

A newsletter from the Borough Councillors for the Test Valley Borough Ward of Mid-Test, Councillors Alison Johnston, Ian Jeffrey, and Stewart MacDonald



## Local Government Reorganisation

As you will already be aware, on 25 March the Government announced their decision for Local Government Reorganisation in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The announcement means Test Valley is set to join Winchester, New Forest and East Hampshire to create a new Mid-Hampshire unitary council, but its communities in Chilworth, Nursling, Rownhams and Valley Park will join South West Hampshire. The map below shows what the makeup of the new councils will be in Hampshire from 1 April 2028.

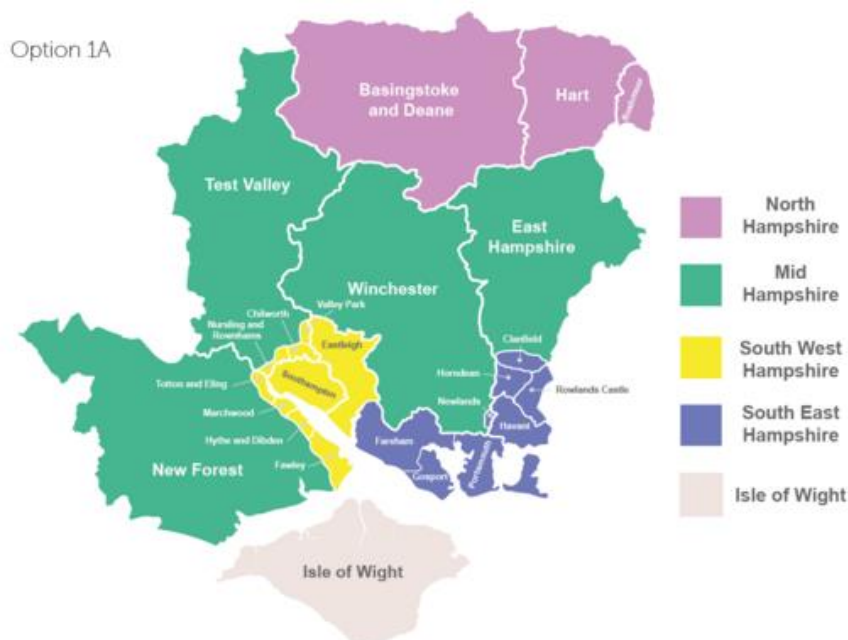
The new unitary authority will replace the existing borough, district and city councils and Hampshire County Council, to create a single layer of councils responsible for all services in their area.

There are also boundary changes affecting Test Valley, New Forest, Winchester and East Hampshire.

Councils will now work together to build the new unitaries and prepare for the Shadow Council elections in May 2027.

Councillors will be kept updated when TVBC receives more information about the process and what changes can be expected.

If you have any further questions then please email [lgr@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:lgr@testvalley.gov.uk).



## Consultation on renewing Public Spaces Protection Orders launched

The Council has launched a public consultation on proposals to extend two existing Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) for a further three years. The orders relate to dog fouling and dog control across the borough, and separate measures to help reduce anti-social behaviour in designated areas.

A PSPO is a legal order under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It helps to protect public spaces by setting reasonable rules that support the safety and wellbeing of local communities. The current orders have been in place since June 2020 and are due to come to an end in June 2026 unless renewed.

The consultation invites residents to share their views on whether the orders should remain in place and, if so, for how long.

## Council Tax

Council Tax bills for 2026/27 have now been sent out. You may have received yours, but if not it will be arriving soon. Below is all the information you need around how to pay your bill, where your money goes and what support is available.

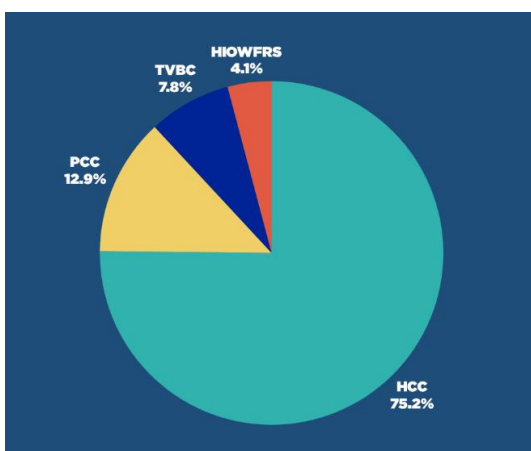
### How much Council Tax am I paying for 2026/27?

The amount of Council Tax you pay depends on what band the property is in, and where it is located.

You can find out what Council Tax band your property is in on the GOV.UK website: [www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands](https://www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands)

For a Band D property, the total bill for 2026/27 will be £2,247.32, excluding parish or town council charges.

