have a look at some of the ideas we have come up with, as well as finding out what to do if you are experiencing a noisy dog at www.southoxon.gov.uk/barkingdogs. We also have a web page for dealing with other neighbour related issues you might be facing at www.southoxon.gov.uk/friendsacrossthefence.

### Summer of events brings thousands of visitors to Henley

well as summer months."

### Working for Wallingford

The new Market Town Co-ordinator for Wallingford, Kate Rayner began work in September. She spoke to us about taking on the role:

place to invest, work, live and visit."

### About Kate:

- she lives in Thame

### Young Achievers assemble!

Our Young Achievers Award is going from strength to strength and we're accepting new applications to the award right now! The awards recognise achievement in sport, the arts and citizenship for 11 – 18 year olds, offering up to £250 each to recognise their dedication and to help them achieve their goals

At the very beginning of this year, 42 talented youngsters were given a Young Achievers Award. Robyn and Charlotte Avers from Sonning Common impressed us all with their drawings. They pooled their award money together and bought themselves a camera to add photography to their impressive range of skills. The Young Achievers sports award is

open to those representing the county or higher in any sport.

The arts awards recognise achievement in music, dance, drama, creative writing, painting, sculpture, photography, video production, multimedia and crafts.



### Photography by Charlotte Ayers

The citizenship awards are for those who are dedicated to helping out in their community, for example through volunteering at a residential care home or acting as a mentor for other young children.

The deadline for applications is 21 December. For more information on how to apply, please visit www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants.



some music to

electronic messages

## ey to purchase

Ben Hale

perform as part of a course and also some John Williams scores to study"

### New service to help **Stop Hate crime**

Victims of hate crime who are reluctant to go to the police now have an alternative reporting service. Stop Hate is a new 24 hour freephone helpline for anyone who has been on the receiving end of, or is witness to, hate crime.

Hate crime is a prejudice of disability, race or nationality, gender, religion or sexual orientation. The abuse can be verbal, physical or emotional and includes attacks to property, and written and

South Oxfordshire is one of the safest areas in the country with only a small number of hate crimes committed each year however when a hate crime does occur it can have a major impact on the life of the victim. The South and Vale Community Safety Partnership recognises that no one should suffer abuse because of who they are and that help should be available for both victims and witnesses.

The Stop Hate scheme is being supported and funded by county and district councils and community safety partnerships across the Thames Valley Police Area, including South and Vale Community Safety Partnership.

Anyone who is a victim of, or witness to, a hate crime is advised to contact the police, however if they are reluctant to do so the Stop Hate free 24hour helpline is available on 0800 138 1625 as an alternative reporting service.

### **TOWN CENTRE FOCUS**

Having been through a period of discovery and investigation and written a plan to help promote business there are now three areas that I am concentrating on: the launch of a shop front improvement scheme; developing a loyalty card scheme and promoting the town as a visitor destination for the winter as

### News

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In the last edition of Outlook we introduced you to Peter McConnell, the new Town Centre Manager for Henley. Peter got in touch with us to let us know what he has been up to since taking up the role:

"Henley has had a particularly busy summer this year with an increased number of visitors, thanks to the many events in the town. A number of events that I have been involved with have contributed to this including the Olympic Torch Relay and Heroes Return both of which saw over 10,000 people lining the streets and riverside with a consequent knock on effect to shops, restaurants and cafe's.

Working with the Henley Partnership we ran a campaign prompting Henley Regatta visitors to visit the town's shops while also placing a temporary information centre on the regatta site. Shortly afterwards our involvement in the Independents Day promotion helped to boost trade into Henley's independent shops.

As with every high street there are concerns about the number of empty shops

in the town. It is a difficult environment for retailers even in a town as vibrant as Henley, so with the town council and district council I will be exploring ways of making better use of empty premises.

"Just by walking around the town, you get a real sense of the pride that business owners and residents have in Wallingford and the enthusiasm that exists towards maintaining a thriving town centre.

I'm really looking forward to getting to know the businesses and residents and to work with them to build the Wallingford brand and promote the town as a great

• her background is in marketing and communications working in the education and not-for-profit sectors she has previous experience in a similar role working for a Business Improvement District in London, promoting the area of Waterloo.



### A bonus for Cholsey cont...

The facilities within the Cholsey pavilion will be based around an attractive central fover with a glass ceiling and a café bar. Adjacent to the foyer will be the main multipurpose hall which will be available for private hire. A number of local groups have already expressed an interest in using this hall for their activities, including the Red Cross, the Rotary Club and the Family Centre.

There will also be a dedicated youth facility for local clubs to use, which would have access to the café, kitchen and fover

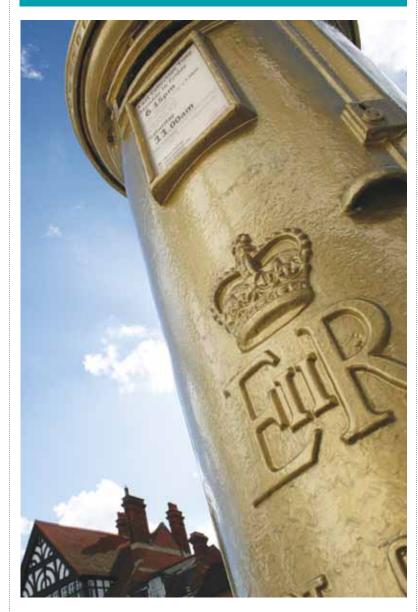
The centre will also be home to a village library and medical consulting rooms.

New sports changing facilities that have direct access to the recreation ground will be present at the rear of the **Parish Plan**, visit www.southoxon. building. They will be used by the vil-

lage football club as well as being available to other local sports organisations.

