

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATES

June 2023

**Andover West**

**CLlr Chris Donnelly**



Please find below an outline of current programmes of work and public information from Hampshire County Council. I hope that this is useful.

If you have any further questions, then please don't hesitate to contact me at [cllrc.donnelly@hants.gov.uk](mailto:cllrc.donnelly@hants.gov.uk)

Kind regards

Chris

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## **Cost of living support**

Hampshire County Council has announced plans for how £14.2million of additional funding will be used to help local households struggling with the cost of food and energy prices. The funding is an extension of Government's Household Support Fund (HSF) until the end of March 2024. They will continue to work closely with other local organisations including district and borough councils, education settings, charities and neighbourhood groups to ensure that eligible households receive support with food, energy and water bills and assistance with essential household items. This includes up to £200,000 of funding to provide locally-based food and energy advice services, alongside practical help with costs.

The funding allocation includes:

- £800,000 to support the community pantry network and £361,000 for organisations supporting unpaid carers
- £800,000 in community grants for locally based organisations to support local residents
- £4,442,870 to district and borough councils to provide food vouchers and support with exceptional housing costs
- £2,845,622 to schools and other educational establishments to offer support at their own discretion to families most in need
- £460,000 in direct fuel support to vulnerable adults
- £715,000 in food vouchers to foster carers and connected carers

Details of how to seek support can be found at the [connect4communities](https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/connectforcommunities) website <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/connectforcommunities>

## Greening campaigns

More communities across Hampshire can be empowered to take positive action on climate change over the next three years, thanks to almost £0.5million of National Lottery funding awarded to the Greening Campaign, with support from Hampshire County Council. This could include improving the energy efficiency of people's homes, reducing CO2, reducing waste, reusing and repairing, being more sustainable through locally grown produce, and providing green spaces for wildlife to thrive.

The Greening Campaign is a structured process, guiding communities to act on climate change and biodiversity locally. Guidance, based on experience gained from working with over 200 other groups across the UK, provides a blueprint for success for each step of the way, starting with motivating people in the community to get involved, through to making it fun and rewarding.

Two events are being held for those wanting to know more - on 12th and 15th June. Information or booking at <https://greening-campaign.org/events/>

## Resurfacing works

Artists Way and Redon Way in Andover have now had permanent patching and resurfacing work completed.

## Digging for Victory!

Thank you to Cllr Jim Neal (Penton Grafton & TVBC) for teaming up to dig out blocked drains in Weyhill before the rain comes. This has now removed a notorious flood.



## Fostering campaign

A new campaign has been launched by Hampshire County Council to encourage residents to consider fostering an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child, whose numbers are increasing locally and nationally. Fostering one of these children can be extremely rewarding – by being a positive and enabling presence to support them to access education, stability in everyday life and to become settled into a new culture and country. More information can be found at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/uasc>.

As an alternative to fostering, residents can join the Council's Innovation Volunteers service, which supports local children, young people and families overcome challenges - details can be found at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/innovationvolunteers>

## New support for buses

Operators of nine bus routes have secured funding totalling £3.5m from Hampshire County Council, protecting their services for the next four years. Buses locally are under pressure with bus passenger numbers locally and nationally still below pre-pandemic levels. This is making it more challenging for the operators to deliver viable services, especially when coupled with increased operating costs and driver shortages. However, the Government has extended the £2 bus fare cap to the end of October 2023, rising to just £2.50 until November 2024, so this is very much an affordable way to travel when services are available.

## Rural verge cutting

Hampshire Highways have now begun their seasonal grass cutting programme. This can be an emotive subject to many, especially in the nesting season. The department work closely with the conservation charity, Plantlife UK, to ensure that their work promotes biodiversity; in particular, they try to avoid cutting grass at ecologically important times, and particularly at sensitive sites. For safety reasons however, there are some locations where roadside grass still needs to be mown in order to maintain adequate visibility and sight lines, for example on the approaches to roundabouts or at junctions. More information can be found at the following link on our website; <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/grasscutting>

## Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan consultation

The consultation on the update to the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan closed at the end of January this year. The summary report on the responses can be seen at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/strategic-planning/hampshire-minerals-waste-plan/minerals-waste-plan-partial-update-consultation> . These responses are being considered and the next stage is for the Minerals and Waste Authority to publish a response.

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens Christmas Lights

Good news if you enjoyed the light-up trail at Sir Harold Hillier Gardens last December. The experience is returning this year between November 30th and December 31st.

Tickets are available here: <https://www.lightuptrails.com/.../light-up-hillier-gardens>

There is an offer of 10% off for the first 1,000 tickets sold. Details on the poster below. Hard to think of cold mid-winter nights and Christmas just now, but worth booking, they were fantastic last year.

## Effect of voter ID in Test Valley

The big change with this year's local elections was of course the introduction of the requirement to show photo ID to vote.

On election day I visited our local polling stations and only found one instance of someone forgetting their ID, who subsequently returned and successfully voted.

The polling clerks reported no problems with the new system, everyone had been prepared and had brought photo ID or voter authority certificates with them.

This anecdotal response seems to be borne out by the official figures from election day:  
"Data shows most electors voting in the borough met newly introduced voter ID requirements.

Figures show that across Test Valley Borough Council, 21,789 electors voted in person at our 95 polling stations on 4 May 2023.

By the end of polling day, 52 electors who had tried to vote in a polling station had not been given a ballot paper because they did not meet the new voter ID requirements (0.2%). This equates to 0.1% of the entire turnout for the elections which was 33,916 votes cast, including postal votes.

The figures also show while 127 electors were initially turned away, 75 returned with acceptable ID and were able to vote.

The Electoral Commission is collecting data from all local authorities across England who held elections on 4 May. It will publish an initial assessment of the voter ID requirement in June and a full evaluation of the local elections in autumn."

Whilst it is disappointing that any elector was turned away, the Returning Officer had to comply with the new legislation introduced for polls from 4 May 2023. These figures demonstrate that the vast majority of electors who came to our polling stations were aware of the new ID requirements and were able to cast their vote.

### **Community Collective Energy Fixed Deal**

Hampshire County Council have worked with a green energy supplier to offer a collective energy fixed deal switch.

HCC have teamed up with iChoose to offer Hampshire residents the chance to be part of a collective energy fixed deal switch.

Register today for free, without obligation, and you could benefit from the power of group buying to lower your energy bills, gain the certainty of a fixed deal, and help reduce #ClimateChange

Once residents receive their personal quotation – from 4 July – they can decide if it's right for them.

Find out more <https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../wha.../projects/energyswitching>

### **Support for Nursery Education for 2 year olds**

Local children could receive funded early years education in an approved nursery, pre-school or with a childminder the term after they turn 2 years old.

Families may be eligible if they have a low income or are unemployed, or if their child:

- Has been in care and/or adopted;
- Has a current statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan
- Receives Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

For more information or to check eligibility, apply online at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../freechildcare/2yearoldoffer> or speak to your childcare provider.

### **Access Hampshire's Parish Registers online for free**

Discover your Hampshire roots with millions of historical records now available online through our partnership with Ancestry!

From prominent figures like Florence Nightingale and Jane Austen to quirky insights into history, these records offer a fascinating look into the past. Hampshire residents can access Ancestry® for free through public libraries and Winchester's Record Office.

Read more at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../20230526HistoricRecordsAncestry>

## Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

Missing or damaged signs:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/brokensigns>

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

Pavement problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

Problems with rights of way:

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

**When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do please forward that message to me and I will chase for you.**