**From:** Communications
**Sent:** 10 December 2020 14:51
**To:** Communications
**Subject:** District council update for towns and parishes in the Vale - 10December 2020

**Vale town and parish update – 10 December 2020**

**Brexit transition**

With Brexit fast approaching, please encourage local businesses, residents and EU citizens in your town or parish to visit the [government’s transition checklist](https://www.gov.uk/transition) which provides a personalised list of actions that people will need to take in preparation.

For businesses it gives guidance on how they will be able to import and export goods from the EU and travel for business.

For residents there’s information on what they’ll need to do if they plan to travel to the EU for a holiday, and for EU citizens wanting to stay in the UK there’s details on how they can apply to the EU Settlement scheme.

**Covid support business grants**

**Local Restrictions Support Grant – for businesses required to close**

Businesses that pay rates and have been required to close due to Covid-19 restrictions can still apply for a Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed Businesses). This includes:

* businesses that haven’t submitted a claim for the most recent lockdown but are now open again
* businesses forced to remain shut due to the restrictions, such as pubs that don’t serve food.

We have so far awarded more than £1 million from this grant.  This includes more than £410,000 to over 250 businesses in the Vale and more than £630,000 to over 370 businesses in South Oxfordshire.

More details can be found at [svbs.co.uk/local-restrictions-support-grant/](https://www.svbs.co.uk/local-restrictions-support-grant/)

**Local Restrictions Support Grant – for open businesses**

This is a new grant for businesses in Tiers 2 or 3 that are open but are still being significantly affected by Covid-19.  We are still awaiting further guidance from government before we can finalise and begin to accept applications – we’ll let you know as soon as we are open for applications.  Businesses are advised to visit [svbs.co.uk](https://www.svbs.co.uk/) where they can sign up to receive the latest updates via email.

**Additional Restrictions Support Grant**

The deadline to apply for the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) has now closed.

Our Business Support team is working hard to process applications as quickly as possible and will confirm individual grant awards as soon as they have completed the required eligibility checks.

While the scheme is closed to new applicants, businesses that have been rejected for the Local Restrictions Support Grant have been invited to submit an application for ARG funding.

**Support during the winter**

We are working with the other Oxfordshire councils to take a countywide approach to delivering funding given to us by government to support families and individuals over the winter period.

In addition to the free school meals offer being administered by the county council, we are working together on new local delivery arrangements to help people to afford food and heat their homes – we anticipate this will launch early in the new year.

Emergency supermarket vouchers are still available through the [Citizens Advice Bureau](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/) and the [Wantage Independent Advice Centre](https://www.wantageadvice.org.uk/).  Fuel assistance is available through agencies such as [National Energy Foundation (NEF)](http://www.nef.org.uk/knowledge-hub/energy-in-the-home/more-ways-to-save-heat-fuel-at-home) and [Fuel Bank Foundation](https://www.fuelbankfoundation.org/), and our [Community Hub](https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/coronavirus-community-support/support-for-people-who-need-help/) arrangements remain in place to support residents and businesses through the Christmas and winter period.

**Christmas Recycling Quiz and Christmas waste information on our website**

We’ve launched a [Christmas-themed recycling quiz](https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/christmasrecyclingbinquiz/) that allows residents to test their knowledge on what to do with festive rubbish and their Christmas leftovers. It’s a fun way to help people deal with all the extra waste at this time of year.

For information on what to do with waste over the Christmas and New Year period, changes to collection days, what to do with extra waste, Christmas trees, and much more visit [whitehorsedc.gov.uk/christmaswaste](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/christmaswaste)

**Covid Compliance marshals coming to a town near you**

Our Covid Compliance marshals are out and about every day in our town centres and villages advising and encouraging people and businesses to comply with the national Covid-19 safety measures.

Here’s where they will be over the next week:

* Wallingford and Didcot on Friday
* Abingdon on Monday
* Thame on Tuesday
* Wantage and Faringdon on Wednesday
* Henley on Thursday

You can find out more about our Covid marshals by visiting - [whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covidmarshals](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covidmarshals)

**Christmas travel**

Government guidance says that people can travel between tiers and UK nations for the purposes of meeting their ‘Christmas bubble’ between the 23 and 27 December – for more information on this please head to the [government website](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers)

If you are planning on travelling by train you can visit [gwr.com/travel-updates/planned-engineering/christmas](http://www.gwr.com/travel-updates/planned-engineering/christmas) to check for planned engineering work.

**Cycle route award**

The Science Vale cycle route from Wantage to Harwell Campus has won “The Green Apple Award for environmental best practices”.  The awards are part of an annual campaign to recognise, reward and promote environmental best practice around the world.

Construction of this route was completed last month, with the exception of a few remaining bollards and signs, which are scheduled to be completed in the next few weeks.

You can find out more about the Oxfordshire Science Vale cycle network on the [County Council website](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/roadworks/major-current-roadworks/science-vale-cycle-network).

Communications

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils

01235 422400

[www.southoxon.gov.uk](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/) | [@southoxon](http://twitter.com/southoxon)

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/) | [@whitehorsedc](http://twitter.com/whitehorsedc)