The parish council based their original proposals for the new pavilion on the requests and requirements expressed by villagers while putting together their Parish Plan in 2007. A Parish Plan is a document produced by parish councils and local community groups in partnership with the district council, which establishes a vision on how people in the parish want to see it progress. Cholsey's Parish Plan being used in conjunction with this project is a working example of how local people can truly influence what happens within their neighbourhoods.

For more information on creating a gov.uk/communityledplanning.



### **PAINTING THE TOWN GOLD**

In case you weren't aware, South Oxfordshire has its very own gold postbox. The postbox on Hart Street in Henley town centre was painted gold in August in recognition of the town's prestigious Leander Club, which has trained more than 100 Olympic medal-winning rowers.

The Royal Mail painted dozens of postboxes gold across the country following the record-smashing gold medal haul from Team GB and Paralympics GB at London 2012.

### **COUNTING DOWN COUNCILLORS**

In the April edition of Outlook this year we ran a story on how we were seeking to make the council more efficient. We submitted a proposal to the Local Government Boundary Commission to reduce the number of councillors in South Oxfordshire from 48 to 36. The Boundary Commission ran a thorough consultation on these proposals and we are happy to say that they have now been agreed.

The next stage of the process is for the Boundary Commission to decide on how the size of the areas represented by each councillor will change to accommodate this reduction in councillors. We have submitted a proposal that has general crossparty agreement locally and we await the Boundary Commission's response.

A decision is expected some time in November, so by the time this copy of Outlook has found its way into your letter box, we might already know the outcome.

All the news will be published on our website as it happens: www. southoxon.gov.uk.



### **NO FINGERS IN THE COOKIE JAR**

If you have visited our website recently, you may have noticed a message about cookies appearing at the top of the screen.

This is in response to new legislation requiring us to notify you that our website uses cookies. A cookie is nothing to worry about – it is a small piece of data that is saved in your internet browser's files, which helps enhance the service our website offers

For example, if you use the helpful My South Oxfordshire section of the website a cookie is used to remember your details so you don't have to reenter them every time you visit the site.

The most important thing to note is that the cookies created by our website cannot access your personal data nor do they transmit any information to the council. They simply exist to enhance your browsing experience.

You can turn cookies off in the settings of your internet browser if you'd prefer, although this can reduce the effectiveness of some of the services on our website.

### **Didcot feature**

## **DIDCOT: A magnificent** transformation

LOOKING TO THE 1 FUTURE

Residents in and around Didcot are being reassured that plans to extend the Orchard Centre will still be going ahead, despite the economic climate having an impact on the process.

Across the country, many retailers have recently been cautious about committing to new stores, but many are still interested in coming to Didcot.

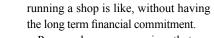
The council, along with development partner Hammerson, is looking beyond national financial uncertainties. Cllr Ann Ducker Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council. explained: "Didcot is recognised as a town that has a great future and while many retailers are scaling back their expansion plans they still want to talk about coming here.

"We are fortunate to have Hammerson as our partner. They are owners of the existing Orchard Centre and we are confident that they can deliver what a fast growing town like Didcot needs."

The multi-million pound retail development will almost double the amount of shopping in the town and will include a number of leading high street brands, restaurants and cafes. The development, with its emphasis on a high quality environment, will make Didcot one of the premier centres in Oxfordshire for both residents and visitors



Preparations are being made to open a pop up shop in Didcot Broadway and the council is on the look out for wannabe retailers who want a real taste of what



Pop up shops are premises that are occupied by a number of different retailers on a short term basis until the premises are re-let. They not only give wannabe retailers an opportunity to see if their idea might succeed on the high street but also fill empty shops, create more variety in a town centre and create more reasons for shoppers to visit a town centre.

The pop up shop is an initiative by the newly formed Town Team made up of South Oxfordshire District Council, Didcot Town Council, Harwell Parish Council East Hagbourne Parish Council, Didcot Chamber of Commerce and Didcot First The Town Team has come together to breathe new life into Didcot Broadway

The idea for the pop up shop was one of those originally included in Didcot's bid to become a Government backed Portas Pilot' town. The bid was not successful but the town team has decided to press on with ideas to boost the town centre and support independent retailers

If you're a wannabe retailer and want to find out more contact Toby Warren Didcot Project Manager, 07717 779171 or toby.warren@southandvale.gov.uk



Many local people feel that the first impression of Didcot when visitors arrive by train is not very good. The council would like to see the site opposite the station redeveloped so that a welcoming gateway to Didcot and Science Vale UK is created.









entre will be going ahead despite the economic climat

The Homes and Communities Agency are supporting the council's plans for the successful growth of Didcot and have purchased several properties opposite the railway station to help in overcoming some of the issues that stand in the way of a comprehensive and appropriate redevelopment.

The council is now working with the Homes and Communities Agency on a masterplan for the future of the site and will be consulting with local people once draft plans have been prepared.



Not only is Didcot improving, it is also expanding. Great Western Park is an exciting new development for the

town and the area as a whole. The first residents moved into their houses on the park in June 2011 but there are plenty more people to move in.

For all of these residents, this needs to be more than a housing estate – it needs to be their home. How do you turn 3,000 new houses from bricks and mortar into homes and communities?

The first step is right back at the very beginning - when we grant planning permission for developments on this scale, one of the most important factors we consider is the quality and quantity of the facilities other than houses that are included in the application.

The developers at Great Western Park are investing £60 million to ensure residents have good communal facilities that

encourage a vibrant community spirit.

