

Update from Hampshire County Council – March 2026



Hampshire Youth Parliament launches new term and sets priorities for 2026–2027

Hampshire Youth Parliament (HYP) has officially begun its new two-year term, bringing together Youth Councillors from across the county for their first in-person meeting of the year

The event marked an energising start to their tenure, giving members, elected by their schools and colleges, the opportunity to connect, share ideas, and begin shaping the priorities that will guide their work over the next two years.

After a day of discussion and collaboration, HYP – which is supported and facilitated by Hampshire County Council – confirmed four key issues that will lead its campaigning and project work:

- Period Poverty – tackling inequality in access to menstrual products
- Crime & Safety – addressing anti-social behaviour and promoting safer communities
- Cost of Living – ensuring young people’s voices are heard in conversations about financial pressures
- Misogyny – challenging gender-based discrimination and promoting respect.

These priorities will shape HYP’s work locally, regionally, and nationally as members begin developing campaigns, partnerships, and youth-led initiatives throughout the 2026–2027 term.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260224YouthParliament>

Hampshire County Council approves council tax increase to protect vital services and plan responsibly for the future

Hampshire County Council has today (26 February) approved its budget for 2026/27, setting out how the Authority will continue to deliver essential services while managing unprecedented ongoing financial pressures facing local government

At the meeting of the full County Council, councillors agreed a 4.99% increase in Hampshire County Council’s share of council tax from April 2026, the maximum rise that Government allows councils without them needing to hold a local referendum. The increase will help protect vital services for the county’s most vulnerable children and adults, while enabling the Council to keep controlling costs, deliver savings and continue transforming services through more efficient and innovative ways of working.

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The increase means that the Hampshire County Council element of council tax for a Band D property will be £1,690.11 in 2026/27 – an increase of £1.54 per week from last year. Despite the increase, Hampshire continues to have one of the lowest county council tax precepts amongst shire councils in England.

As in previous years, 2% of the increase will be directed specifically to adult social care, in line with Government policy, as demand keeps rising from an ageing population and essential support for adults with complex needs and disabilities.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260226Budgetdecision20262027>

Helping Nature - Hampshire County Council set to examine Hampshire's Biodiversity Duty Report

Hampshire County Council has today published its first statutory Biodiversity Duty Report, setting out in detail how the authority has conserved and enhanced biodiversity across Hampshire between January 2023 and December 2025, that will go before the Universal Services Select Committee on 2 March

Councillors will discuss the report that demonstrates the County Council's approach to embedding biodiversity considerations across its policies, land management, infrastructure, public health, planning, and community engagement.

It sets out a whole organisation approach and commitment to working collaboratively with a wide range of partners, recognising the significance of Hampshire's natural environment to the county's identity, economy, health and wellbeing, and ability to respond to the challenges of climate change.

Key achievements include major habitat creation and restoration, significant tree and hedgerow planting, integration of nature-based solutions in infrastructure, strengthened monitoring, and strong partnerships for nature recovery.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260220BiodiversityDutyReport>

Report highlights the harms from alcohol and the support available

More people in Hampshire are now seeking advice and treatment to reduce their alcohol consumption, according to the latest report from Hampshire County Council's Director of Public Health

The report highlights the ongoing impact of alcohol harm on individuals, families, and communities, while showing strong progress in the number of people accessing advice and treatment.

Simon Bryant comments: "Although most Hampshire residents drink safely, around a quarter of adults currently drink more than the recommended limit of 14 units per week, contributing to around 25 alcohol-related hospital admissions every day. Many residents may not realise they are putting their health at risk by drinking above recommended limits.

"However, we are seeing more Hampshire residents taking positive steps to improve their health, with the number of people seeking support to reduce their alcohol consumption doubling since 2022. This rise means around 1,000 additional people are now getting help to make healthier choices about alcohol, reflecting growing awareness of the benefits of early support and the increasing availability of services across the county.

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“Even small reductions in drinking can quickly improve sleep, energy, mood, and long-term health. It is encouraging to see more residents taking positive steps with twice as many people now getting the help they need, thanks to the support available.”

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260212DirofPHreportalcoholharm>

Man fined after failing to cooperate with fly tipping investigation in Andover

A man has been ordered to pay more than £1,400 after failing to comply with a legal notice linked to a fly tipping investigation in Andover.

On 23 June 2025, a quantity of waste was discovered unlawfully dumped on Watery Lane. Information within the fly-tip led officers to Oliver Poulton, from Andover.

Poulton was invited to attend an interview under caution but failed to do so. Officers then served a formal Notice under Section 108 of the Environment Act 1995, requiring him to attend a further interview. Despite being properly served and given reasonable opportunity to attend, Poulton again failed to engage and did not offer any explanation or request a new date.

Appearing at Basingstoke Magistrates Court on 10 February 2026, Poulton pleaded guilty and was given a £500 fine, along with a £200 victim surcharge and £736 in costs, bringing the total to £1,436.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2026/feb/man-fined-after-failing-to-cooperate-with-fly-tipping-investigation-in-andover>

Test Valley nominated for award for transformational Andover Health Hub partnership

Test Valley Borough Council has been nominated for an award for its work with the NHS to create the innovative Andover Health Hub.

National publication, the Local Government Chronicle (LGC), hosts an annual awards ceremony, celebrating councils that have undertaken exceptional work over the past 12 months. TVBC is up for the LGC's Public Partnership award, which recognises local authorities that have worked with other public sector bodies to improve lives and outcomes for their communities.

Andover Health Hub, located diagonally opposite Boswell's Café in the Chantry Centre, started out as a covid vaccination centre back in 2021. But the council and its partners, including Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight and Andover Primary Care Network (PCN), saw the opportunity to create a permanent presence in the town centre and offer more joined-up community-based healthcare. And since opening in 2023 it's gone from strength to strength.

Initially offering a range of services including blood pressure and other health checks in a bid to help prevent and diagnose conditions early on and improve people's lives in the local community, the hub underwent a major revamp and expansion back in 2025.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2026/feb/test-valley-nominated-for-award-for-transformational-andover-health-hub-partnership>

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