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



Full Council Motion – Land Banking and "A Drain on the Nation" report

The Government has promised to increase the number of houses built in the country. Local Government has pointed out that the number of planning permissions approved does not equal the number of houses built. Developers have been holding on to approved permissions in the hope of increasing the value of their land assets – “land banking”. Following a Test Valley Borough Council Motion on the [15 October 2025](#) it was resolved that the Council would write to the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government on the proposals to reduce “land banking”, including incentives and penalties to encourage delivery, including on brownfield sites, and to respond to the Home Builders Federations report, “A Drain on the Nation”.

Local Government Association

Safer Canvassing for Councillors 5 March 2026 | Virtual event

With elections fast approaching in May 2026, many councillors will be out on the doorstep in the coming months. While canvassing is a vital way of seeking support and talking to residents about their priorities and concerns, it can also expose councillors to a risk of abuse, intimidation and threats.

This practical programme, funded by UK Government, will provide attendees with an awareness of steps that can be taken to ensure that canvassing is safe, enjoyable and productive for everyone taking part, including how to plan a session, situational awareness, warning signs to be aware of and ensuring the whole group is safe.

Council Grants

Rural Business and Community Enterprise Fund

Grants of £1,000 to £10,000 to help rural enterprises and community organisations to deliver commercial services that benefit local communities are available until March 2027.

What can the grant be used for?

- Refurbishing or equipping rural pubs, shops, or social clubs.
- Community organisations starting or expanding commercial ventures, such as business hubs or childcare facilities.

- Social clubs in rural areas seeking to refurbish, buy equipment or train staff.
- A commercial sports club in a rural area.
- Farms looking to diversify.
- Traditional rural businesses investing in equipment or training.

Applicants must provide at least 20% of project costs, with the fund covering up to 80%. All applications will be assessed against criteria including evidence of need, anticipated impact and sustainability, value for money and contribution to net zero objectives.

Find out more and apply:

www.testvalley.gov.uk/business/businessgrantsupport/grantsandfunding/rural-business-and-community-enterprise-fund

Other News

Shipping container removed from protected land in Romsey



Test Valley Borough Council took successful direct action in Romsey last week by removing a large shipping container and its contents from land located next to Nightingale Pharmacy in Romsey, which is covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

An enforcement notice was first issued in June 2023, but it took 19 months to wait for the outcome of an appeal which was finally dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. The Council was then able to obtain a Court warrant to allow them to

carry out the work when the requirements of the notice were not met by the landowner.

Once everything was in place, the removal itself took less than ten minutes thanks to careful planning and skilled on-site work. Most importantly, the team completed the job without causing any damage to the protected trees.

The container and its contents will now be stored for 28 days. If the owner doesn't come forward during that time, TVBC will dispose of or sell the items, in line with their procedures.

This was a great example of teams across the Council working together. The legal team supported the planning enforcement process, while colleagues from environmental services helped with opening the container and managing traffic to keep the area safe.

It's a strong result that shows how committed the Council are to protecting the environment and acting when rules are broken.

Man sentenced after dumping household waste in King's Somborne



A man has been ordered to complete unpaid work and pay more than £1,000 after admitting to dumping household waste along a rural lane in King's Somborne.

The Council received reports about a fly-tip across several locations on Eldon Road, which consisted of bagged and loose household waste.

Evidence within the waste led officers to a resident who informed the council she had paid Leighton Smith, 22, of Southampton, to remove her rubbish.

Appearing at Southampton Magistrates Court on 21 January 2026, Smith received a 12-month community order, requiring him to complete ten rehabilitation activity requirement days and 80 hours of unpaid work. He must also pay £950 in costs and a £114 victim surcharge, totalling £1,064

Councillor David Drew, portfolio holder for recycling and environmental services at Test Valley Borough Council, said:

"Fly-tipping damages our borough and our natural spaces. It leaves a mess behind, wastes public money, and it has no place in our communities. We'll carry on taking firm action against anyone who chooses to dump waste here. We're pleased with the outcome of this case, and we'll continue to take action against anyone who thinks it's okay to dump waste in our borough."

"It's also important residents know who is taking their waste away and where it is going if they are paying somebody to do so. You also have a duty of care to check they are licensed before they take the waste away or you could also face a punishment."