A family atmosphere is vital to any neighbourhood so a number of new play areas as well as quality new schools and park land are at the heart of the development.

In order to create a social atmosphere, a focal point at which people can meet up with their neighbours is essential which is where the new shops and community centres will come in

Plenty of open spaces as well as important facilities such as a modern health centre provide the finishing touches that will allow Great Western Park to be a wonderful and vibrant selfcontained community.

As you will be aware though, plenty of work is going on elsewhere in Didcot The Didcot of today is unrecognisable when compared to the same town just ten years ago. What was once just an under-loved commuter town is fast becoming a highly desirable place to live as well as a thriving centre of industry and commerce. The town has made enormous strides already, but as we will discover here, there is plenty more good work to come...



town of Didcot as a whole.

To help make buying a brand new home



### **Didcot** feature

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vide wider facilities for both new and long-standing residents to enjoy, ensuring that everybody moving into the new homes will be able to integrate with the

at Great Western Park simple and affordable the developers of are offering a range of incentives including part exchange, shared equity schemes and the Government-backed NewBuy incentive - for more details, visit www.newbuy.org.uk.

We have started to draw up the project plan which will be used to help bring a new leisure centre to a site somewhere

in Didcot. The project was given the go ahead by the council in April and it is hoped that construction will begin in 2014. Watch this space for information on how you can keep up to date and be involved as things progress.

### DIDCOT A POWER 6 STATION TO CLOSE

Didcot A (the 2,000MW coal-fired power station which is operated by RWE npower) will close on 31 March 2013, after 42 years of service.

The site which lies on the outskirts of the town and straddles the boundary between our district and the Vale of White Horse has been an important part of the community since it first opened. We are now working alongside the Vale.

to assist RWE npower as they plan the decommissioning demolition and then subsequent redevelopment of the site.



The station forecourt at Didcot is getting a much needed revamp, and the council is contributing a significant amount of money towards the work.

£900 000 that the council received from the government will be contributed as well as £800,000 from the council's own funds. The council's successful negotiations with housing developers resulted in another £4 million for the project. Oxfordshire County Council has also provided £1 million and is managing the work.

The work will reduce traffic congestion and will help to keep vehicles away from pedestrians

Pedestrians will be given greater priority with a piazza and clear footpaths, while vehicles will be kept separate in designated areas to reduce congestion.

There will also be more bus stops, a larger taxi rank, and new pick-up / drop-off areas as well as disabled parking and short-stay waiting – all with a covered footpath

The station forecourt will become exactly the kind of transport interchange that rail passengers and the people of Didcot deserve; one that is uncluttered, easy to get around and reflects a modern and vibrant community

The improvements are set to be complete by October 2013.

First Great Western is refurbishing the station's concourse in a separate £1.8 million project funded by the Department for Transport and Network Rail. The works, which include changes to the interior lavout and café, and the installation of new ticket barriers, will complement the external improvements to the forecourt.

### For the latest updates and

information, visit www.southoxon. gov.uk/didcot, twitter.com/southoxon and www.didcotparkway.info.

### **DIDCOT STATION** DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

### September 2012

Construction begins, the lower east car park closes and excavation starts for a new rainwater storage tank and retaining walls.

### January 2013

Work in the upper east car park begins.

### April 2013

The east car park fully reopens and permit holders will be the first to benefit from the £5.7 million forecourt redevelopment. Work switches to the west car park.

### August 2013

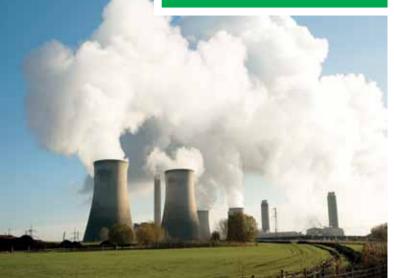
The west car park reopens and the new taxi rank, drop-off point disabled parking, waiting bays and motorcycle parking come into use. Work begins in the central bus area.

### October 2013

The redevelopment project is complete and the new station interchange fully opens.

### 

Power station to close: Didcot A will close n 31 March 2013 after 42 years of service.



**Parish Councils** 

tourism

### Policy

# National Policy, Local Action

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

birth, marriage and

ducation

lighting

libraries

museums

ocial care

transport

fire



### Central Government Decision

Through the Localism Act, the empower ordinary people within local communities to help shape the future of the places in which they live and work.

### How it affects the work we do

Neighbourhood Planning means local developments should look like. The council uses an existing document

sions on building developments.





of the Woodcote Parish Council

Geoff told us why he wanted to get involved in Neighbourhood Planning: "I had deep concerns that development would degrade the countryside and local environment intrude on the

When reporting political decisions, the national press and media largely focus on those taken by central government. Sometimes it is very obvious how these decisions affect individuals, sometimes less so.

he line between what decisions are made by parliament and which ones are made at a more ocal level can often be a bit difficult to understand. The diagram on the right is a simplified representation of what each tier of local government is primarily responsible for, although even this doesn't tell the full story.

Here at the district council your elected councillors make political decisions that affect your day to day lives, but we also have to put into practice those decisions

handed down from parliament in London. Sometimes, national policy that is handed down to a local level provides us with opportunities and avenues we can use to benefit and enhance the lives of you the resident. On other occasions though, particularly during the current economic climate, it can create significant challenges.

Across these pages are some examples of work we carry out that is very much dictated by the decisions made centrally in Whitehall

### **Changes to benefits**

Among the most difficult challenges currently facing the district council is to implement the Welfare Reform Act which was passed by the coalition government.

