

Parish Update – October 2023

Cllr Malcolm Wallace (mwallace@winchester.gov.uk)

& Cllr Danny Lee (dlee@winchester.gov.uk)

NEW TOPICS

- **Nature Emergency**
 - At September's Full Council meeting, [Winchester City Council declared a Nature Emergency](#) that will sit alongside the Climate Emergency declaration made in 2019. Councillor Danny Lee was instrumental in driving through this Nature Emergency declaration.
 - The declaration came out shortly before the [State of Nature 2023 Report](#) was issued, which highlights that one in six species at now at risk of being lost from Great Britain, and that only one in seven of the habitats assessed during the study were deemed to be in good condition.
 - The Council's declaration of a Nature Emergency is a great first step towards putting in place the actions and policies needed to drive real change.
- **The Great British Insulation Scheme**
 - This new Government scheme will enable up to 300,000 households to add insulation to their homes to make them easier to heat for less.
 - The scheme is aimed at two main groups:
 - Those living in homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating D-G and within council tax bands A-D
 - Householders receiving qualifying benefits and living in homes with an EPC rating of D or below.
 - More information is available at: [What is the Great British Insulation Scheme \(ECO+\)? - Energy Saving Trust](#)
- **Solar Together Hampshire**
 - WCC are working with Hampshire County Council to promote a group buying scheme to residents for high-quality solar Photovoltaic (PV) panels and battery storage.
 - The scheme will bring Hampshire households together to get high-quality solar panels at a competitive price, helping them through the process and keeping them informed at every stage. Local residents have the opportunity to invest in generating their own electricity to save on their energy bills and lower their carbon footprint by having solar panels installed.
 - Visit [Solar Together | Winchester City Council](#) for more information.
- **Recycling Update**
 - The Council is working to understand the PMs announcement on recycling and the implications for the planned improvements to waste collection in the District.
 - It is unclear whether the PMs statement means that the much-delayed plans for consistent household collections and the Deposit Return Scheme have been amended or indeed scrapped.
 - More to follow.
- **Rural England Prosperity Fund**
 - Another opportunity to get funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund is opening shortly. This grant scheme will support capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure, to help to improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities.

- In the first tranche, projects receiving funding included Ground Source Heating for Itchen Abbas Village Hall, improving hall equipment for Wickham Community Association and installation of EV charging points for Twyford Parish Council
- Over £500K is available as part of the second tranche of funding. More details are available at: [UK Shared and Rural England Prosperity Funds - Winchester City Council](#)
- **Shoots Along the Routes**
 - Hampshire County Council's new initiative, the Hampshire Forest Partnership will be providing free trees to landowners and land managers to create over 630 kilometres of new green networks across the county.
 - See the attached for further information or contact Kate Morgans, Principal Landscape Architect, via email kmorgans@winchester.gov.uk or phone 01962 848 069.

Upcoming Events

- **Future Energy Forum, Bedales School, Petersfield, Friday 06-Oct**
 - See attached information about a Future Energy Forum being hosted by Energise South Downs
 - For more information go to [Home - Energise South Downs \(esd.energy\)](#)
 - To book go to [Energise South Downs' Future Energy Forum | Bedales School](#)
- **Bishops Waltham Eco Fair, Saturday 07-Oct**
 - [Sustainable Bishops Waltham – part of the WeCAN Network – Winchester Action on Climate Crisis \(winacc.org.uk\)](#)
- **Wickham Charity Beer Festival, Saturday 07-Oct**
 - [Home - Wickham Beer Festival](#)
- **Soberton & Newtown's Climate Café Event, Saturday 21-Oct at Rookesbury Hall**
- **Winchester Christmas Market, 17-Nov to 21-Dec**
 - [Winchester Cathedral | Christmas \(winchester-cathedral.org.uk\)](#)

ON-GOING TOPICS

Homeshare

- St John's Winchester charity has set up a Homeshare scheme to help tackle loneliness and isolation, relieve pressure on housing and the cost-of-living crisis and have a positive effect on the mental and physical wellbeing of older and younger people in Winchester and District. Matches an older homeowner who has a spare room (the 'householder') with a younger person (the 'sharer') who needs affordable accommodation. In exchange for the room, the sharer volunteers 10 hours a week practical help and companionship to the householder. There's a small fee to pay for the service (matching, robust safeguarding checks, on-going monitoring) £100 per month for the householder, £200 per month for the sharer. See: [Find out more, or register your interest - St John's Winchester](#)

Grants

- **Small Grants Scheme** – The WCC District Small Grant Scheme provides one-off grants of up to £1,000 to local voluntary/not-for-profit groups and organisations for one-off expenditure on projects, equipment, and other items to help organisations to do more, reach more people, or provide better services.
- Fund closes to applications: 28 February 2024 or sooner on full allocation of budget
- See: [District Small Grant Scheme - Winchester City Council](#)

Going Green Faster & Help with Cost of Living

- **Homes** – Residents can apply for grants of up to £25,000 for energy efficiency improvements to their property under the [Warmer Homes](#) program. Homes who are likely to be eligible to receive support:
 - are low income
 - are off the gas grid
 - have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) between D and G
- **Energy bills and protecting the environment**
 - Paying bills, Keeping homes warm and Energy Efficiency Advice - see [Energy - Winchester City Council](#)
 - More information about keeping warm and well at home is also available from 'The Hampshire Environment Centre' - enquiries@environmentcentre.com or by phone 0800 804 8601
- **National** – A new website has been launched that provides information on Government support that is available: [Help for Households - Get government cost of living support](#) – see also (www.gov.uk)
- **Local** – In addition, Winchester Council has launched a website providing information on local resources: [Cost of living support and information - Winchester City Council](#)
- **Travel by Bus** – The £2 bus fare cap scheme has been extended until 31 October and then rises to £2.50 until November 2024. See: Government extends £2 bus fare cap and protects vital services - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Business

- **Business Support** – There are currently LOTS of funding opportunities available to help businesses with the transition to net zero. See: [Support for sustainable businesses - Winchester City Council](#)
- **Businesses or sole traders** in Winchester district can keep up to date with topics from funding, events, and information. Sign-up at: [Winchester Business Bulletin - Winchester City Council](#)
- **Networking** - [Business Networking - Winchester City Council](#)

Groups

- **Community Support for Ukraine (information and help)** – For latest information see: [Winchester City Council pledges support for Ukraine - Winchester City Council](#)
- **Climate Groups** – There's a range of sustainable groups and organisations within the Winchester district at: [Climate groups - Winchester City Council](#)
 - **Winchester Action on the Climate Crisis** – visit [Search - Winchester City Council](#)

Of Interest

- **Residents' Survey 2022** - The council is performing strongly in the context of results across the South-East of England. <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/assets/attach/33766/Residents-Survey-2022-Executive-Summary.pdf>