Man fined after failing to cooperate with Fly Tipping Investigation



A man has been ordered to pay more than £1,400 after failing to comply with a legal notice linked to a fly tipping investigation in Andover.

On 23 June 2025, a quantity of waste was discovered unlawfully dumped on Watery Lane. Information within the fly-tip led officers to Oliver Poulton, from Andover.

Poulton was invited to attend an interview under caution but failed to do so. Officers then served a formal Notice under Section 108 of the Environment Act 1995, requiring him to attend a further interview. Despite being properly served and given reasonable opportunity to attend, Poulton again failed to engage and did not offer any explanation or request a new date.

Appearing at Basingstoke Magistrates Court on 10 February 2026, Poulton pleaded guilty and was given a £500 fine, along with a £200 victim surcharge and £736 in costs, bringing the total to £1,436.

Councillor David Drew, portfolio holder for recycling and environmental services at Test Valley Borough Council, said,

“When people choose not to engage with our investigations, it slows us down and puts extra pressure on the teams who work hard to protect our environment. Fly tipping and the issues linked to it impact everyone. We rely on residents to cooperate so we can gather the facts quickly and deal with offences fairly and effectively. Our communities expect us to tackle waste crime, and cases like this show that we’ll continue to follow through when someone doesn’t meet their responsibilities. We want Test Valley to remain a clean, safe and welcoming place, and we’ll keep taking firm but fair action to make sure that happens.”

Fly Tipping on the Ashley Straight Road towards King’s Somborne



This fly tip took place very recently near King’s Somborne.

Please help us by reporting anything that might help in catching the people who continue to offload their unwanted goods. The Council takes fly tipping very seriously.

Residents can report fly tipping online at www.testvalley.gov.uk/fly-tipping

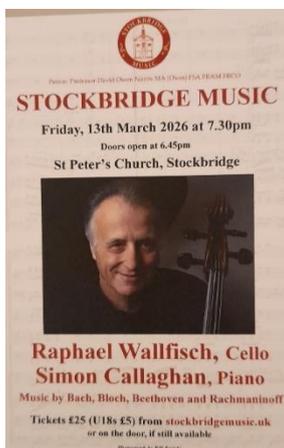
A303 and A34 Litter Picking

The Council’s contractor, Core Highways Ltd, will continue clearing the litter from the borough’s A303 and A34 verges, laybys and slip roads.

Mobile traffic management will be deployed to ensure that working on verges and slip roads is safe.

The work takes place during the day which will ensure the quality of the clearance and will be monitored and signed off by the Environmental Service.

Stockbridge Music



Friday, 13th March at 7.30pm St Peter’s Church, Stockbridge,,

Concert by Raphael Wallfisch, Cello with Simon Callaghan, Piano.

Music by Bach, Bloch, Beethoven and Rachmaninoff

Tickets £25 (under 18s £5) from: Stockbridgemusic.uk
Or at the door if still available.

There are still a few seats available, so don’t delay!

Stockbridge Community Cinema

March screenings

25 March 4.45pm and 7.30pm

The Friend

New York City writer Iris finds her comfortable, solitary life thrown into disarray after her closest friend and mentor bequeaths her a Great Dane named Apollo. The huge dog immediately creates practical problems for Iris, from furniture destruction to eviction notices, as well as more existential ones. Yet, as Iris finds herself unexpectedly bonding with Apollo, she begins to come to terms with her past, and her own inner life.

29 March 7.30pm

The Ballad of Wallis Island (12A)

Charles, an eccentric lottery winner who lives on a remote island dreams of getting his favourite musical duo, Mortimer-McGwyer, back together. His fantasy quickly turns into reality when the band mates, and former lovers accept his invitation to play a private show at his home on Wallis Island. Old tensions resurface as Charles tries desperately to salvage his dream gig.

King's Somborne Community Cinema

March Screenings

12 March

Roof Man (15) 7.30 pm

Actor: Channing Tatum, Kirsten Dunston, Keith Stanfeld
Comedy, Crime, Romance.

28 March

The Audience (12A) 7.30 pm

Actor: Edward Fox, Helen Mirren, Paul Ritter

Biography, Drama

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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