The overall changes to the benefits system are hugely varied and in some instances quite complicated, although the general impact is almost always to reduce or restrict entitlement to claimants

The reforms intend to save £18bn nationally, including £1.9bn of savings from housing benefit

The district council is responsible for allocating both housing and council tax benefits, and these reforms will have an impact on some of our residents.

The Welfare Reform Act also includes the new benefit cap which restricts the total amount of financial support an individual can receive. This will only affect a very small number of residents in South Oxfordshire. The act also includes provisions to reduce housing benefit to residents of social housing who are overaccommodated, which means people whose social housing is deemed to be larger than their requirements. This will affect in excess of 1,000 of our residents.

The amount the government intends

to save from cuts to housing benefits

The full impact on specific individuals is not yet clear, but we would like to reassure residents that we will try to help those most in need of support by awarding short term discretionary housing payments through the transition.

If anybody has any concerns about the Welfare Reform Act, they can seek advice at the Citizen's Advice Bureau, their registered housing association or contacting us on 0345 302 2313.

The district council is responsible for allocating both housing and council tax benefits, and these reforms will have an impact on some of our residents.



## **Contaminated land**

were used in the past for industrial purposes sometimes need to be checked to ensure that they do not pose a danger to the public.

By law the district council is required to carry out routine land quality investigations to test whether any potential contaminants are present in the ground

Often an investigation will need to be carried out because there is lack of information about the history of the site and whether it could present a risk to the environment or local residents

Areas of land, whether public or private, which Where we decide to carry out such an investigation we write to the land owner to inform them: requesting their permission to test the site and asking whether they have noticed any abnormal conditions.

In most cases there will not be an issue and our tests will provide peace of mind for the landowner. If contaminants are found on the site we then work with the landowner to ensure any risk to the public is addressed

For more information contact our Contaminated Land Officer on 01491 823244.

death registration markets environmental health moorings planning and building recreational spaces control highways – including community centres on-street parking, traffic council tax collection (on management, and street behalf of all council tiers) signs parks and leisure allotments economic development cemeteries recreation, arts and council tax and housing benefits community safety strategic planning car parks trading standards licensing arts waste disposal elections housing grants <u>business support</u> food safety

Who is responsible for what?

recycling and waste

ollection

South Oxfordshire

7

### Neighbourhood Planning

way. Both Thame and Woodcote were

granted Front Runner status by the

government, which means the plans

are being assisted by a financial grant

to get them up and running. The other

areas currently preparing neighbour-

hood plans in the district are Benson.

Woodcote is developing its neighbour-

hood plan using work already put in place

by its recent parish plan. The village has

responded well to approaches for opinion.

Over 85 per cent of households have re-

sponded to various consultations and ap-

praisals over the years, so the neighbour-

hood planning group have an excellent

measure of the feelings of villagers and

how these have changed, or not, over the

In response to these views, the initial

objectives for the neighbourhood plan

included finding sites for new housing

and determining what they would look

like; as well as integrating any develop-

ment into Woodcote so the rural look

and feel of the village is maintained

There is also a wish to minimise any

impact on the surrounding countryside

while ensuring any developments are

positioned so that they don't adversely

affect traffic congestion and road safety.

past quarter of a century.

Chalgrove and Sonning Common.

Woodcote

coalition government is seeking to

communities can contribute to how decisions are made on where new homes, shops and offices are built in their neighbourhoods, as well as having a say on what those buildings and

called the local plan to assess planning applications. Our new core strategy, which will form part of our next local plan, will help to direct development for the years to come. However, new neighbourhood plans allow us to work side by side with community groups, parish councils and other interested parties to ensure we are taking very specific local issues into account when making deci-

In South Oxfordshire there are al-

### ready five Neighbourhood Plans under Thame

Thame's Neighbourhood Plan is well under way. The neighbourhood planning group have identified their initial preferred sites for additional housing that has been earmarked for the town in the council's draft core strategy. The preferred options were drawn up after Thame Town Council hosted public fact-finding meetings, which identified many common preferences locally, including that new housing should not be in one big cluster but spread over several sites. They also specified that new housing must be integrated into the town, be well connected with good pedestrian, cycle and bus routes with access to the town centre to support local shops. They have highlighted the desire for the town to retain its market town character.

Do you think your town, village or community would benefit from a Neighbourhood Plan? A good way to start is to contact some local community groups to see if there is any interest in helping set up a neighbourhood plan. Your local town and parish council might also be a good place to start.

growing up in the village today – and in the future – to be able to eniov the social and natural environment that my children did" **Geoff Botting** 

"I want children

### Meeting housing needs

### **Central Government Decision**

There is a significant shortage of housing in the United Kingdom which must be addressed urgently.



### How it affects what we do

We have to find space for over 11 000 homes in South Oxfordshire over the next 15 years. Housing sites have been found for just over half of this amount, but land still needs to be identified for the rest. Needless to say, it is going to be a hugely challenging task to allocate this number of houses within the district, while also paying attention to the individual and specific needs of the various towns and villages across our part of the county

It is absolutely vital that these houses are built, but we need to find a way of allocating them that helps to enrich the communities into which they are built, rather than to spoil them.

We are putting the finishing touches to our Core Strategy which will provide an overall strategy for the location of the houses we are required to build throughout the district and will allocate specific housing sites at Didcot and Wallingford.

We are also drawing up a follow-on document to this, a site allocations document, which will identify specific housing sites in some of the larger villages in the district. We are engaging with local communities to help prepare this document. One of the first things we did was to talk with all of the relevant parish councils about how the task of apportioning housing numbers between the larger villages should be approached. Views from a broad spectrum of interested parties have been taken into consideration

There are some town and parish councils including Woodcote and Thame as front runners, who are creating what is known as a Neighbourhood Plan. This can be used to help decide the nature of developments within a community. You can read more about these in the adjacent article.

