

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATES

March 2025

Andover West



Please find below an outline of current programmes of work and public information from Hampshire County Council. I hope that this is useful.

If you have any further questions, then please don't hesitate to contact me at cllrc.donnelly@hants.gov.uk

A very happy Easter to you all.

Kind regards

Chris

County Council Updates

Councillor Community Grants

I have been pleased to support a number of local organisations and initiatives this year with my councillor community grants. This year, they have gone to:

Charlton Village Community Day	Charlton	£700
Long Acre Farm Allotment Project	Andover	£400
Santa's Spirit Community Day	Saxon Fields	£500
Amber Bee CIC Therapy & Mindfulness	Andover	£1,600
Village Christmas Tree	Kimpton	£200
Parish Archiving Project	Thruxton	£1,000
Countryside Management Training	Grateley	£650
Village Warm Hub	Appleshaw	£1,000
Andover Cardiac Rehab Programme	Andover	£600
Yellow Brick Road Youth Projects	Andover	£1,000
Harrow Way School Shelter	Andover	£100
Shipton Community Pub Project	Shipton Bellinger	£100

Due to the financial situation at HCC, the Grant system is being reviewed. We hope to reopen it in September 2025.

Devolution & Reorganisation

The devolution proposals for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight remain on track, with elections for the Mayor and county expected in 2026.

Local Government reorganisation is, as expected, proving more difficult. Essentially the Government appears to be changing their minds as we go through the process, which results in there being too little clarity around the process. From saying that they wanted districts to merge to become new councils, they are now saying that they are open to some splitting of districts. This has opened a can of worms with some Solent councils wanting parts of New Forest, Test Valley and East Hampshire, either for council tax revenues or political reasons, and Blackwater Valley councillors calling for a standalone unitary with Surrey and Berkshire districts in that area.

If districts were to be split, the Local Government Boundary Commission would need to get involved, which would delay the process legislatively by at least a year, with probably public inquiries. It would also then start debates over whether villages such as Shipton Bellinger should transfer to Wiltshire, or Ludgershall to Hampshire.

Test Valley's position is that if reorganisation goes ahead, we want four mainland authorities which meet the population criteria initially set out by the Government, with districts merging in totality. The Hampshire councils have collectively commissioned a report by KPMG which aims to assess financial stability of proposed new councils as well as the impact on service delivery.

The Government also promised that being on the devolution fast track would give us more time to undertake this work, but they have now rowed the submission date back to 27th September. All councils have written to the Minister to request that the original timescale which we were promised, and which we publicly advised, is respected.

Neurodiversity Week

This week is Neurodiversity Celebration Week. This is a subject close to my heart and you can find out what HCC is doing here: <https://www.neurodiversityweek.com/>

Anyone can get involved and if you have any friends or family who would be interested, please do pass it on to them.

SEN investment

HCC is creating an extra 166 places for children with Special Educational Needs at 13 schools across the county: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20250307SENDMarch>

Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

Pavement problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

Problems with rights of way:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do please forward that message to me and I will chase for you