



Andover wins big with £18.3m awarded for new theatre, cultural hub and accelerated town centre redevelopment!

Andover has been awarded £18.3m from round three of the government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF), to build a multi-purpose theatre and cultural hub in the heart of the town.

The new venue will replace The Lights with a larger theatre and space for cultural and creative activities.

The funding allocated to Andover means the council can accelerate the plan to transform the town centre - bringing more businesses, shops and homes into the heart of Andover.



An example of what the new theatre and cultural hub could look like, but it's not a detailed design. That will now be worked up in advance of a planning application.

The masterplan, to which more than 4,000 residents, businesses and stakeholders contributed, will see the creation of the theatre and cultural hub run alongside the development of the Western Avenue Riverside Walk, to which £6.5M of council funds were allocated earlier this year, which included £1m in developer contributions from Hampshire County Council (HCC).



The Western Avenue Riverside Walk development was allocated money earlier this year

The new venue will be situated at the entrance of the Chantry Centre, opposite the Guildhall, and feature a brand-new theatre auditorium, as well as modern spaces to host a variety of events and creative classes that currently take place in The Lights, which it will replace. With Andover bus station and the Chantry Centre car park just a short walk away, it will have High Street shops, cafes and restaurants on the doorstep and with the green backdrop of Riverside Park.

The theatre and cultural hub will transform and revitalise the space, introducing an evening economy, offering more cultural activities and events, and supporting businesses in the town.

Leader of the council, Councillor Phil North, said: "This is absolutely amazing news for Andover and will be transformational for the town - enabling us to accelerate the masterplan. It's the result of a lot of hard work in putting our bid together and making the case with central government. My huge thanks to our Member of Parliament, Kit Malthouse, who led the charge in Westminster. We wouldn't have got the money without his strong advocacy and unwavering desire to get it over the line.

"Our efforts in developing a cultural programme of events and progressing with other aspects of our town's redevelopment clearly show that Andover is a place that is ready to move forward. We have a huge amount of experience in running a successful theatre with creative spaces, and the new venue in the centre of town will become an invaluable asset for the local community."

Kit Malthouse MP said: "I was so enthusiastic about the council's brilliant masterplan that I was determined to do everything I could to get their bid over the line, and I'm so pleased that Andover has won this massive amount of money. It will make a huge difference to our town and is exactly the catalyst we need to start the much-needed reinvention of Andover town centre. Phil North and his team have shown exceptional leadership and vision, and they really deserve this win."



More updates about the town's regeneration can be found at www.thinkandover.co.uk.

Community Asset Fund opens for applications

Test Valley Borough Council's Community Asset Fund opens on Monday 13 November, offering not-for-profit, charitable community groups and organisations grants of up to £25,000 for projects which either provide new, or enhance existing, community assets and facilities.

The fund will close at 11:59pm on Sunday 14 January 2024.

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact their Community Engagement Officer in the first instance for guidance on what makes a good application - www.testvalley.gov.uk/ceofficers.

Council grant helps provide art engagement activities for families



An arts charity that encourages community connection and possibilities through art has benefited from a £500 councillor community grant.

The money was used by Chapel Arts Studios (CAS) in Andover, alongside Arts Council funding, towards running a community engagement activity with families from across the borough.

Council grant has sewing group sitting pretty

A Councillor Community Grant from Test Valley Borough Council has enabled a local sewing group to make their sessions more comfortable with a brand new set of cushions.

The Thursday Sewing Group are a group of 16 retired women that meet at Nursling & Rownhams Village Hall on the second Thursday of each month to sew, knit, crochet and socialise. They have been meeting for the last nine years apart from the lockdown period in 2020.



Start-up business awarded £750 grant



Local dog care business Boardwalk in Barton Stacey have been awarded a £750 Business Incentive Grant from Test Valley Borough Council.

Owner Debbie Sturgess set up Boardwalk, which offers dog walking, day care and home boarding, as a change of career after 15 years working as a teaching assistant.

Test Valley Lettings holding open day for potential landlords

Test Valley Lettings is Test Valley Borough Council's in-house, letting agency. The agency offers landlords a no fee hassle-free tenancy service, and is looking for landlords to help secure homes for local households in need

Test Valley Lettings is hosting an open day for new and existing landlords, on 30 November in Andover

testvalley.gov.uk/housing/test-valley-lettings

Test Valley Association of Parish and Town Councils meeting

The meeting was held on Thursday 23 November at Longstock Village Hall.

The meeting included presentations/workshops on the following:

Rikki Noble from Hampshire Fire and Rescue
Fire Safety presentation

Community Planning Toolkit workshop

Free training on Domestic Abuse for councillors

In partnership with the Hampshire Domestic Abuse Partnership, Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) are hosting a range of domestic abused themed training in November. These fully funded multi-agency events are free for councillors on a first come, first served basis.

www.womensaid.org.uk Tel. 0808 2000 247

Other News

Watch live sculpting of new statue of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



The latest opportunity to see progress on the statues of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, commissioned by Test Valley Borough Council, took place on the 18 & 19 of November.

Local sculptor and portrait artist Amy Goodman was commissioned by the council to create two life-size sculptures of Queen Elizabeth II which will be sited in Andover and Romsey.

Test Valley's Big Band Buffet strikes the right notes

"Lovely people, lovely food and lovely music. I spoke to everyone on all the stalls so learned a lot, and everyone was so helpful, thank you." is how one attendee from Andover described the Big Band Buffet, held at Test Valley School in Stockbridge, which has once again proved to be a major hit with residents.



The purpose of the annual event is to support older and vulnerable people in the community to stay safe and well, whilst enjoying themselves and reducing the risks of isolation this winter.

The money was used by Chapel Arts Studios (CAS), alongside Arts Council funding, towards running art workshops with families from across the borough.

Covert camera catches fly-tipper in the act at Romsey hotspot

A covert camera placed by Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) at a fly-tipping hotspot in Romsey has resulted in another conviction.

Yevhen Topolnytsky, 36, from Southampton, was pictured removing waste from his vehicle and leaving it in on Lee Lane on 7 April 2023.

Warmer Homes Scheme

The Warmer Homes scheme aims to raise the energy efficiency of low-income and low energy performance homes. Home owners can apply for full funded energy efficiency measures like insulation, solar panels, or an air source heat pump.

The organisers of Warmer Homes are sending out around 4000 letters to residents who may benefit from applying.

For more information visit [What is the Warmer Homes Programme? | Warmer Homes](#) or ontact the housing team.

testvalley.gov.uk/housingandenvironmentalhealth/housing

Latest News from Unity



Demand responsive transport service survey

Unity are trying to determine the level of demand for a fully 'on demand transport service' for the community, using two 16-seat minibuses. Both would be fully wheelchair accessible.

It would work very much like an Uber minibus service that will pick you up and drop off multiple people at a time, all within or close to the Test Valley area, People would be able to book in advance or on the same day and the specialised software would organise the most effective route for the vehicle and update the passenger on their collection time.

We would have one bus covering the south of the Test Valley and one in the North with the cut-off being probably Kings Somborne. They would both run between the hours of 8.30 and 5pm Monday to Friday

If you would like to take part in the survey, please visit the web site below or contact Unity on the phone number below.

unityonline.org.uk Tel. 0330 4004 116

A Defibrillator Near You

Defibrillators for public use are located at:

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)

Instructions for use are given when the device is commandeered but for anyone who would like prior understanding of how to use one, see

<https://www.aeddonate.org.uk/events/>

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 below.

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