

A very Happy Christmas to Everyone!



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



Residents urged to have their say on local government reorganisation

The government has launched a public consultation on four proposals for local government reorganisation in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

A group of 11 councils from across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, including Test Valley Borough Council, made a submission to government in September for a five-unitary council model. Our preferred version of this proposal, Option 1, would see Test Valley come together with the New Forest, Winchester and East Hampshire to form a new Mid Hampshire Council. We feel this is the best fit for our area to keep services local and deliver at least £63.9m a year of savings. This is in line with the government's guidance that new councils should have an average population size of circa 500,000 people.

Have your say!

Your councils are changing,
the government is consulting on the size and shape of
new councils across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight



Hampshire County Council and East Hampshire District Council have made a separate proposal for four unitary councils. Under this proposal Test Valley communities would be included in a new council with Southampton, Eastleigh and the New Forest.

A hard copy of the government's consultation document and the proposals will also be available for view at each of the [county's 40 libraries](#) from next week.

The consultation closes on 11 January 2026.

21st Century Councillor event

On Tuesday (4 November) we were very proud to host an event to launch INLOGOV's (Birmingham University) revamped 21st Century Councillor document. Representatives from national organisations such as the LGA, INLOGOV, LGIU, and the Local Government Chronicle were in attendance alongside councillors from a number of local authorities.

The event, held at the Andover Community Church, looked at what it means to be a councillor in the 21st Century. Participants discussed the changing role of councillors through a series of workshops and presentations.

A full report from the event will be available soon. A big thank you to all the TVBC councillors who attended.

Local Plan Development Proposals

Developers are exploring an alternative proposal to the proposed allocation of land adjacent to Danebury School in Test Valley Borough Council's Regulation 18 draft local plan.

The alternative site being explored by the developer incorporates what is known as the 'D' field. This site also lies across an historically sensitive landscape. It is home to ancient agricultural terraces (lynchets)

The Pan Parish group (parishes of Longstock, Houghton and Stockbridge) are monitoring developments and will provide guidance on how residents can participate in Regulation 19 responses.

Your support is vital and your involvement matters!

For more information see: <https://www.panparishplanningforum.org.uk>

Southern Water Exercise 12th November at Hunts Farm

Southern Water held an exercise on Wednesday 12 November at the Hunts Farm leisure facility in Timsbury setting up a bottled water distribution site such as might be expected in the event of a water outage to practice the establishment of a water distribution site.

Councillors have been working with Southern Water to look at how bottled water could be more effectively distributed at a local level in the event of a water shortage by liaising with local communities with a view to identifying smaller community sites which will reduce and hopefully in the future remove the need for larger sites. Southern Water are testing their ability to bring support closer to residents in Test Valley through the likes of Hunts Farm.

Water infrastructure and the draft Local Plan

Through engagement on the draft Local Plan over the summer, there was an increased interest about the implications of development on water infrastructure capacity and the knock-on effects on the environment. A note which provides information in relation to water resources and supply, wastewater, and surface water has been prepared for councillors to provide a high-level overview on the relationship between water infrastructure and the local plan.

Discover future plans for the South of Romsey Town Centre



We have shared updated plans for the future of the South of Romsey Town Centre – a key gateway into Romsey that includes the area around Crosfield Hall and the bus station.

The plans have been shaped by years of community input, including two Citizens' Assemblies, public consultations, and design workshops.

At the heart of the plans is a new community facility and extra car parking, which is designed to meet Romsey's needs now and in the future.

TVBC has launched a new online platform which sets out: the journey so far, the options explored and why, and the preferred proposal and what happens next;

Visit <https://testvalley.govocal.com/en-GB/projects/sortc-introduction> to view the plans and share ideas or concerns about what you want the council to consider when they move into the designing phase.

Report to Support: new homelessness campaign launched



"Rough sleeping affects our community. Together, we can change it."

Those are the words of Test Valley Borough Council's housing cabinet member, Kirsty North, as we urge communities to 'Report to Support' people sleeping rough and launches a new campaign.

The campaign aims to get help to individuals who are sleeping on the streets as quickly as possible. The council is asking people to remember where, when, who:

- **Where** were they – provide their specific location if possible, ideally using What3words
- **When** did you see them – time and date
- **Who** did you see – provide a description

You can then log the information via Streetlink at www.thestreetlink.org.uk, enabling the council's housing team to track people down swiftly to offer support and assistance.

