**District Councillor’s Update for Blockley Parish Council, October 2024**

Residents can contact me, Clare Turner, at Clare.Turner@cotswold.gov.uk
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1. I recently attended the latest meeting of the Cotswold Food Network (which take place three or four times a year). Inspiring to meet with representatives from a range of organisations working hard to address financial inclusion but lots of alarming statistics and experiences were highlighted too. For example, at the start of October, the majority of the money that CDC allocated for discretionary housing payments had been used already, so only a small sum left for the remainder of the financial year, which covers the period most likely to generate hardship related to heating costs.
2. Citizens Advice are launching a 12 month health and well-being pilot programme which aims to get people in the community trained up for early intervention conversations. The idea being to help people before they reach crisis points. Proof of concept will hopefully lead to further funding and roll out.
3. 14 events are planned as part of a HAF (holiday activities and food) legacy project. Locations to be decided and CDC are looking for partners, to work with the CDC team, to deliver this. The events will cover all age groups, not just school-aged children. They are particularly interested in getting residents (participants) to co-produce the events and perhaps volunteer with ongoing activity.
4. In terms of supporting residents, Severy Wye Energy are still operating a programme that covers the Cotswolds. They can conduct home visits to review energy issues, help set up payment plans (and in some cases write off debt) signposting to other services, get residents signed up to the priority register and offer support with acquisition of things like dehumidifiers and secondary glazing.
5. As most people know, winter fuel payments being stopped but there was not enough time for CDC staff to reach out individually to those impacted. Instead, they’ve created a postcard to flag up the change and signpost residents to other support. It will be posted to households in the next few weeks.
6. Public toilets in the Market Square, Stow-on-the-Wold are being retained and the ones in the car park just outside Stow will be closed instead, following a petition being submitted. This serves as a reminder that community action can be effective in influencing decisions.
7. NHS Gloucestershire ICB and Gloucestershire County Council are launching a Community Health and Wellbeing grant scheme which is open to the local VCSE sector in Gloucestershire. I’ll find out more and see if we have any projects which could qualify. The deadline for applications of grants between £10,000 and £20,000 is 11th November.

The scheme aims to invest in local communities to help organisations and groups create the conditions for healthy individuals and communities and is described as “a flexible, light-touch, targeted grant scheme which aims to build community capacity”.

1. The high profile planning enforcement issue in Draycott has progressed, with the planning breach now resolved.
2. A quick reminder of the well-being event in Moreton-in-Marsh on 28th November (community builders encouraging asset based community development) is open to all.
3. A further three fly-tipping prosecutions have been made since we last met.
4. Coming up: I’ll be at the Local Government Association (LGA) Conference next week. Next full council meeting is on 27th November and Overview and Scrutiny meet on 4th November. There will also be a Cost of Living Working Group meeting on November.
5. Don’t forget to nominate “Unsung Heroes” for recognition here: <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/unsungheroes>