

South Oxfordshire DC - 2022/23 Outcomes Report

This update relates to outcomes delivered following the allocation of £500k in the 2022/23 budget to bring forward priority projects. The financial sums are rounded and where used for officer resource, reflect 12 months of activity

1	£60k	<p>1FTE communications and engagement resource focused on climate related projects</p> <p>Examples of activity delivered throughout the year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the climate team to complete the new Action on Climate and Nature section on the website, involving the creation and enhancement of 17 pages. Topics include retrofitting, sustainable travel and the council’s work with partners to enhance biodiversity. • Promotion of the economic development team’s very popular Didcot Eco Fair in November which hosted 37 local businesses involved in the zero waste or the circular economy. • Highlighting of the council’s work to increase the use of EVs, with publicity of the completion of the Park and Charge project across Oxfordshire. • Supporting the new Climate Action Oxfordshire website, led by Oxfordshire County Council, and contributing to the content. e.g) the article entitled 'Making savings not waste at Christmas'. • Delivering a communications campaign to promote National Tree Week 24 Nov to 4 Dec, highlighting how we’re accelerating tree planting through our grants schemes, partnerships, tree planting guide, and policy for planting trees on council-owned land. <p>Current work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting the enhanced information on the council’s website • an internal communications campaign on the new climate change training for staff <p>promoting the council’s new Let It Bee Project which is an extension of last year’s No Mow May trial to increase biodiversity on council land.</p>
2.	£225k	<p>2FTEs climate officer resource and delivery of activity focused on retrofit, delivery of tree and hedge planting, enhancing access and use of blue and green natural assets and supporting local engagement and delivery of the car sharing schemes</p> <p><u>Retrofit</u></p> <p>Officers have worked with Oxfordshire partners to finalise the Pazco Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan, presented to EAG on 12 December, which focuses on retrofit and particularly looking at ways</p>

	<p>to address the skills gap and supply chain issues which are currently affecting the rate at which retrofit can be rolled out.</p> <p>A retrofit options paper for the council has been finalised and was discussed at the CEEAC meeting on 16 January 2023.</p> <p><u>Tree and hedge planting</u> Officers updated the Councils Guide to Planting Trees for Community Groups, and supported a successful application to the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund which allowed the employment of two additional tree officers to deliver new tree and woodland planting throughout the county.</p> <p>A tree planting and meadow creation programme has been designed with support from the Parks team. The tree planting will be delivered at five sites in Didcot and one site in Woodcote in the next 3 months.</p> <p>The team is developing a new partnership project with the Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment (TOE) to develop a small number of biodiversity and tree planting schemes which it will deliver through its existing grant making programme.</p> <p>Officers have been working with the Oxfordshire’s Tree’s Collaborate Group, promoting details of their Garden Tree Giveaway to south Oxfordshire’s residents.</p> <p><u>Access and use of blue and green natural assets</u> A joint application from South Oxfordshire DC and Wallingford Town Council for Bathing Water Status was submitted to Defra on 31/10/22. We are now awaiting the results of the application which are expected in March/April 2023. In the meantime, the project is continuing with the support of volunteers to monitor the river over the winter months and collect data that can be used to highlight water quality issues in the autumn/winter months.</p> <p>Thames Valley Rivers Network (TVRN) – Officers have met with the councils Thames Champion on a number of occasions to look at how best to take forward the work of the TVRN. Following a review by officers, a decision was taken to re-focus this work on working more proactively with pre-existing Catchment Partnerships which collectively cover the whole of the Thames catchment. There are three Catchment partnerships which cover the SODC area, which include the South Chilterns Catchment Partnership, the River Thame Catchment Partnership and the Ock Catchment Partnership. Each of these partnerships has a wide-ranging membership and access to significant resources to enable both practical improvements to the catchments as well as being able to lobby for improvements to water quality. Officers from the Climate and Biodiversity Team are now represented on all three of the partnerships and are looking to take an active role in developing their work in our district.</p>
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3	£50k	<p>Delivery of an active communities grant scheme</p> <p>The Everyone Active grant scheme, which offered up to £1000 for projects that increased residents activity either through gardening, sport or movement, opened in July and closed on 30 September. The whole fund was allocated successfully across 56 projects.</p>
4	£40k	<p>Delivery of additional deep cleans and enhanced maintenance of SODC public toilet sites</p> <p>An additional staff resource was recruited to undertake the deep clean and enhanced maintenance work programme for public toilet sites. This included the redecoration and maintenance work at all South public toilet sites. Further works have been picked up on a reactive basis through regular proactive surveys.</p> <p>New UPVC fascias and soffits have been fitted to Kings Road, Henley and Thame Cattle Market toilets. New LED lighting has been installed at Wallingford and Dorchester, with Goring to be completed this quarter. A deep clean was undertaken at Goring. Unfortunately further progress was hampered by works required to respond to vandalism, breakages and misuse, particularly at Greys Road Henley and Thame Cattle Market. No current change in extent of antisocial behaviour has been reported.</p> <p>The ambulant disabled WC at Greys Road Henley does not have Radar key, but the Space for Change facility does. As future capital schemes are delivered, a mixture of Radar and non-radar access for disabled will be included.</p>
5	£85k	<p>Additional resource to increase deep cleansing work.</p>

		<p>A two-person crew from Biffa started work on 1 June 2022 to undertake additional deep cleansing work across the district. Officers regularly contact all Town and Parish Councils for suggestions on priority locations to visit as part of deep cleansing work, so were able to add additional priority areas for the additional crew to attend to, particularly in the larger towns. Work has been carried out in Didcot, Wallingford, Thame, Watlington and Chalgrove.</p>
6	£5k	<p>Increase promotion and support of litter picking activity</p> <p>The waste team increased work, in conjunction with additional communications officer support (above), to promote The Great British Spring Clean – Keep Britain Tidy campaign. It was promoted on the council’s website and the waste team directly supported several parishes that had events during the period. Work was undertaken to promote and encourage more litter picking groups to form, through local Town and Parish newsletters. The website sets out what equipment we can loan to groups either on a short or long-term basis, and how to arrange for the waste to be collected after an event. Additional equipment was purchased to provide to groups on a longer-term basis.</p> <p>This has raised the profile of the support we can offer communities, for instance over the last quarter we have provided seven sets of litter picking equipment to community litter picking groups. One of these was on a permanent loan basis for ongoing use. The others ranged from bookings of 10 pickers to 60.</p>
7	£10k	<p>Delivery of two green business fairs</p> <p>The Didcot Eco Fair was held at Cornerstone Arts Centre on 5 November. The event attracted 38 exhibitors and was attended by over 800 guests on the day. Traders ranged from those displaying e-vehicles, to environmentally friendly local businesses selling sustainable products, through to the low carbon hub, who offered advice on energy bills. There were also arts, cooking, & storytelling sessions ensuring that the event appealed to families. Post event enquiries revealed that the eco-fair was positively regarded by traders and attendees alike.</p> <p>Partners for the event, Sustainable Didcot, were able to sign up 43 new members on the day, all of whom have since followed up with the group and are now engaged in local sustainability activities.</p> <p>The second fair (badged as the Thame Green Business Expo) is scheduled to take place on 16 March 2023 at Thame Town Hall. The event will be primarily business to business and serves to engage local businesses with sustainability projects in the area. This will include engaging businesses with the Council’s decarbonisation support plans linked to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and training available via our Greentech Partnership. At the time of writing, there are 8 exhibitors registered, and Economic Development Officers are working with Thame Town Council to deliver the event.</p>

