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| **Title** | District Councillor’s Report |
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| **Parish** | Dorchester on Thames Parish Council |
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**Household support fund**

In South Oxfordshire we have £117,856 of vouchers still available to help residents afford essentials. Do help us to continue to let residents know about the fund and how to apply. The scheme closes at the end of this month (March).

People who are struggling to pay for food, energy, water bills and other related expenses can contact Citizens Advice on 0808 278 7907 / **hsf@osavcab.org.uk** to apply for support.  They will refer all successful applicants to receive vouchers from the councils’ Community Hub.

**135 reception open to the public**
The reception to the District Council offices at 135 Milton Park re-opened to the public this week (Monday 21 February). A reminder that they are open with slightly reduced hours:

Open 9.30am to 12.30pm, closed for lunch and then open again from 1.30pm to 4pm

**A district-wide tree planting drive to help tackle climate change begins in Wallingford.**

South Oxfordshire District Council has granted an application from [Friends of Wallingford and Cholsey Green Spaces](https://www.facebook.com/WallingfordGreenSpaces) to plant trees at Radnor Road and Wilding Road.

The applications are the first to be approved following the launch of the council’s new tree planting policy, which outlines how it will support local tree planting initiatives as well as how it will protect, plant and manage trees on council land.

The Friends have planted approximately 45 trees at Radnor Road, including a community orchard and walnut, sweet chestnut, oak, rowan and hawthorn trees, while a new community orchard on Wilding Road will feature ten apple and plum trees; a hornbeam, oak, field and horse chestnut; and a new hedgerow.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere so this work will play an important role in helping to reduce local emissions. We welcome proposals for planting trees on council land across the district – for more information visit [southoxon.gov.uk/trees](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/trees)

Tackling the climate emergency is a major priority South Oxfordshire District Council which is aiming to become carbon neutral within its own operations by 2025. The council’s new [Climate Action Plan](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/climateaction)outlines the steps it will take to achieve this aim, as well as how it will support local efforts to tackle the climate emergency.  This includes identifying sites for new tree planting and wilding opportunities on council land or through partnership opportunities on privately owned land to support natural carbon capture.

**Second car park to have EV chargers installed – Wallingford**

Work is due to start next week at a second car park in Wallingford as part of the Park and Charge Electric Vehicle charging scheme.The project proposes a total of up to 62 new charging points in car parks across the South Oxfordshire district. Engineers are installing electric chargers at Goldsmith’s Lane car park in Wallingford. All work is due to be completed by the end of March. This project is part of a county-wide scheme to install hundreds of EV charging points in council-owned car parks.

**This week is Food Waste Action Week**

It is estimated the majority of food waste (70 per cent) which is thrown away in the UK comes from households - so we can all do our bit. In South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts it’s estimated that residents put around 700 tonnes of food\*\* into their black bins in one month alone, emitting nearly 150 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e)\*\*\* into the atmosphere. As well as wasting valuable resources, it is estimated the average family of four could save £720\* a year by wasting less food through reducing their food waste.