

Winchester City Councillor Report

October 2021

1. Winchester Discovery Centre

Work on a major refurbishment of Winchester Discovery Centre is due to start this month, leading to temporary service impacts, including an expected seven-week closure from January next year. The Grade II listed building is planned to re-open in spring 2022 with upgraded library facilities and improved gallery spaces, alongside enhancements to the café, toilets and lift. This follows a decision to develop a new cultural hub at the Discovery Centre through the creation of a partnership between Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Cultural Trust.

Winchester Discovery Centre is home to Hampshire's busiest library and this refurbishment is a one-off investment from the County Council that has enabled the partnership with Hampshire Cultural Trust. The majority of the £715,000 funding is from the County Council with a contribution from Hampshire Cultural Trust, and £85,000 from Arts Council England. The building's day-to-day running costs will transfer to Hampshire Cultural Trust in spring 2022, enabling the County Council to make medium to long term efficiencies whilst retaining the library space at this site.

2. Proposals for River Park Leisure Centre

The River Park Leisure Centre in central Winchester closed earlier this year following the opening of the new sports and leisure centre at Bar End. Winchester City Council is in discussions with Southampton University for it to take on part of the site and redevelop this for educational purposes.

3. M27 works

Residents should be aware that extensive closures will take place on the M27 this month, as Highways England begin surfacing of lanes two and three between junction 9 and 11. The closures will take place between the hours of 9.00pm and 6.00am the following morning.

As is always the case, dates are subject to change due to operational requirements or adverse weather conditions. Road users are advised to plan journeys in advance and keep up to date by visiting the Traffic England website: www.trafficengland.com or by following their Twitter feed: @HighwaysSEAST.

4. Boost your immunity this winter

Residents should be aware of the NHS call for everyone to 'Boost your immunity this winter' by getting the COVID-19 booster and 'flu vaccine. With COVID-19 infection rates continuing to rise across the county, eligible residents are being urged to get their booster and 'flu jabs as soon as possible.

Free flu jabs are available to adults over 50, anyone with a long-term health condition, healthcare workers and carers, most children aged 2-16 years and pregnant women. A free COVID-19 booster is available to adults over 50, carers and health and social care

workers, anyone living and working in care homes, people with certain health conditions and people who live with someone who is immunocompromised.

Residents eligible for the COVID-19 booster will be contacted by the NHS – if anyone has not been contacted within a week of reaching six months since their second jab they can call 119 or [book online via the NHS National Booking Service](#). Those who are eligible for a free 'flu vaccine can book an appointment through their GP surgery or local pharmacy. It is not too late to book a first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccination: [anyone aged 16+ can book the vaccine through the National Booking System on the NHS website](#), go to a [walk-in clinic](#) or contact their GP surgery.

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