Council Grants

Test Valley communities benefiting from climate change grants



Test Valley Borough Council's new Climate Change Grant is helping a number of communities across the borough to deliver sustainability projects.

Ampfield Parish Council, Sherfield English Village Hall Trust, and Woodley Village Hall have each been awarded £10,000 to help deliver solar panels and battery storage. These upgrades will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by generating

renewable energy and help save on energy bills.

The Climate Change Grant is open to community groups and not-for-profit organisations across Test Valley. Grants of up to £10,000 are available, with 20% match funding required for applications of £5,000 or more. Projects must demonstrate how they will reduce greenhouse gas emissions or improve community resilience to climate change.

Applications are open until 31 December 2025, or until the funding is fully allocated. Interested groups are encouraged to read the guidance and contact the council's Climate Change team to discuss their project before applying.

Last chance to claim your golden ticket!



If you've found a golden ticket in your food waste caddy, now's the time to come forward.

Golden ticket winners will choose a special prize to celebrate our brand new collection service.

New grant launched to help communities prepare for emergencies

Test Valley Borough Council has launched a new Community Resilience Grant to help local communities plan ahead and strengthen their ability to respond to emergencies. From flooding and power cuts to extreme weather and other unexpected events, the fund is designed to make sure communities have the tools and plans they need when it matters most.

The grant offers up to £1,000 to support projects that create or enhance community-led resilience plans. Funding can cover up to 100% of project costs and may be used for practical items such as first aid kits, wind-up radios, snow shovels or emergency blankets. It can also support improvements to local rest centres or activities that bring people together to plan for the future.

Applications are open to constituted groups, parish and town councils, schools with a wider community role, and resilience-focused community organisations. Payments will be made in advance via BACS, and applicants should speak to a member of the council's team before submitting their form with a clear breakdown of costs.

For advice, support and application details, email communityresilience@testvalley.gov.uk or visit www.testvalley.gov.uk/communityresiliencegrant

Test Valley Borough Council offers a range of support for new businesses, including grants and advice. The Business Incentive Grant is available to businesses based in Test Valley that apply within eight weeks of starting to trade. The grant is awarded once the business has been running for at least six months. To find out more, visit: <https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/businessgrants>

Councillors see Toy Library thrive after awarding £1,000 grant



Councillors have visited Romsey Area Toy Library (RATL) to see the impact of the Councillor Community Grant awarded towards the cost of relocating the service and buying new high-quality toys to loan out.

After having to stop due to the venue they were using closing, RATL made contact with Test Valley Borough Council's community engagement officers, who worked with councillors to find and help fund a new, central space for this important

community-run project.

The £1,000 grant from Abbey Ward councillors helped the toy library move to Age Concern Romsey & District and buy toys for families to borrow. Councillors Sandra Gidley and Nik Daas visited the new venue to see the difference the funding has made.

Councillor Sandra Gidley said; "It's fantastic to see the Toy Library back up and running in such a central location. This service helps families save money, reduce waste and enjoy quality toys without the cost of buying them. The partnership with Age Concern is a brilliant example of how we can bring different parts of the community together." Councillor Nik Daas added; "Toy Library is a real asset for Romsey. It's great to see

our grant being used to support families and create opportunities for intergenerational activities. I'd encourage anyone who can volunteer to get involved - it's a simple way to make a big difference."

Romsey Male Voice Choir celebrates 30 years with support from councillor community grant



Romsey Male Voice Choir (RMVC) marked its 30th anniversary with a special concert at Romsey Abbey on 11 October, supported by a £1,000 councillor community grant.

The amateur choir, founded in 1995, is open to all and doesn't hold auditions. It welcomes people from all backgrounds, including those without musical experience. Their strapline 'singing fun taken seriously', reflects their commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive space for members and audiences alike.

The concert celebrated three decades of music-making and raised funds for local charities, Romsey Young Carers and Youth in Romsey. It also gave young musicians from the area the chance to perform alongside the choir, helping to inspire the next generation.

Andover dog groomer takes the lead with a council grant



Andover based dog groomer Lois Leech has received a £750 Business Incentive Grant from Test Valley Borough Council to support her new venture, Bliss Dog Grooming.

Lois currently rents a grooming table at Collar and Comb in Andover, where she's built up a healthy client base. She's expecting to move into her own premises in the coming months. She said: *"I'm extremely grateful for receiving the business grant. Dog grooming equipment can be rather expensive, and it's enabled me to get some equipment that will help elevate my work."*

Energy efficiency grants and support - general advice



The Environment Centre is a Hampshire-wide service offering advice on how to save money on energy bills and how to access financial support, whether you own your own home, or are renting from a private landlord. To find out more visit: <http://www.environmentcentre.com/> or call their advice line on 0800 804 8601.