This is collected by us and then distributed between the following organisations:



- **Hampshire County Council - £1,690.11** an increase of £80.28 from 2025/26 (4.99% increase)
- **Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire - £290.46** an increase of £15.00 from 2025/26 (5.45% increase)
- **Test Valley Borough Council - £173.91**, an increase of £5.00 from 2025/26 (2.96% increase)
- **Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service - £92.84**, an increase of £5.00 from 2025/26 (5.96% increase)

## How can I pay my Council Tax?

You can pay your Council Tax in a number of ways:

- by direct debit
- debit card
- telephone banking or standing order
- by post via a cheque
- at a post office or pay point outlet (if you have registered for this service with the Council)

Find out more about the options available to you when paying your Council

Tax: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/benefitsandcounciltax/counciltax/paying-bill](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/benefitsandcounciltax/counciltax/paying-bill)

Did you know that you can receive your Council Tax bills by email and manage your Council Tax account online?

Using our online facilities, you can notify us of a change of address, set up or amend direct debit instructions and apply for, or cancel, a single person discount. To register for paperless billing you will need your account reference and online key, both of which are shown on the front of your latest bill.

## What support is available if I'm struggling to pay my Council Tax?

Council Tax support is available to support households on low incomes. There is a national scheme for pension-age households, where household income is compared to an applicable amount (an amount that the government says you need to live on based on your household and your personal circumstances) and there is a local scheme for working-age households which is based on a range of earned income bands.

## Hampshire's Debt: What It Is, What It Isn't, and Why It Matters

You will hear a lot of talk about 'the County Council's Debt' in Hampshire. Here's the simple picture for Hampshire County Council:

### Debt vs Deficit

Debt is long-term borrowing for things like school buildings, roads and care facilities. Deficit is when the annual cost of running services is higher than the annual funding we receive.

Hampshire's financial pressures come from increasing demand and funding issues, not from debt.

### Hampshire's debt is low — and falling

Our external debt is now £153 million, down from £162 million last year. To put that in context: Hampshire's gross budget is £3.3 billion, so our debt is only around 4.6% of total spending. Many councils carry hundreds of millions or even billions in borrowing.

### What we actually borrow for

Hampshire only borrows for long-term capital projects, not day-to-day services. That includes: New SEND units and specialist school places, modern social care facilities, highways and transport improvements. These are assets that last for decades and benefit residents across the county.

### How this investment saves money

Capital investment is one of the few ways we can reduce long-term running costs: SEND units in mainstream schools mean fewer expensive out-of-county placements and lower transport costs. Modern care facilities reduce reliance on high-cost private placements and cut energy and maintenance bills. Better infrastructure prevents costly emergency repairs later. Borrowing for the right projects helps protect the revenue budget year after year. Hampshire is managing its finances responsibly and investing wisely to protect services for the future.

## Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/flooding>

Pavement problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/paving>

Broken or missing signs: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/brokensigns>

Faulty street lights: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/streetlights>

Faded or missing road markings: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/road-markings>

Problems with rights of way:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

## Proposed Development: Land South of Romsey Road

Gladman have now lodged an outline planning application for its proposal for the land south of Romsey Road, next to the Village Hall in West Wellow.

This site (SA27) did appear in Test Valley Borough Council's Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18), but it has not been formally allocated for development. It is also not included in the Wellow Neighbourhood Plan, meaning this remains a speculative application at this stage.

What the developer is proposing: Up to 105 homes, with 40% classed as affordable housing - Vehicular access changes on Buttons Lane - Additional parking for the Village Hall.

Further details are available on the Test Valley planning portal here: <https://view-applications.testvalley.gov.uk/applications>.

## Another successful fly-tipping prosecution for TVBC

A man has been fined more than £1,400 after refusing to cooperate with a fly-tipping investigation in Andover. Firm action will always be taken against this kind of behaviour.

In June last year, waste was dumped illegally on Watery Lane. Evidence led officers to an individual in Andover, who was invited to attend an interview under caution, and was ordered to pay £1,436 in fines, costs and a victim surcharge at Basingstoke Magistrates Court.

## Community Delivery Fund

The Community Delivery Fund continues to support local groups to improve valued community spaces and plan for the future. The first three projects in Awbridge, Ampfield and Goodworth Clatford show how the fund helps communities protect important buildings, upgrade well-used facilities and develop long term plans with confidence.

The fund is designed to be more than a traditional grant scheme. It brings communities and the council together early on, helping groups build strong, evidence led cases for investment and opening the door to other funding opportunities. The aim is to create improvements that are community led, have lasting impact and leave a long-term legacy for people across Test Valley.

Awbridge village hall is set to receive £71,232 to upgrade the village's community hub. The project will extend the hall and kitchen by 50 per cent, improving outdoor facilities.

Just over £22,000 has been awarded to the parish council for essential roof works at Ampfield Village Hall. The works will make the building safer, protect the fabric of the hall and reduce heat loss, lowering running costs and cutting the hall's carbon footprint. This will also enable future sustainable energy options, such as solar panels and heat pumps.

Goodworth Clatford Village Club has been awarded more than £69,000 to replace windows and external doors and refurbish the interior, making the venue warmer, safer and more welcoming. The project follows strong community support, with 180 responses from 332 households, and will help widen participation and strengthen the club's long-term finances.

Councillor Stewart MacDonald, portfolio holder for community led projects, said: "The Community Delivery Fund is about backing local ideas that come from the community. These first three projects show what the fund is here to do. They protect valued buildings, improve facilities that people rely on, and help communities plan for the future with confidence."

