



Hampshire County Council's country parks regain prestigious Green Flag status

Once again, five of Hampshire County Council's country parks have gained prestigious Green Flag status, recognising they offer the highest standards in visitor experience, park management and environmental care

Lepe, River Hamble, Royal Victoria, Queen Elizabeth, and Staunton Country Parks have all secured Green Flag awards.

In addition, Staunton, Royal Victoria, and Lepe Country Parks have also retained their Green Heritage Site Accreditation, which celebrates sites that actively conserve and promote their unique historic features.

Each of Hampshire's five country parks offers something unique:

Find out what's on offer on [the County Council's webpages](#).

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250715GreenFlagAwards>

Green Flag Awards fly high again for three Test Valley parks

Three popular parks in Test Valley have once again been awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award – marking over a decade of continued excellence in green space management.

Rooksbury Mill Local Nature Reserve in Andover, Valley Park Woodlands Local Nature Reserve, and Romsey's War Memorial Park have all retained their Green Flag status for another year. The awards are a national benchmark for well-managed parks and open spaces, recognising the efforts that go into keeping them welcoming, safe, and well-maintained for the public to enjoy.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2025/aug/green-flag-awards-fly-high-again-for-three-test-valley-parks>

Update from Hampshire County Council – August/September 2025

Helping your child start the school year with confidence

As Hampshire schools prepare to reopen from 2 September, the County Council is reminding families about the support available to make the first day back a positive experience for children of all ages, their parents and carers

For families with children starting school for the very first time, this can be a particularly big milestone - filled with excitement, pride, and sometimes a few nerves. Whether your child is starting in reception or moving up to a new year group, a little preparation can go a long way in helping them feel settled and ready to learn.

Some key elements:-

- **Vaccinations:** With children mixing more at school, staying up to date with vaccinations helps protect them from preventable illnesses. You can check your child's immunisation record in their red book or speak to your GP practice. This [NHS website](#) has the full vaccination schedule.
- **Toilet training:** For younger children starting school, being toilet trained is a big step towards independence and confidence. Hampshire's Public Health team, in partnership with the Public Health Nursing service, [offers helpful advice](#) for navigating this important milestone.
- **School attendance:** Building a positive relationship with school from day one can ease worries and help children settle in. If you have concerns about attendance, speak with your child's school early - they're there to help. You can also find tips for supporting regular attendance on the [Council's website](#).

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250811backtoschool>

Hampshire County Council Cabinet backs preferred model for future local government

Hampshire County Council's Cabinet (18 July) agreed to move forward with a preferred model for how local government could be reorganised across Hampshire and the Solent area – marking a key milestone towards shaping a simpler, stronger, and more secure future for council services

Central Government wants to replace councils nationally in places where there are two tiers of local government – replacing county councils and district and borough councils with a smaller number of unitary (all-purpose) local authorities. Each unitary council would be responsible for delivering all local government services in their area, including social care, education, highways, housing, and planning.

Following detailed analysis of robust evidence and data to underpin proposals for the Hampshire and Solent area, Hampshire County Council believes the best model of local government for our area would replace the current 15 councils across the Hampshire and Solent area with four new unitary councils. (Three new councils would be created on the Hampshire and Solent area mainland, and the Isle of Wight would remain a standalone unitary council, as it is now.)

Food waste caddies begin delivery across Test Valley

Households across Test Valley will soon receive their food waste caddy packs as part of the borough's new food waste recycling service, which launches this autumn.

Update from Hampshire County Council – August/September 2025

Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC), with the help of a specialist distribution company, has begun the rollout of food waste caddies to homes throughout the area, which is expected to take up to seven weeks to complete.

Each standard household will receive a five-litre kitchen caddy, a 23-litre kerbside caddy, one roll of caddy liners, and an information leaflet explaining how the new food waste collection service works.

For households that share bins, deliveries will include a 140-litre grey-lidded food waste wheeled bin for the bin store, rather than a kerbside caddy.

Residents are being reminded to store their caddy liners in a dry place and keep the information leaflet safe for future reference.

The new food waste collection service will officially begin on Monday 13 October 2025, so the caddies should not be used until week commencing 6 October.

Residents will also soon receive postcards telling them what day their food waste will be collected.

The service aims to reduce the amount of food waste sent to landfill and increase recycling rates across the borough. Food waste will be collected weekly and taken to an anaerobic digestion facility, where it will be turned into renewable energy and nutrient-rich fertiliser.

The Environment Act requires all councils to have food waste collections in place by 1 April 2026.

To celebrate the rollout, TVBC has hidden 20 golden tickets inside randomly selected caddy packs.

Lucky winners can choose from a range of exciting prizes, including a £50 gift voucher for The Lights, and a three-month premium membership for Andover Leisure Centre, Romsey Rapids, and Knightwood Leisure Centre.

Councillor David Drew, portfolio holder for Recycling and Environmental Services, said:

“The council is committed to the delivery of waste service changes as required by the Environment Act. We know this new food waste collection service is eagerly anticipated by many residents across the borough. It marks a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to improve recycling and reduce waste.

“By introducing the service ahead of the government’s deadline, we’re demonstrating our dedication to providing residents with the tools they need to recycle more effectively.”

For more information about the food waste collection service, including FAQs and guidance on what can and cannot go in your caddy, please visit www.testvalley.gov.uk/foodwaste.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2025/aug/food-waste-caddies-begin-delivery-across-test-valley>

Man ordered to pay £1k for fly-tipping garden waste

A man has been ordered to pay more than £1,000 after pleading guilty to fly-tipping garden waste near Charlton cemetery.

Multiple piles of tree and shrub cuttings were found by a Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) officer at a layby at Marrowpits, Charlton, near Andover, during a routine inspection on 20 September 2024.

A male was captured by covert cameras removing garden waste from the boot of a car before leaving it in the layby.

Update from Hampshire County Council – August/September 2025

Following a DVLA search, TVBC identified Roy Brown of Winchester Road, Andover, as the owner of the vehicle. Council officers invited him to an interview under caution, where he admitted dumping the waste.

Mr Brown pleaded guilty to fly-tipping at a hearing at Basingstoke Magistrates' Court on 25 July 2025.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2025/jul/man-ordered-to-pay-1k-for-fly-tipping-garden-waste>

Westover Market Garden takes root with support from the Rural England Prosperity Fund awarded by the council

A new horticultural venture in the heart of the Test Valley is set to flourish thanks to a grant of almost £25,000 from the UK Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), awarded by Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC).

The Westover Market Garden, based at Westover Farm near Stockbridge, marks a bold addition to the farm's traditional arable farming. The funding has helped establish the garden by supporting the purchase of polytunnels, fencing, gates, a mobile packing shed, fruit trees, and essential tools.

Owner, Will Liddell is a former GP who is passionate about growing and selling food locally as a sustainable alternative to imported produce. The garden will supply high-quality fruit and vegetables to local restaurants, village shops, and campers staying at the adjacent site.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2025/jul/westover-market-garden-takes-root-with-support-from-the-rural-england-prosperity-fund-awarded-by-the-council>

David Drew

Test Valley Central Division, HCC
Harewood ward, TVBC