Arthian Ltd

Building Energy Efficiency Support Service available for community groups

Test Valley Borough Council are working with [Arthian Ltd](#) to provide a support service for community groups and not for profit organisations on how to make buildings more energy efficient and, in the long term, help to reduce energy bills. This is geared to those organisations that are looking for advice on where to start, rather than those that have a clear understanding of the options available.

Arthian gather information to ensure the assessments are aligned with organisational needs. This initial conversation will be used to evaluate the level of support required. An onsite assessment will be undertaken by Arthian to confirm the scope of assessment and give you the opportunity to ask any further questions.

Information gathered from a site visit will be analysed and put into a tailored report which provides recommendations and actions on opportunities to make the building more energy efficient.

If you are interested in this support, then get in touch at climatechange@testvalley.org.uk. We will then be able to put you in touch with Arthian if you are eligible for the support. The support will be running up until the middle of March 2026.

If you do not need this service, the climate change grant remains available to apply for until 31st December 2025. This grant is only available to community groups and not for profit organisations. More information on eligibility and how to apply can be found at [Climate Change Grant | Test Valley Borough Council](#)

Want to make your home warmer and more energy efficient?

There's a range of fully funded and grant-supported schemes available to help residents across Test Valley cut energy costs and improve home comfort. For more information:

General advice from The Environment Centre - free advice on saving energy and accessing grants - whether you own or rent.

This could include advice on:

Warmer Homes Scheme

Connected for Warmth

ECO4 & Great British Insulation Scheme

Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS)

Alternatively, you can contact us for further information on any of this support, including information on home improvement grants and loans administered by the council.

Most of the grants available are managed by external organisations, and you will need to apply directly to those organisations using the links included below.

Warmer Homes scheme



The Warmer Homes programme is funded by the government. Portsmouth City Council, in partnership with several local authorities including Test Valley Borough Council, secures funding from the Warm Homes: Local Grant to offer funding to improve the energy efficiency of eligible homes. This funding launched in April 2025 and you can register your interest here: [energy-efficiency home improvements | Warmer Homes](#)

The Warmer Homes programme aims to raise the energy efficiency of low-income and low energy performance homes. Both homes and applicants will need to fulfil specific criteria to qualify for the funding.

There is funding available under the programme for the following energy efficiency measures: solid wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, underfloor insulation, loft insulation, room-in-roof insulation, air source heat pumps, solar PV panels, park home insulation, high heat retention, storage heaters, heating controls.

To find out more visit [Warmer Homes](#) or call the Warmer Homes Freephone on 0800 038 5737

.ECO4 and Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS)

You may be eligible for assistance through one of the main energy companies who operate the ECO4/ECO Flex scheme on behalf of Ofgem, or through the Great British Insulation Scheme.

For further information please follow this link: [How to reduce your energy consumption and costs | Test Valley Borough Council](#)

Connected for Warmth Scheme

The Connected for Warmth Scheme can also assist eligible households to access energy efficiency measures such as the installation of air source heat pumps. Residents who already have a gas boiler or air source heat pumps will not qualify for this scheme.

Further information can be found here: [Fully funded energy efficiency measures | Connected for Warmth](#)

Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS)

The Government is providing grants to encourage property owners to install low carbon heating systems such as heat pumps, through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS). These grants can help property owners overcome the upfront cost of low carbon heating technologies. The scheme is open to domestic and small non-domestic properties in England and Wales and you need a current Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and no outstanding recommendations for loft or cavity wall insulation. Check your eligibility at: www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-may-be-eligible-for-the-boiler-upgrade-scheme-from-april-2022

Apply now: Solar Panel Grants for Test Valley businesses



Test Valley Council is offering grants to help any commercial businesses install solar panels - but funding is limited, and time is running out.

Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, £50,000 has been set aside to support clean energy upgrades. Eligible businesses can receive a one-off contribution of 20% of the costs of solar installations, up to a maximum of £5,000, to reduce the payback time of solar PV installations.

All installations must be completed by March 2026, so early application is essential to secure funding.

Grants are available to landlords, leaseholders, or occupiers of a commercial property in a business park.