# Council Grants

## Climate Change Grant

The Climate Change grant was launched for a second year on 1 April 2026.

The grant is available only to community groups and other not-for-profit organisations for core works to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions of their assets and / or deliver projects to improve community resilience to climate change. Please note businesses are not eligible for this grant.

The types of work that could be funded are outlined in Section 3 of the website: [‘What is an eligible project’](#).

This year, the grant will be split into two application windows:

- The first 6 months, until 30 September 2026, is open only to applicants who did not receive a climate change grant in 2025/26.
- The second 6 months, from 1 October, is open to all eligible organisations.

Applicants are able to apply for a grant of up to £10,000 towards a project. Match funding of 20% of the total cost of the project will be required for grants of £5,000 or more. A minimum of £250 will be set for grant applications.

We encourage all eligible organisations to apply for the grant and are asking Councillors to promote the grant in their areas.

For further information please follow [Climate Change Grant | Test Valley Borough Council](#), which will provide step by step guidance, planning requirements, and FAQs.

# Other News

## Award-winning bakery expands with new kiosk at Andover Bus Station



Something exciting is brewing in Andover town centre as award-winning bakery and coffee shop *The Travelling Cupcake* prepares to open a new kiosk at Andover Bus Station.

The much-loved business, known for its handcrafted bakes, house-made gelato and speciality coffee, took on the kiosk from 1 April. The new kiosk is their second town centre premises and will offer a “bakehouse-style” experience, with an expanded range of savoury options appearing alongside the sweet treats already enjoyed by many in the town.

## What's On?

### Mottisfont

Mottisfont has a range of family-friendly events, including seasonal trails, outdoor activities and opportunities to explore the gardens and estate as spring gets underway. Visitors can enjoy time outdoors, take part in self-led activities.

Full event listings and booking information are available on the National Trust website: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/hampshire/mottisfont/events>



### Cholderton Rare Breeds Farm

Cholderton has spring events, with family-friendly activities including animal encounters, trails and outdoor play across the farm. Visitors can enjoy seasonal events alongside the farm's usual attractions. Full details and booking information are available on the Cholderton Rare Breeds Farm website:

<https://choldertonrarebreedsfarm.com/events/>



### Sir Harold Hillier Gardens

Has a programme of family-friendly events including self-guided trails, seasonal activities and opportunities to explore the gardens as summer approaches. Visitors can enjoy time outdoors alongside exhibitions and hands-on activities.

Full event listings and booking information are available on their website: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/thingstodo/hilliergardens>



### Hawk Conservancy Trust

has a range of family-friendly activities. Visitors can explore the site, learn more about birds of prey and enjoy time outdoors

. Full details and booking information are available on their website: <https://www.hawk-conservancy.org/>



## The Army Flying Museum

The Army Flying Museum in Middle Wallop offers a family-friendly day out, with interactive displays and exhibitions exploring the history of British Army aviation. Visitors can explore the museum at their own pace and take part in activities and events running throughout the year, making it a good option for an educational day out.

Full details, opening times and event information are available on the Army Flying Museum website: <https://www.armyflying.com/>



## Romsey Signal Box

The Signal Box is open on **selected days** offering visitors a chance to step inside a restored railway signal box and learn more about local rail history. It's a small, engaging attraction in Romsey.

Opening dates, times and visitor information are available on the Romsey Signal Box website: <https://romseysignalbox.org.uk/visit-us/>



## Andover Museum and the Museum of the Iron Age

The museum offers a family-friendly day out focused on the history of the town and surrounding area. Visitors can explore the galleries at their own pace and enjoy a programme of seasonal activities and exhibitions.

Full opening details and event information are available on the Hampshire Cultural Trust website: <https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/andover-museum>

## Defibrillators for public use are located at:

Stockbridge Recreation Ground (24 hours)  
Stockbridge Fire Station (available 24 hours)  
Longstock Village Hall (available 24 hours)  
Leckford Estate Office (restricted hours)  
Leckford Farm Shop (restricted hours)  
Up Somborne Rookley Farm (24 hours)  
King's Somborne Village Hall  
King's Somborne – The Crown Inn (available 24 hours on front wall of pub)  
Over Wallop - the White Hart pub, Pinchbecks Garage and the Army Flying Museum.  
Nether Wallop -Village Hall and the Pavilion on the playing fields.  
Broughton Village Hall  
Mottisfont Social Club  
Ashley- Ashley Farm (24 hours)  
Lockerley - Outside the main door at the Lockerley and East Dean Memorial Hall. SO51 0JG  
Lockerley - Outside the door of Lockerley Stores on Lockerley Green. SO51 0JN  
East Tytherley – outside the entrance to the farm.

Instructions for use are given when the device is commandeered.

In the event of an emergency, after dialling 999 to report the incident, the phone operative should give the access code for the cabinet, to the person/first aider using the device.

### Contact:

If there are any issues in this copy that you would like to discuss, or any items of news that you would like to be considered in a future copy please contact any of the Borough councillors



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