

Title:	District Cllrs Report	
Chinnor District:	Aston Rowant, Chinnor, Sydenham and Towersey	
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## LRG: Local Government Reorganisation

Following the publication of its White Paper before Christmas, the government asked upper tier authorities (the County Council in our case) to respond with their views on the nature and pace of change. With this in mind, their cabinet met on 9 January and along with the leaders of the other district councils, took the opportunity to set their views on the subject.

The full meeting can be watched [via the Oxfordshire County Council \(OCC\) website](#)

SODC leader emphasised the need to act quickly in order to give residents and businesses confidence that we will continue to deliver excellent services, and; that there was a broad consensus that the footprint of the Strategic Authority should be guided by existing institutions such as the Thames Valley Police or the integrated care board area (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Berkshire West) and that we should make this preference known to government.

A lot of detail about the Strategic Authority and indeed the unitary' s still need to be worked out and agreed upon, but it is our view that we should be looking to work together in a Strategic Authority with those councils in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire who wish to join with us. This is because: these areas all have vibrant economies which will contribute to the sustainable growth which the government is looking for, we have a record of working together in the police and health authorities, we have a shared identity as part of the South East Region, and we have historical connections in that much of South Oxfordshire was in Berkshire prior to the previous local government reorganisation.

## New Performing Arts grant

Our new £60,000 Performing Arts grant scheme will open for applications on **3 February 2025**. The scheme is open to town and parish councils and voluntary and community organisations in South Oxfordshire, who will be able to apply for a minimum of £500 and up to a maximum £5,000 in funding for projects that improve community wellbeing across the district.

The grant scheme closes at midday on **3 March 2025**.

Please do help share our social media messages and this information with your voluntary and community contacts. See [our grants web page](#) for full details including a preview of the application form and guidance document.

Organisations can contact the Community Arts team by emailing [performingartsgrants@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:performingartsgrants@southandvale.gov.uk) for support.

## Warm spaces

Local libraries, leisure centres, and other organisations are providing a warm welcome to communities across South Oxfordshire. If you know of an organisation planning to offer a warm space during the colder months, please do encourage them to [add their details to the website](#).

Better Housing Better Health also have help available to support residents keep warm, stay safe and live well in their homes.

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## Garden waste changes

**We are introducing a new permit scheme for garden waste collections this year.**

To receive garden waste collections from 1 April 2025, residents must purchase an annual permit. This will replace direct debits.

**What residents need to do:**

From late February, visit the council's website [www.southandvale.gov.uk/GardenWastePermit](http://www.southandvale.gov.uk/GardenWastePermit) to make a one-off, annual payment for garden waste collections.

When customers get it in the post, they need to stick the permit to the lid of their brown bin.

Garden waste customers can also sign up for an online account on our website to make things easier when they purchase the next permit in 2026. Anyone who cannot easily sign up for a permit online can call us on 01235 422422 for support.

In February we'll provide town and parish councils with downloadable posters to display locally promoting the new scheme. Visit the [New Garden Waste FAQ page](#) for more information.

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## Litter Picking and Spring Clean collection

If you or groups in your area would like to take part in this year's [Great British Spring Clean](#) (21 March to 6 April), please contact us as soon as possible to confirm when and where you'll be out and about picking litter. We can arrange for the rubbish you pick up to be collected afterwards, however these slots get booked up very quickly – so don't delay!

For lots more info on how to book a collection or reserve litter picking equipment which is available for loan to community groups and individuals, please visit our [litter picking webpage](#).

## Sustainability Action Plan

As part of Energy Saving Week we have put together a guide for community groups, town and parish councils and small businesses looking to take action to improve the sustainability of their organisation. The pages have links to a variety of sources of help, advice and funding for projects plus an action plan template to help get started. [More information available here.](#)

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## Community defibrillator scheme

The British Heart Foundation has recently re-opened their community defibrillator scheme. This scheme allows local community groups to apply and potentially receive a free defibrillator and cabinet which must then be made accessible for use within the local community. More information including how to apply is available on [The British Heart Foundation website](#).

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## Cornerstone

Cornerstone is brimming with fun entertainment for all ages.

[Anti-Valentine's Cabaret](#) on 13 February kicks things off with a dazzling night of lip-syncing, striptease, and comedy that's bold, glamorous, and fabulously unromantic. Then, prepare to be spellbound on 15 February as [James Phelan: The Dreamer](#) brings jaw-dropping illusions and magic to the stage, perfect for all ages.

For creative kids, our [Decorate Your Own Photo Frame](#) workshop during spring half term on 19 February offers a rainbow of materials to craft unique, colourful frames—ideal for showcasing special memories.

Find out more on the [Cornerstone website](#).