**Cllr Robin Bennett – July report**

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**Oxfordshire libraries announce children’s Summer Reading Challenge**

Children across the county are invited to join the Wild World Heroes, Summer Reading Challenge 2021, at Oxfordshire libraries from Saturday 10 July until Saturday 11th September.

The competition encourages children to borrow and read any six library books over the summer. The Summer Reading Challenge is a great way for children to keep up their reading skills and confidence over the summer holidays and prevent the common holiday reading dip.

The challenge is packed full of ideas children can use to care for their environment and inspire them to stand up for the planet. Once they complete the challenge, they will receive a Wild World Heroes certificate and medal. They will also be entered into a prize draw with a falconry experience at Millets Farm with VIP entry, national book tokens and more to be won.

All children need to do is sign up at the library, where they will be given a special collector’s folder to keep a record of their reading journey.

**Pathways to a zero-carbon Oxfordshire**

A key climate action report – [Pathways to a Zero-Carbon Oxfordshire](https://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/news/2021/0629-pathways-to-zero-carbon-oxfordshire.html) – by the University of Oxford’s Environmental Change Institute and Bioregional has been published and welcomed by Oxfordshire County Council.

The county council was one of many organisations involved in commissioning the report as part of its commitment to a zero carbon future, as outlined in the Carbon Action Framework published last October. The council particularly welcomes the importance of the report in providing an evidence base for the transition to zero carbon and the role of partnerships in achieving these goals.

The decade to 2030 is a critical period to accelerate the decarbonisation of our economy. Building on the momentum that has been growing over the last ten years is a huge challenge, as acknowledged in the report. We will review the findings and recommendations in detail with our internal programme board and with our partners around the county so that we continue to respond to this climate emergency with the innovation, determination and dedication that it requires.

**EU settlement scheme update**

The deadline for EU residents in the UK to apply to the EU settlement scheme (or risk losing their right to work and live in the UK) has now passed. The home office says the scheme remains “indefinitely” open - but only if the individual can show they had reasonable grounds for missing the deadline. Late applications may be accepted for an indefinite period where there are reasonable grounds for failing to meet the applicable deadline as laid out in the [EU settlement scheme guidance](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988540/main-euss-guidance-v12.0-gov-uk.pdf).

Caseworkers are instructed to “take a flexible and pragmatic approach to considering, in light of the circumstances of each case, whether there are reasonable grounds for the person’s failure to meet the deadline” and to give applicants ‘the benefit of the doubt’ in considering this. This could include cases where the applicant was unaware of the need to apply to the EU settlement scheme.

If a person is encountered by immigration enforcement after 30 June 2021, and it appears to the office the person would have been eligible for status under the EUSS had they applied by the applicable deadline, the person will be given a written notice giving them 28 days to make a valid application and during this period no enforcement action should be taken.

We would be very grateful for your help in raising awareness of this information with residents and please signpost them to gov.uk for information on how to reply-

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

**Covid statistics**

In the seven days up to 25 June, there were a total of 704 confirmed new COVID-19 cases in Oxfordshire. This is an increase from 422 new cases in the previous week and is equivalent to a weekly rate of 101.8 per 100,000 residents. Cases in the over 60s have decreased from 19 to 15, which is equivalent to a weekly rate of 9.1 per 100,000 residents. You can view the latest figures on our [COVID-19 dashboard](https://phdashboard.oxfordshire.gov.uk/).

**Cases of COVID-19 by district**

|  | Cases in 7 days up to 18/06/21 | Rate per 100,000 population | Cases in 7 days up to  25/06/21 | Rate per 100,000 population |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cherwell | 73 | 48.5 | 140 | 93.0 |
| Oxford | 119 | 78.1 | 275 | 180.4 |
| South Oxfordshire | 99 | 69.7 | 145 | 102.1 |
| Vale of White Horse | 64 | 47.1 | 74 | 54.4 |
| West Oxfordshire | 67 | 60.6 | 70 | 63.3 |
| **Oxfordshire** | **422** | **61.0** | **704** | **101.8** |

Data correct as at 4pm on 29 June.

**Vaccination programme – update**

The vaccination of all adults over the age of 18 continues. Walk-in clinics in Oxford have delivered over 800 first dose COVID-19 vaccinations to people aged 18 or over as part of the ‘grab a jab’ weekend (26/27 June). To date, over 765,500 COVID-19 vaccinations have been delivered in Oxfordshire since the start of the programme.

People who attend a walk-in clinic for their first dose will have their vaccination record updated online and will then be able to book in their second dose appointment using the national booking system.

You can book a vaccination on the [national booking service](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/) (you do not need to wait to be invited) if any of the following apply:

* you’re aged 18 or over
* you’re at high risk from COVID-19 ([clinically extremely vulnerable](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/who-can-get-the-vaccine/))
* you have a condition that puts you at higher risk ([clinically vulnerable](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/who-can-get-the-vaccine/))
* you have a learning disability
* you’re a frontline health or social care worker
* you’re a main carer for someone at high risk from COVID-19.