We have been tasked with providing homes for many thousands of people within our district. South Oxfordshire is a wonderful place to live and we are doing everything we can to ensure that will always remain the case, not only for those that currently live here, but also for those that will be joining us in this beautiful corner of the country.

### Real people making a real difference

he Woodcote Neighbourhood lanning committee. He has ved in Woodcote for 35 years and his two daughters were brought up in the village. He has worked in the IT industry for 40 years and restores veteran British lightweight motorcycles in his spare time. He is also the vice-chair

eoff Botting is the Chairman of village's area of outstanding natural beauty, put stress on the relatively limited services available in the village and exacerbate existing problems such as road safety. I want children growing up in the village today – and in the future – to be able to enjoy the social and natural environment that my children did.

"As a result of our work to date on the neighbourhood plan we hope that we will be really listened to when it comes to determining the new housing to be allocated to the village and that by allowing the village to choose the type, location and size of developments we

can absorb development that is environmentally sustainable and does not disrupt or damage village life nor the local environment. Ideally we can replace 15 years of dispute over new planning applications with a measured, considered, publicly supported plan that will meet the changing needs of the village, help maintain a healthy community and avoid stressing the already stretched facilities and services in the village

### **Big Clean Up**

## The Big Clean Up continues...

In April this year, we launched The Big Clean **Up** – a programme to get South Oxfordshire looking its very best.

introduced The Big Clean Up after you told us that keeping your neighbourhoods clean and tidy was very high on your list of priorities. Specially dedicated crews from our waste partner Biffa have been despatched to every corner of the district to remove weeds, and to tidy verges and pavements. They're picking litter, clearing gutters and doing anything else that might need doing when they arrive.

As you can see from the photos, it is hugely effective and makes a real difference Don't forget that this is in addition to our normal and on-going street cleaning programme.

We published a timeline in the April edition of Outlook this year that showed you where the Big Clean Up was heading over the following three months. We're happy to say that they are on schedule and we've produced an updated timeline of the places they're headed to next. It was initially scheduled to run for

a single year, but we are now looking at the possibility of continuing this programme on an annual basis. We will look into a more formal way of seeking your feedback in the New Year, but for now if you have any comments on the Big Clean Up you would like to make please email them to communications@southandvale.gov.uk.





All cleaned up: A collection of images showing the before (top) and after states of a number of Big Clean Up sites around South Oxfordshire.

### **REAL JOBS, REAL PEOPLE...**

### Alan, Big Clean Up operative for Biffa

have been working on the Big Clean Up since it began around six months ago. I've thoroughly enjoyed the experience so far. I start at six in the morning at the depot in Culham where I meet the rest of the crew and we collect all of the gear. On the Big Clean Up we have six people, three vehicles and our special bit of kit we call weed rippers for clearing weeds and overgrown verges. We also have a specially adapted vacuum for us now though, as keeping active

which is attached to a wheelie bin to gather up all the waste.

We are working our way across the whole district which is brilliant because it means I've got to spend time in some of the nicest places in South Oxfordshire. It's particularly pleasant on the few occasions in the summer when the sun shone, although it is quite physical work so we could get a bit on the warm side. That's a bonus

helps keep us from seizing up with the cold as we unavoidably plough headlong into the winter.

As you might expect, my favourite job is to be in charge of weed ripper. which is a large lawnmower style machine. It has rotating blades which we use to strip weeds out of gaps in the pavements, as well as cutting back the overgrown verges that have encroached onto pathways. Once the other boys have cleared away the debris, the difference is immediately noticeable We regularly get compliments and thanks from members of the public, who can see the difference we're making Seeing the difference your job makes and being told that it's appreciated makes all the hard work worthwhile

If you see us out and about, give us a wave or say hello. We're all wearing Big Clean Up jackets, so you can't miss us!







binfo to download the ann. Simply input your postcode or use the

recycling week or a grey rubbish week.

bins out

### Waste

### What to do with your Arubbish quiz **Christmas waste**

Try as we might Christmas inevitably means more waste. No doubt, evervbody is guite familiar by now with what can and can't be recycled in your

green bins (to refresh your memory. you can always go to www.southoxon. gov.uk/recycling). However, the festive period comes along with different

types of waste and you might not know where they go. The diagram below is our guide to Christmas-specific waste and what bin it goes in:

### **Get your info from Binfo**

Don't forget to download Binfo to your iPhone or Android smartphone Scan the OR code or visit www.southoxon.gov.uk/

GPS tracker when you're at home and Binfo will let you know on what day your next waste collection will be. Binfo will also inform you whether or not it's a green You can use Binfo to set an alarm at any time of the day you like on the day before your collection to remind you to put your

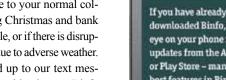
Binfo will also send you a notification

if there is a change to your normal collection day during Christmas and bank holidays for example, or if there is disruption to the service due to adverse weather.

If you're signed up to our text message service, but would rather use Binfo to remind you when there's a change to



unsubscribe from the text service.



vour waste col-





Binio

### **Garden waste service update**

In addition to our recycling, residual and food waste collections, the council offers a brown bin garden waste collection service to residents for a small charge. There have been occasions in the past where we have inadvertently continued to collect garden waste from people who were no longer paying for the service. We have now rectified this situation and have a system in place to ensure garden waste collections are only provided to those who are paying for the service

The implementation of this system includes the recovery of brown bins from customers whose contract has come to an end. Our waste contractor Biffa is undertaking this task on behalf of the council.

