

Update from Hampshire County Council – December 2025



Avoid a festive headache – with four weeks to go drivers should plan ahead for the closure of the M27 between Junctions 9 and 11

Four weeks ahead of a major motorway closure on the M27 in Hampshire, drivers are being urged to plan ahead and allow extra time for journeys to avoid severe delays over the Christmas and New Year period

The M27 motorway will be closed between J9-J11, in both directions, from 8pm on 24 December 2025 to 4am on Sunday 4 January 2026. The closure of this section of the M27 is necessary to deliver a new underpass that will be constructed using a timesaving engineering technique, replacing what would otherwise have been many months of lane restrictions, speed limits, and overnight works.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20252611FourWeeksToGoM27>

Hampshire County Council joins 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence

Hampshire County Council joins the global 16 Days of Activism campaign, which calls for action to end domestic abuse and gender-based violence, challenge harmful attitudes, and create safer communities for all

The campaign, which starts on 25 November, is a powerful reminder that domestic abuse affects thousands of people in Hampshire. Every year an estimated 34,100 women and 18,000 men, plus 42,600 children and young people who are now legally recognised as victims in their own right, experience abuse.

Hampshire County Council is proud to work with the Authentic Voice Panel, a group of survivors of domestic abuse who share their experiences to shape and influence support services, policy

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and practice across the county. Supported by SafeLives, the panel ensures that decisions about domestic abuse services reflect the realities faced by those who have lived through it.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20251125WhiteRibbonDay>

Have your say on the future of local government across the Hampshire and Solent area

A public consultation has been launched by central Government on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) across Hampshire and the Solent area – a once-in-a-generation opportunity to help shape how council services are delivered in the future

Central Government wants to simplify local government structures nationally by replacing the current two-tier system, where responsibilities are split between county councils and district or borough councils, with fewer, new single-tier unitary councils. These new councils would be responsible for all local services in their area, from education and social care to waste collection and planning.

In Hampshire and the Solent area, this change would affect 15 existing councils, including Hampshire County Council, 11 district and borough councils, and the unitary authorities of Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20251119LGRGovernmentconsultation>

Councils back “five unitary council” model and urge residents to have their say on Local Government Reorganisation

A group of 11 councils across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is urging residents, businesses and partners to take part in the Government’s consultation on Local Government Reorganisation. Together the councils all support a five-unitary council model as 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.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2025/nov/councils-back-five-unitary-council-model-and-urge-residents-to-have-their-say-on-local-government-reorganisation>

Holiday Activities and Food programme to bring festive fun and healthy meals to Hampshire families

Children and young people from low-income families across Hampshire can look forward to a winter break filled with exciting activities and nutritious meals, thanks to Hampshire County Council’s Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme

Funded by the Department for Education, [HAF](#) enables local authorities to provide hot, healthy food and enriching experiences during school holidays for children who receive benefit-related free school meals during term time. A limited number of places are also available for other vulnerable families.

This Christmas, more than 125 sites across Hampshire will host a wide range of activities, delivered by schools, childcare providers, community groups, and sports organisations. From arts and crafts to sporting adventures, the programme is designed to keep children active, engaged, and well-nourished during the festive break.

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Eligible families are now invited to book their free holiday club places.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20251112HAFChristmas>

Residents' views sought on ways to balance the budget

Hampshire County Council is asking people for their views on ways the Authority could balance its books over the next two years, up to April 2027, as costs and demand for local services keep rising alongside ongoing underfunding by central Government

County council budgets nationally have been stretched to the limit for many years, but in Hampshire, the County Council has worked hard to manage public money carefully – making every penny count, delivering high-performing services and maintaining the second lowest Council Tax rates set by county councils in England. By the end of this financial year, the Authority will have saved £734 million from its annual budget since 2008 - acting early to address financial challenges, often well ahead of other authorities, transforming and working more efficiently to save money, as well as being more commercial in some areas to help generate income.

Despite these steps, financial pressures remain not only in Hampshire but across the country, especially in high demand areas like social care for vulnerable children and adults, and school transport.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20251104Budgetconsultation2026-27>

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/budgetconsultation>

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 storms and flooding to power cuts, pandemics and other unexpected events, the fund is designed to make sure communities have the tools and plans they need when it matters most.

Resilience planning matters because Test Valley's mix of rural areas and small communities can be more vulnerable when emergencies happen. Preparing now means helping communities help themselves and saving money in the long term.

The grant offers up to £1,000 to support projects that create or enhance community-led resilience plans for defined local areas, such as villages, parishes or neighbourhoods. 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, emergency blankets or generators. 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/CRGrant.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2025/nov/new-grant-launched-to-help-communities-prepare-for-emergencies>

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Residents help collect more than 400 tonnes of food waste in first five weeks of new service

Residents across Test Valley have embraced the borough's new weekly food waste collection service, helping to recycle an impressive 420 tonnes in its first five weeks.

The scheme, which launched in October, has exceeded expectations and is already making a big difference. By separately recycling food waste, residents are reducing the amount of household waste sent to the county's energy from waste facilities.

After collection, the food waste is taken to a local anaerobic digestion facility, where it's transformed into renewable energy and nutrient-rich fertiliser.

420 tonnes is the equivalent to the weight of around one million footballs.

Councillor David Drew, Test Valley Borough Council's portfolio holder for recycling, said: "We're thrilled with the response from residents. Collecting on average more than 80 tonnes every week shows how committed our residents and communities are to reducing waste and protecting the environment. And I'm sure homeowners have also noticed the reductions in their black bins. Thank you to everyone who's taken part, this is a fantastic start.

"We have introduced this service to almost 60,000 households at once. Our collection teams have been working hard since the service launched, learning and improving their new rounds, and emptying caddies each week. Thank you for your support with this - by following the guidance, and putting your caddy out for collection as instructed, you have certainly helped the service run smoothly."

The local authority introduced this new collection service five months early, as the Environment Act required all councils to have food waste collections in place by 1 April 2026. It's one of several steps being taken to make Test Valley greener and more sustainable.

For more information about the food waste collection service, including what can go in your caddy, visit www.testvalley.gov.uk/foodwaste.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2025/nov/residents-help-collect-more-than-400-tonnes-of-food-waste-in-first-five-weeks-of-new-service>

David Drew

Test Valley Central Division, HCC
Harewood ward, TVBC