For more information: www.testvalley.gov.uk **Solar Panel Grants for Test Valley Businesses**

Test Valley Borough Council Home Improvement grants and loans

There are grants and loans available from Test Valley Borough Council for energy efficiency measures and improvements. The grants are means tested and for people with an income of up to £15,000 per year with savings less than £10,000. The loans are for a household income of up to £20,000 per year and savings less than £10,000.

If you are a tenant of a housing association property please contact your landlord in the first instance as there may be grants that are available specifically for social housing properties.

For more information and eligibility visit: <https://testvalley.gov.uk/housing/housing-advise-for-people-who-rent/private-sector-housing-renewal-policy> or call 01264 368000.

Other News



HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

CONSTABULARY

Scam Alert

Criminals are using e gift cards to commit fraud in a variety of different ways:

You might buy a gift card **from** a legitimate retailer and a criminal has pre-registered the gift card so your gift goes into their pocket etc.

Remember – always Stop! Think Fraud before sending gift cards, money or valuables to anyone.

If you've received a phishing email please report it to your email provider and/or forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk

If you've received unwanted phone calls or texts from people you think are trying to scam you, but you haven't engaged with them, please forward the text/phone number to 7726.

If you've been affected by a crime please contact Victim Care Hub for free, confidential support: <https://www.hampshireiowvictimcare.co.uk/> or phone 0808 178 1641

If you would like to report a crime anonymously please contact: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/> or phone 0800 555 111

If you realise you've been scammed and wish to report a fraud that has already happened, please report it to Action Fraud either phone 0300 123 2040 or online at: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

If a crime is in progress, and/or you are in fear for yourself or someone else, and/or there is evidence in situ that could be damaged/destroyed, please phone 999 immediately. Otherwise, report online, or find out about other ways to report a crime at: <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

The Fraud Safeguarding Team (Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary, Fraud Safeguarding Officers, Hampshire and Isle of Wight)

'Hotshot' thermal imaging cameras to help prevent delays on South Western Railway



Customers travelling on the SWR network may spot 'Hotshot' – a newly named Class 450 train fitted with cameras to monitor track conditions, allowing engineers to tackle infrastructure problems before they cause disruption.

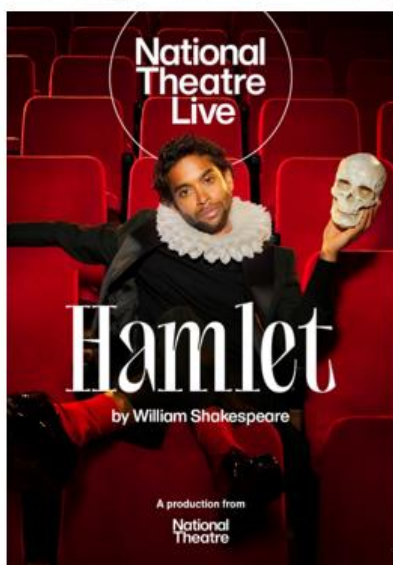
Two thermal imaging cameras have been fitted to a South Western Railway train, now named 'Hotshot' to monitor tracks in London, Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire and Dorset. The cameras, are part of an innovative year-long trial of the technology.

The images captured will provide engineers with real time alerts of potential issues such as overheating or faulty connections, improving safety and efficiency, reducing maintenance costs, and helping to better manage resources during incidents. Faults that the Hotshot train will help detect can otherwise cause around 200 minutes of delays.

Please note that the timetable for December may have changed. There are no significant changes to train times being made on the 14th December (although timings may shift slightly), however a small number of services may use different types of train from the 14th onward. Updated PDF timetables are now available on our website [Train Timetable | South Western Railway](#)

Somborne Community Cinema News

Monday Matinee Theatre



26th January 2026

at King's Somborne Village Hall

Doors open 1:30pm : Curtain up 2:15pm

Tickets £10 online at

www.sombornecommunitycinema.co.uk

or at the door on the day

Free Refreshments

Tea | Coffee | Biscuits

Under 16s must be accompanied by an adult

In a change to the "Monday Matinee" films which have run in previous years, the Somborne Community Cinema has signed up to "National Theatre Live". Supported by Test Valley Borough Council and King's Somborne Parish Council special events will be screened throughout 2026, both matinees and evenings, kicking off with "Hamlet" on Monday 26th January.