If you would like to receive a garden waste collection, the annual cost is £34, payable by direct debit which you can set up over the phone by calling 01749 341247.

Back by popular demand – it's the waste guiz! How well do you know our waste service? Your knowledge will be stretched to its limits with our exhaustive and taxing waste guiz – the Christmas edition:

Question 1: What should you do with all the flat batteries created by endless hours of play time on new electronic toys?

a) dump them in a huge pile in the middle of the living room and call it art b) wait until next door get around to re-doing their kitchen and then chuck the batteries into their skip c) put them out in a small sandwich or freezer type bag on top of your green bin on recycling week.

Question 2: What should you do if you don't know what day your bins will be collected over Christmas?

- a) panic
- b) cancel Christmas

c) cut out and keep your updated waste calendar on the back page of this edition of Outlook - you can also download Binfo to your smartphone.

### Question 3: What should you do if you end up with more food waste than will fit in the food waste bin?

a) chuck it in the grey bin b) sweep it under the carpet and

hope it goes away c) put it out for collection in a normal compostable bag tied up, on

top of the food waste bin, or put it in your home composter.

### Question 4: What should you do if you can't fit all of the used wrapping paper into the recycling bin?

a) wrap the kids up with it to keep them guiet during the Bond movie on TV

b) build a bonfire and send smoke signals to Santa

c) leave it as side waste in an open box or clear/white bin bag next to your green bin on recycling week.

Question 5: What should you do with your Christmas tree in the new year?

a) leave it up in the corner of the living room until it takes root and becomes a year-round horticultural feature

b) stick a stamp on it and post it back to Norway

c) leave it out next to your brown bin if you're a garden waste customer or take it to one of the many Christmas Tree recycling points around the district.

### ANSWERS:

Of course all the correct answers were "C". Here's a bit more information or some of the questions:

### Questions 3 and 4:

This isn't restricted to Christmas alone - you can leave extra recycling or food waste like this all year round. Please note that we cannot accept extra grey bin rubbish as side waste.

### Question 5:

Garden waste customers - please don't put the tree in the bin as it can be very difficult for the crews to remove. Please put the tree out next to the brown bin, even in your brown bin is empty – this is so we know you're a garden waste customer.

We will be providing a number of Christmas tree recycling locations across the district for residents who don't use the garden waste service, please visit our website over Christmas or in the new year for details of these locations.

www.southoxon.gov.uk.

### **REMINDER FOR GARDEN WASTE CUSTOMERS**

Don't forget that from Thursday 27 December, we will not be collecting garden waste for one full recycling week. This is so that crews can concentrate on collecting the extra waste created during the estive season. To make up for this, during the week ommencing Monday 15 April, customers of the service can put out two bin loads worth of garden waste



### News

### **Council energy savings** in the past year PARTNERS

Centre

**J** 9%

As set out in our Carbon Management Plan we committed to reducing our carbon emissions by 30 per cent between 2007 and 2013. This not only helps us reduce our impact on the environment, but a more immediately measurable effect is the money that it saves the council, year after year. Here are the energy savings that we have made in the past year alone, as well as the savings made by some of our partners.

> **Council offices** Electricity use **J** 3%

> > SODC

### **LEISURE Didcot Leisure** Park Sports Centre Electricity use 16% 2% Henley Leisure Centre **Didcot wave**

Electricity use **J** 9%

LEISURE CENTRE

**J 9%** 





out the district which are run by GLL on our behalf. Each centre offers a variety of facilities and services for

both sports enthusiasts and those looking to take things at a more leisurely pace. The main facilities are highlighted below, and you can find out more information about each centre at www.better.org.uk:

<b>Abbey Sports Centre</b> Berinsfield, 0X10 7NR 01865 341035	Ŕ	" <b>\</b> "	*	*
<b>Didcot Wave Leisure Po</b> 0X11 8NX 01235 819888	ool		<b>'</b> \	*
<b>Didcot Leisure Centre</b> 0X11 8AY 01235 811250			*	۴
<b>Henley Leisure Centre</b> RG9 1PA 01491 577 909	" <b>\</b>	*	*	"
<b>Park Sports Centre</b> Wheatley, 0X33 1QZ 01865 872128	"	*	*	٣
<b>Thame Leisure Centre</b> 0X9 2BB 01844 215607		<b>"</b> \"	*	٣
Key				
	Swimming		Dan	ıce
courts ]	pool	hall		

ence. It not only taught me a number

of applied skills which cannot be found

anywhere else but was also a fantastic

opportunity to see the workings of local

of work for a while, it has boosted my

confidence, and has made me feel much

"I would sincerely recommend it

for young graduates who have found it

more useful as a person.

hard to get into employment"

involved with extended work

placements contact your local

Job Centre, alternatively more

available for job seekers at

information about the scheme is

www.direct.gov.uk/employment.

If you are interested in becoming

"For someone who has also been out

government

### **Enterprise Zone** opens for business

The Science Vale UK Enterprise Zone, which includes sites at Harwell Oxford and Milton Park on the edge of Didcot opened for business on 1 April 2012.

The government wants enterprise zones to create jobs and economic growth. The benefits for new businesses include, simplified planning regulations for new buildings and a business rate discount worth up to £275 000 per business over a five year period (£55,000 a year). There is also a flexible choice of globally competitive broadband services as well as comprehensive business advice and support.

A lot is already happening in the Enterprise Zone

At Harwell Oxford, a new Global Innovation Centre is being built for Element Six. the world-leader in synthetic diamond research. Once complete in spring 2013, the Centre will initially employ more than 100 top engineers, scientists and technicians and 50 new material science jobs will be created.

