

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



Local Plan 2040 Call for Land for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites

The draft Local Plan 2040 identifies gypsy, traveller and travelling show people needs. TVBC will be running a focussed 'Call for Land' targeted solely at contacting local landowners, businesses and agents to see if there are any other sites for consideration. This will run from 24 June to 22 July.

Fly-tipping in Romsey leads to significant fine for Hampshire man

A man from Southampton has been ordered to pay more than £3,500 after fly-tipping a vehicle tyre in Romsey.

A covert camera placed at a fly-tipping hotspot caught a man driving into an empty layby on 23 June 2023. He was seen removing a tyre from the back of the vehicle, rolling it into the bushes nearby and then leaving the scene.

The man was identified as Justin Conroy, 54, from Southampton, who claimed that he had a puncture and had left the tyre behind by mistake.

Appearing at Southampton Magistrates Court, Conroy admitted to the offence and was given a fine of £2,048 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £819 and costs of £658.25.



You can report fly-tips to TVBC
at www.testvalley.gov.uk/fly-tipping.

Council grass cutting schedules to be relaxed through the Summer to help wildlife thrive

Test Valley Borough Council will be relaxing its current grass cutting schedules across a number of sites between until September. This will create urban meadows, which are more wildlife friendly and provide a longer season of nectar for pollinators.

Cllr Terese Swain, Portfolio Holder for Community and Leisure said:

"As a Council, our commitment to creating increasing amounts of urban meadows each year supports pollinators at the time they are most active. We do need to keep cutting quite a number of verges for safety reasons but our longer-term plan will see a much larger area of urban meadow created across the borough."

The council has been increasing the amount of urban meadow it creates each year since 2021. This year, it will be letting a total of 44 hectares in Andover, Romsey and Valley Park grow wilder - that's more than 82 football fields of grass that will be left unmown until September, when it will be cut and collected. This approach will reduce the number of visits for mowing and allow grasses and plants to develop, providing valuable habitat for insects and birds.

The sites are typically on the edges of open spaces so as not to impact on activities like dog walking or on recreation space. Some sites, like the North Churchyard at Romsey Abbey have been planted with meadowscape wildflower mix to boost their diversity and ecological value and create a scenic route through a colourful, nectar-rich wildflower meadow. In other sites the longer grass and native wildflowers also have great value as a habitat for pollinators.

Council staff will monitor each of the sites over the summer and make a record of any notable plant species.

Anyone who would like to help with monitoring local wildlife can get in touch through the Council's Citizen Science programme on CitizenScience@testvalley.gov.uk

Create a habitat for wildlife in your own garden.

With over 20 million gardens in the UK, even the smallest grassy patches add up to a significant proportion of our land which, if managed properly, can deliver enormous gains for nature, communities and the climate. So create your own area in the garden, no matter how small to create a haven for wildlife..

Residents revamped tennis courts at Vigo Park



The council, in partnership with The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), have invested £37,000 to revamp Vigo Recreation Ground and Romsey War Memorial Park Tennis Courts. This will help ensure that high quality facilities are available for free in the local community as well as introducing an easy-to-use online booking process.

Accessibility ramp

Work to install an accessibility ramp at the tennis courts at Vigo Park will be commencing on Monday 24 June. The aim is to have the work completed by the end of the week with temporary handrails.

Once the permanent handrails have been manufactured, they will be installed a few weeks later. This will be followed a few weeks later by an additional access gate being fitted on the second court at Vigo to ensure full accessibility of the courts.

Health walk volunteers wanted

Do you have a few hours to spare and enjoy walking and chatting to other people? Then we would like to hear from you.

We're looking for new volunteer walk leaders to guide health walks in different parts of the borough.

Each walk is led by a qualified leader whose duties include welcoming new and existing walkers, taking an attendance register, assisting new walkers to complete a quick registration form, and leading a safe, fun and enjoyable walk.

Some walks are a gentle stroll, others more brisk and they all last around 60 minutes and cover 2-3 miles, although if you need a shorter walk this can usually be accommodated. Most end with a chance to stay for a drink and a chat and they're great for boosting mental as well as physical health.

Anyone who is interested in finding out more about becoming a health walk leader should contact Fen Holland on healthwalks@testvalley.gov.uk or 01264 368000.

Connecting with the community

The Environmental Service and the Community and Leisure team joined forces to attend North Baddesley's annual Village Day last month. It was very well attended, and officers spoke to over 80 people about recycling, composting, avoiding single-use plastic and reducing food waste, along with the problems associated with littering and fly tipping. For more information, please contact Mike Pratt, Waste and Recycling Officer.

New sensory walking experience at Charlton Lakes

A sensory walk has been launched at Charlton Lakes as part of Mental Health Awareness Week and National Walking month.

Sensory walks allow you to use your senses to connect with your surroundings whilst you stay active. The walks are designed for people with complex disabilities, but can be enjoyed by anyone. You can go alone or in a group, you don't need any specialist equipment and the walks can be any length you like.

This collaborative project between Test Valley Borough Council, Isle of Wight Council and Hampshire County Council is part of a suite of sensory walks being created across Hampshire. All the walks are accessible to everyone, are around one mile long, and usually over flat ground.

Fancy a change of career?

We always have great jobs available at Test Valley Borough Council. Whether you like to be in the office or out and about, there are lots of different opportunities on offer.

To view the latest job opportunities please see the web site: <https://testvalley.gov.uk>

OTHER NEWS

Cyber Security Awareness Reminder - General Election

You will have seen in the news the recent cyber-attacks targeting UK democracy. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has issued important advice to remind individuals and organisations of the threats and to stay alert.

Be particularly vigilant about:

Email Phishing attacks. (Read NCSC's guidance about how to spot an attack. Spot and report scam emails, texts, websites.)

Deep fakes and Social Engineering attacks (make sure your accounts / devices are securely and adequately protected.

More guidance can be found on NCSC's website [Guidance for high-risk individuals on protecting your...](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance) - NCSC.GOV.UK)

If you encounter any concerns or suspicious behaviour, please contact the IT Service Desk on 01264 368989.



Armed Forces Day

The Andover Armed Forces Day event will celebrate the UK armed services and veterans. There will be live music, parades, fly-pasts and activities for all ages.

Saturday 29 June, Vigo Recreation Ground

Greening Campaign online information event

The Greening Campaign is a scheme designed to help communities to consider how to tackle climate change, including measures to reduce energy use, health impacts related to climate change, waste prevention, promoting biodiversity and growing your own food. Over the last 15 years they have worked with over 200 communities.

The Greening Campaign held an online information event for communities in Hampshire on Tuesday 11 June at 7pm. It is an opportunity for communities to find out more about their programme, the partners they are working with (such as Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and Garden Organic, and the funded support that they can offer.

More information about the Greening Campaign is available at: [The Greening Campaign Climate change community support \(greening-campaign.org\)](https://greening-campaign.org)

Bird Walk and Talk

Last month the Countryside and Leisure team organised a Bird Walk and Talk with a professional Birder at Valley Park. Keith Betton, Chairman of Hampshire Ornithological Society along took the team around Skyswood. Attendees spent the morning listening and looking at birds, their song, their habits and habitats with a bit of learning on how to use binoculars and other optical instruments.

It was an excellent turnout for the nature event, with 15 local residents coming along and taking part.

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)
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.
Ashley Farm (available 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/>

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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