

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Title | District Councillors' Report |
| Councillors | Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson & Cllr Crispin Topping |
| Parish | Moulsford Parish Council |
| Date | 8 May 2025 |

[Booking link](#) for planning surgeries for town and parish councils

New ArtWeeks exhibition at Cornerstone

Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot will be welcoming local artist Linda Benton to its gallery this May as part of Oxfordshire Artweeks.

Her latest exhibition, Didcot's Oaks (and other notable trees), is a love letter to the leafy giants that shape the town's landscape, along with the stories, poems and wildlife they quietly shelter. From sprawling oaks to characterful corners of woodland, the show invites visitors to see Didcot with fresh eyes.

Linda Benton said: "During lockdown, I really started noticing the trees around Didcot—especially the oaks. I found myself seeking out these beautiful, mature trees tucked away in corners of the town.

"I'm very excited (and a little nervous) to be filling the gallery at Cornerstone with my paintings and illustrations. I hope visitors feel inspired to head out, find these trees for themselves, and come away with a greater appreciation for just how important they are."

The exhibition stems from a collaboration with The Poets' Trail project, which encouraged local writers, both seasoned and spontaneous, to craft poems inspired by the area's trees. Their words sparked a creative response in pencil, ink, oil, and watercolour. The resulting anthology, funded by a legacy from the late East Hagbourne poet Roger Phipps, will be launched alongside the exhibition.

Alongside the new work, visitors can also enjoy illustrations from earlier Poets' Trail anthologies, The Four Seasons and Green Theme, offering a broader glimpse into an evolving relationship with the natural world just beyond Didcot's doorstep.

Cornerstone, which is owned and managed by South Oxfordshire District Council, has been working with Artweeks supporting local artists to exhibit their work for over 15 years. The centre has its own gallery area and showcases art throughout the year, which the public can view for free when they visit, whether they are popping in for a show, class or refreshments in the café.

Didcot's Oaks is free to view in the gallery at Cornerstone Arts Centre from Tuesday 29 April to Saturday 31 May during opening hours. To mark the final day, live music will fill the gallery from 1pm to 3pm.

Whether you're a tree-hugger, a poetry lover, or simply in need of a peaceful wander through painted woods, this exhibition is well worth a look.

For more information, [visit the Cornerstone website](#).

Flowery facelift for Cornerstone courtyard

Cornerstone in Didcot has received a flowery facelift thanks to South Oxfordshire District Council. The area has been transformed with colourful planters increasing the plant life in the area and encouraging more insect life. The planters were installed by South Oxfordshire

District Council using money from the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and contributions from developers.

Volunteers from Didcot Train visited the arts centre on Station Road to help plant up the new planters in the outdoor area on Friday 4 April. The planters also have integrated seating to encourage more social interaction between residents.

The project supports the adopted [Didcot Green Infrastructure Strategy 2024](#) which assesses current green infrastructure in and around the town and provides guidance on expanding the network of green infrastructure across the town and enhancing connectivity between each place.

The Strategy also provides a framework for protecting and improving existing green infrastructure and proposes mechanisms for delivery.

Work to create accessible moorings on the River Thames at Wallingford is now complete

Over £209,000 has been invested in major accessibility improvements at the riverside in Wallingford.

The project has been managed by South Oxfordshire District Council, with the support and eager anticipation of the local volunteer-run charity, Wallingford Accessible Boat Club.

The package of improvements has been designed to be step-free to provide easy access to people of all disabilities and to enhance the whole riverside as an attractive destination for residents, visitors, clubs and river users alike.

Work has covered improvements to the existing access path, roadway, ramp and moorings at the riverside – in addition to the installation of an accessible pontoon designed for river lovers with a disability.

Whilst the facility is available to all, it has been specifically designed to meet the requirements of the Wallingford Accessible Boat Club's wheelyboat, WOW-one, to enable disabled and less mobile people to have equal access to the river. To contact the club for further support or guidance, visit www.wabc.org.uk

To support the Wallingford Accessible Boat Club's activities, the site includes a wheelchair accessible cabin with access to water and electricity. The ambition is to create cheerful artwork on the cabin to brighten up the area.

In a related project, a Changing Places accessible bathroom has also been created at the riverside, next to the existing toilet facilities and is now available for use.

The completion of the work times perfectly with the summer opening of the Riverside site. The popular campsite opened at the beginning of May and the outdoor pool and splash pad will follow later this month.

An experienced civil engineering firm, Greenford Ltd, who are based in Wheatley, completed the work on behalf of the council. The project has been financed by £209,534 of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) money, charged by South Oxfordshire District Council on new development in the district. This refurbishment work follows a £400,000 boost of the onsite wash facilities and a revamp of the splashpads in 2023.

[Riverside Park and Pool](#) are run by GLL on behalf of the council, whilst South Oxfordshire District Council owns and manages the park and moorings at this site.

Find out more about [Wallingford Riverside Meadows here](#).