The regular Thursday evening programme continues to be well supported and films coming soon are:

- Thursday 11th December - Naked Gun
- Thursday 8th January - The Ballad of Wallis Island
- Thursday 12th February - Downton Abbey : The Grand Finale

Keep an eye on the village noticeboards, cinema website and The Gauntlet for full details of all the regular films and NT Live theatre events

Under 16s must be accompanied by an adult.

Stockbridge Music



On the 14th November in St Peter's Church in Stockbridge people were treated to an outstanding concert by 19 year old Leia Zhu, who performed with pianist Dina Duisen.

The technical mastery and overall virtuosity of Leia left everyone enthralled and wanting more. There was a standing ovation at the end of the performance,

It is clear that Leia will go far in her career. Dina's performance was equally amazing, even more so when it was discovered afterwards that the pair had only rehearsed together once - that afternoon!

Stockbridge Music is attracting more and more accomplished musicians and have included in the past, small choral groups, cellists, harpists, pianists, harpsichordists, and chamber orchestras amongst others.

Bach Winchester Voices and Orchestra



will be performing 'Bach at Christmas' on December 7th in St Peter's Church, Stockbridge.

Tickets £25 under 18s £5 from stockbridgemusic.uk or on the door.

Sunday December 7th 4pm.- 6pm. Doors open at 3.30pm

Wine and soft drinks available for sale in the interval.

A Cinderella Christmas at Mottisfont



Step into a world of sparkle and storytelling this festive season at Mottisfont. From **22 November to 4 January**, the house is transformed with theatrical flair for *A Cinderella Christmas* – a magical twist on the classic pantomime. Explore beautifully decorated rooms, discover iconic scenes from the fairytale, and enjoy interactive activities

indoors and out. It's a festive experience for all ages, with no need to book in advance, just collect your ticket on arrival.

The house will open at the earlier time of 10.30am so as many people as possible can enjoy the spectacle. Last entry is 3.30pm. **This is a free event, but normal admission charges apply for the venue.**

Christmas Afternoon Tea at King John's House

Celebrate the magic of Christmas with a friend at King John's House Café in the heart of Romsey. Enjoy a cosy afternoon filled with festive cheer, including turkey, stuffing and cranberry sandwiches, homemade cake, traditional mince pies, mini cheese scones and a warming hot chocolate to finish. Vegetarian options are available.

Various dates and times are available **throughout November and December**.

King John's House Café, 13 Church Street, Romsey, SO51 8BT

Bookings: <https://www.kingjohnshouse.org.uk>



Romsey Winter Carnival and Lantern Parade



Join in the fun and light up the town as the fabulous Romsey Winter Carnival and Lantern Parade returns. An amazing spectacle of lights, music, dancing, floats and much more!

Location: Starts at Crosfield Hall, through Romsey town

Date: Saturday 29 November

Time: 6pm

More information: [Romsey Town Carnival & Lanterns | Events & Tickets](https://www.romseycarnival.co.uk)

Romsey Abbey Christmas Fair

Head to Romsey Abbey Christmas Fair on **Saturday 29 November** from 10am to 2pm. Enjoy mulled wine, seasonal refreshments and a wide range of Christmas stalls offering gifts and bargains. Father Christmas will be making a special appearance too. Entry is £1 for adults and free for children, with all proceeds supporting Romsey Abbey.

Christmas Wish Trees

Lastly, but not least.....

For the last 3 years Prego, the Italian restaurant in Stockbridge has been running a Christmas Wish Tree for primary school children from Stockbridge, Kings Somborne, Broughton, and Tytherly School.

Children are provided with a Christmas bauble, which they decorate on one side and on the other wish for a present from a list of presents provided by us. Each present is worth up to £10. The presents are assigned to each child, wrapped and ready for the school Santa visit, who gives them to the children.

Over the years the number of presents has increased that are being provided. Last year The John O' Gaunt pub donated a tree, so the Kings Somborne children placed their wishes on that tree, whilst the rest of the schools used the Prego tree. This year we are looking to place a tree at the Broughton community shop, so that Broughton and Tytherley can place their wishes locally.



The cost of presents has been raised locally through Business donations. As the number of presents has increased so has the cost. This year we will be providing approximately 460 presents one for every child at the 4 schools. Donations relate to the school area that they come from, i.e... Kings Somborne businesses to Kings Somborne school.

We are asking local businesses and communities if they would be willing to donate towards the cost of presents. The fund is managed by a Committee.

Please call the Community Christmas Committee (CCC) .

For further details contact Dave on 07974 695442.

Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year!



Defibrillators for public use are located at:

Stockbridge R (24 hours) recreation Ground

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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