At Milton Park, a major new office development is being planned and 12 new hi-tech units are being built ready for companies from across the globe that are being attracted by the package of Enterprise Zone benefits

Science Vale UK was named as one of the government's 21 Enterprise Zones in August 2011. It is expected that the Enterprise Zone will bring in around 8.400 high-tech, high-value-adding jobs, 200,000 square metres of new commercial development, and generate up to £10.5m of additional business rates a year. These funds will be directly reinvested into the Oxfordshire economy.

### **Extended work places - helping** businesses and the community

Are you involved in a small or medium sized business? Would you like to bring in an extra pair of hands to help you through busy periods but are restricted by your budget? If so, why not look into an extended work placement.

The extended work placement scheme is run by Job Centre Plus to help young people into employment through extended voluntary work placements and could provide your business with someone for up to eight weeks, working up to 30 hours a week.

There is no cost to your business and the only requirement is that you provide appropriate supervision and a reference at the end of the work placement, subject to a satisfactory performance. The placement is managed by staff at the Job Centre and any issues are resolved by them.

This scheme is designed to help young people gain valuable work experience while still being able to claim job seeker's allowance. The initiative benefits young people by giving them an opportunity to gain real work place skills such as working in a team and provides them with a reference which is vital for them when applying for jobs. It also provides local businesses with the opportunity to help boost the career prospects of young people in their community

A number or departments at South Oxfordshire District Council have been supporting this initiative.

Julian Howard, a graduate who did an extended work placement with the council over the summer, said:

"I found it such a valuable experi-



### **Christmas with Mr Toad** and Friends

Join Mr Toad and his friends Ratty, Mole and Badger as they celebrate Christmas with crafts, activities, songs, dance... and presents! Most suitable for under 10s. Museum admission + £3 per child.

www.rrm.co.uk/events/ christmas-with-mr-toad-friends

### **Carol Evening aboard the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway** Saturday 15 December 7:00pt

An evening of traditional Christmas carols on board a steam train on the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway. Train departs at 7.00pm.

www.chinnorrailway.co.uk/ carolevening

### Santa Specials on the **Cholsey** and Wallingford Railway

8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 23 December

Join the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway on their special Santa trains. Santa will ride with you on the train visiting children during the journey. Each child up to the age of 8 will receive a gift from Santa. Adults will receive a mince pie at Wallingford Station. No need to book just turn up on the day!

### Santa Specials on the **Chinnor** and **Princes Risborough Railway** 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 2

Children receive a present from Father Christmas and adults receive seasonal refreshments. Seats bookable in advance. Special Timetable applies.

www.chinnorrailway.co.uk/ santaspecials

### Days out with Thomas to visit Father Christmas

Days out to visit Father Christmas with children.

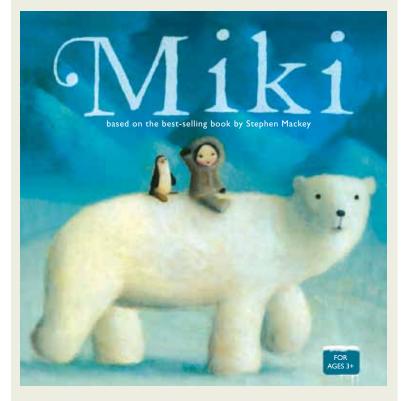
www.didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk/ events/father\_christmas.html

# What's on this Xmas

### Saturday 15 December 10:30am – 4:00pm

Thomas the Tank Engine and his friends at the Didcot Railway Centre. Rides behind "Thomas", meet The Fat Controller, children's entertainment, visit Father Christmas in his Grotto, Presents for the

### **CORNERSTONE FAMILY CHRISTMAS SHOW**



'I wish I could catch a star. A star would shine forever' Said Miki, as she fished for her supper. On midwinter eve when an icy wind blew, The moon weaved its magic and wishes came true...'

### MIKI

### based on the book by Stephen Mackey

Saturday 15 – Sunday 23 December £12, £9 (concessions and members) £35 family ticket (group of four with at least one under 16)

A long time ago and very far away, Miki, Polar Bear and Penguin lived in an icy world where nothing ever grew. One midwinter eve they make a wish and Miki embarks on a magical adventure...

### Carols at the Court, **Rotherfield Greys** Saturday 8 December at 2:00pr

Celebrate Christmas at Greys Court with carols in front of the mansion. Meet in front of the house.

Assistance Dogs only are welcome. Children welcome.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greyscourt/things-to-see-and-do/

in search of a star. Featuring amazing underwater creatures, songs to sing along to and extraordinary puppetry, Miki is an inspiring story about friendship, courage and adventure suitable for children from 3 – 10 and all the family.

Created by Slot Machine, the company who brought One Snowy Night to Cornerstone last year.

See www.cornerstone-arts.org for details of performance times or call Box Office on 01235 515144.

### Aladdin Monday 26 November Saturday 1 December

PANTOMIME StageWorks are proud to present their Christmas pantomime 2012: Aladdin. Over 200 students will be performing and it promises to be a great show for all the family. Tickets £5-10. An amateur production.

All tickets: 07761 129546 or ladyjanevtaylor@gmail.com

### <u>CHRISTMAS AT</u> 0(0);3\1=1;3\510(0)\1=

### **Christmas** Carol - as told b Theatre

What better way to get ready for Christmas? Jacob Marley returns to recount the tale of his miserly ousiness partner, Ebeneezer Scrooge 'Riveting acting...Stunning voice work ... Unforgettable.' The stage.

Presented by Brother Wolf

Thu 22 Nov 7.30pm £14, £12.50 (concs), £11.50 (members)

### leil Innes

Comedy and music

Neil plays music, sings songs and tells stories in this unique show. It's poignant, it's spicy and it's lyrical. Don't miss the man famous for Monty Python, the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band and the Rutles!

Fri 23 Nov 8pm £14, £12.50 (concs), £11.50 (members)

### en Waters boogie solo Music: boogie woogie piano

Newsflash: Jools Holland picks Ben Waters as his number two greatest pianist ever! To celebrate – and for his fans – Ben is doing a short solo tour of the UK in November. And <u>he asked to come to Cornerstone.</u> These gigs are electric; his fast fingers, physical acrobatics, piano and vocals will blow you away!

Sat 24 Nov 8pm £15, £13.50 (concs), £12.50 (members)

### locturn dance – the Dance

An evening celebrating adult dance, showcasing all the best that community dance groups across the thames valley can offer, hosted by locally based nocturn dance.

Sun 25 Nov 7.30pm £8.50, £5 (concs)

### Stories and supper

A stunning combination of delicious food and storytelling. Come to the café bar for a savoury and sweet cocoainspired meal, accompanied by tales of the secret, the banned and the scandalous from authors including Byron, John Donne and Angela Carter

Tue 27 Nov 7pm £20, £18 (concs) includes storytelling, cocktail, main meal, coffee and treats

### Pappy's: last show ever Comedy: sketch

Hailed as "the funniest sketch troupe on the fringe" by the Scotsman Pappy's have appeared on tv and radio had five hit Edinburgh shows and 3 national tours. Don't miss what might be the last chance to see them.

Fri 30 Nov 8pm £14, £12.50 (concs) and £11.50 (members) ages 16+

### **Christmas** cushion concert – trumpet Music: children's

It's Christmas in cushion concert land and the trumpet is the most 'hallelujah' instrument to celebrate it

Sun 2 Dec 11am and 12 noon under 5s (max 50) £8, £6 (concs

Sun 2 Dec 1.30pm 5-8 year olds (max 100) £8, £6 (concs)

### erstone Christmas merstone en Dance: community

A selection of performances by the wonderful pupils of Cornerstone's many dance classes. Tickets go on general sale from 24 November. Prior to this date ticket sales are restricted to parents of children performing

Thu 6 and Fri 7 Dec 7.30pm £7, £5 (concs and members)



11

Arts

### **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON DATES**

Didcot Christmas Street Fair:
Thursday 29 November
Henley Christmas Festival:
Friday 30 November
Thame Christmas Lights:
Friday 30 November
Wallingford Christmas Event:
Sunday 2 December.

### DIDCOT CHRISTMAS STREET FAIR

Didcot's 19th Christmas Street Fair on Thursday 29 November will have a vintage theme this year and a new four day Christmas Market in the Orchard Centre.

The Christmas Market opening hours: 4pm – 9pm on Thursday 29 Nov 9am – 5pm Friday 30 Nov - Sunday 2 Dec. THAME CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Shops open for extended opening hours.

Town Carols and Parade of Lanterns. Lantern parade will leave the Regal Centre at 6pm. Carols with the Cholsey Silver Band and others around the Christmas tree in the market place at 6:30pm. All welcome.

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### LIVING ADVENT CALENDAR, HENLEY

www.livingadventcalendar.co.uk The Living Advent Calendar provides a live performance on the twenty four days leading up to Christmas, each in a different venue, raising money for three local charities.

Every evening in December from 6:15pm -6:30pm, up to and including Christmas Eve.

### Waste collection dates Here are your waste collection weeks until July 2013. There are no changes to your normal collection days.

	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Dec 2012	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
Jan 2013				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
Feb 2013							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
Mar 2013							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Apr 2013			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					
May 2013					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Jun 2013	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							
Jul 2013			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
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### YOUR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR COLLECTION DATES

Please see the table below for details on when your bins will be collected over the Christmas period. Adverse weather: In the event of extreme weather conditions over the winter, there may be some

disruption to the collection schedule. We will communicate any changes through local radio and media outlets as well as on our website and through our smartphone app Binfo (see page 9 for details).

	NORMAL COL	LECTION DAY	<b>REVISED COLLECTION DAY</b>									
GREEN	Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	25 December 26 December 27 December 28 December	Thursday Friday Saturday Monday	27 December 28 December 29 December * 31 December								
GREY	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	31 December 1 January 2 January 3 January 4 January	 Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Monday	2 January 3 January 4 January 5 January * 7 January								
GREEN	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	7 January 8 January 9 January 10 January 11 January	 Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday	8 January 9 January 10 January 11 January 12 January *								

DEVICEN	COLLECTION DAY	
VE A 12ED	COLLECTION DAT	

\* Saturday collections begin from 6am, so please put your bins out the night before if possible.

This magazine is printed on PEFC approved paper from a sustainable and ethically-managed source.

Please remember to recycle it once

vou've read it.

Editor: Shona Ware Sub Editor: Andy Roberts

**T:** 01235 540300 E: communications@southoxon.gov.uk

### Published by

South Oxfordshire District Council, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 8HQ

**Designed & produced by One Ltd T:** 01865 200200 E: hello@oneltd.co.uk

Alternative formats of this publication are available on request. These include large print, Braille, audio cassette or CD, email and alternative languages. Please contact us on 01235 540300.

cember 2012 to the address below for a chance can you find in the word search? Find as many as to win a £20 Amazon voucher, kindly donated by you can and send in your wordsearch by 21 De- Outlook's designers, One Ltd. Good luck!

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Congratulations to Mr K Knight from Woodcote winner of last months Crossword competition. Your Amazon voucher is on its way to you.