
A newsletter from the Borough Councillors for the Test Valley Borough Ward of Mid-Test

Cllrs Alison Johnston, Ian Jeffrey, and Tony Ward

New Mayor appointed for Test Valley



Councillor Alan Dowden has been elected as Test Valley's new mayor following an annual council meeting.

Councillor Dowden, who represents the Valley Park ward on Test Valley Borough Council, has supported previous mayor, councillor Mark Cooper, during his duties over the past 12 months.

At a meeting held at The Guildhall, Andover, on Wednesday 18 May, councillor Alan Dowden was nominated by his wife, councillor Celia Dowden, with his recommendation seconded by councillor Martin Hatley.

Mayor Alan Dowden said: "I'm incredibly proud to have been elected as this borough's next mayor for the coming year. This is an exciting time in Test Valley, coupled with the multiple celebrations that are being lined up for Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in the next few weeks.

"I'm hugely grateful to councillor Cooper for all his support over the past 12 months and look forward to a busy year ahead."

Councillor Philip Lashbrook has been elected as the Deputy Mayor of Test Valley, to support Mayor Dowden and deputise for selected events.

Councillor Lashbrook said: "This is a fantastic honour, and I would like to thank those members who have supported my nomination to this role. I hope I can be a good deputy to Mayor Dowden for the next year and I'm excited to get going."

During his civic year, councillor Dowden announced that his Mayoral Appeal will be raising funds for borough wide charities that support young people.

Hampshire Passenger Transport Forums

You can now register to attend one of the upcoming Hampshire Passenger Transport Forums. The two Hampshire wide Passenger Transport Forums (held via Microsoft Teams) will take place on the following dates:

- Thursday 9th June 9.30-11.30am
- Monday 13th June 10am-12 noon

The two sessions will be the same, so there is no need to attend both meetings.

Please book your preferred session by 4pm the day before each event by completing the registration form online at: <https://forms.office.com/r/VNdghDsjmG>

[Download agenda for 9th June meeting](#)

[Download agenda for 13th June meeting](#)



Hampshire Police - Firearms Surrender

Hampshire Police are holding a 'Firearms Surrender' period for firearms and ammunition between Thursday 12th May - Sunday 29th May 2022.

Police are asking people to surrender unlawfully held or unwanted guns and ammunition to help avoid them getting into the wrong hands. Many firearms may be held in innocence and ignorance of their illegality or may be overlooked or forgotten in people's homes. The Surrender period gives holders the chance to dispose of them safely by taking it to a local police station and handing it in.

Firearms should be handed to police and front counter staff at designated stations. The stations in and close to Test Valley are:

ANDOVER: Monday - Friday 0800 - 1600hrs ; SOUTHAMPTON (Police Investigation Centre): 7 days a week 0800 - 2000hrs

Outside of the surrender period, those in possession of an unlicensed firearm could receive a mandatory five-year prison sentence. [Click here for more details.](#)

Energy Bills Rebate

If you have received a letter from Test Valley Borough Council requesting your bank details, [please click here](#).

Following [the government announcement](#) on 3 February 2022, households in England which are in Council Tax bands A to D will receive a £150 rebate.

The Council's full policy may be downloaded here: [Test Valley Energy Bills Rebate Policy](#)

Eligibility

The Energy Bill Rebate is available to all households in Council Tax bands A to D (or are in Band E and qualify for the disabled band reduction) and consists of a one-off payment of £150 to eligible households.

If you are unsure of your council tax band, this can be found on your latest council tax bill or by visiting: [Check your Council Tax Band](#)

You must be liable for the Council Tax bill at the property to be eligible for the rebate. You will be eligible if you receive 100% Council Tax Support or are exempt because your property is occupied only:

- By students or school/college leavers,
- By person(s) aged under 18 years,
- By severely mentally impaired persons
- In the case of annexes, by dependant relatives.

Empty homes or second homes are not eligible for the rebate.

Only one £150 payment will be made per household, regardless of the number of occupants or liable council taxpayers and is to support all members of the household.

You can read the [full government guidance here](#) or you can download the Council's policy here: [Test Valley Energy Bills Rebate Policy](#).

Payment

The Council has started making payments to residents who are eligible and pay their Council Tax by Direct Debit. It will take us a few weeks to make all these payments so please bear with us. You do not need to take any action.

If you sign up to pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit, this will make it easier for us to pay your £150 rebate if you are eligible. [You can sign up for Direct Debit here](#).

If you do not pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit, we will write to you to advise how you can apply. Your letter will contain a unique access key which you will need to submit your bank details to us, so please keep this letter safe. The letter will direct you to our online form where you can submit your bank details safely - this is the quickest and easiest way to claim your Energy Rebate. The letter will also explain how you can make a claim if you do not have internet access.

Please note that the Council will never cold call you to request your bank details.

Discretionary Fund

The Council has chosen to target its most vulnerable households and will make a Discretionary Fund payment to a liable council taxpayer (or an occupant where the property is exempt) where they occupy a property which meets one the following criteria on 1 April 2022:

- £205 one-off payment for Council Tax Support claimants in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in bands E to H; **Continued on page 4**

- £55 top up payment to Council Tax Support claimants in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in bands A to D;
- £205 one-off payment for residents not in receipt of Council Tax Support with a Council Tax Disabled Band Reduction or Severely Mentally Impaired exemption in bands E to H;
- £55 top up payment for residents not in receipt of Council Tax Support with a Council Tax Disabled Band Reduction or Severely Mentally Impaired exemption in bands A to D.

More information about the Discretionary Scheme is detailed in the Council's policy: [Test Valley Energy Bills Rebate Policy](#)

We aim to start making Discretionary Fund payments when we have finishing making payments in respect of the main scheme. We will contact eligible residents in writing if we require further information from you to make a payment. You do not need to take any action currently.

Support for Ukraine

We will do all we can to support those fleeing the war in Ukraine and are working with our partners to help.

Information from the Government

The Government has published a range of information and guidance at www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/russian-invasion-of-Ukraine-UK-government-response

[View Gov.UK webpage about A Homes for Ukraine campaign and frequently asked questions document.](#)

They have also published a welcome pack for Ukrainians arriving in the UK which is available here: [Welcome! A guide for Ukrainians arriving in the UK \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Further information includes:

- [Factsheet](#)
- [Guidance for people arriving in the UK](#)
- [Guidance for sponsors](#)
- [How to register under the homes for Ukraine campaign](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Information on accessing financial support](#)
- [Guidance for coming to the UK with pets](#)

They are updating these pages regularly, so keep checking back for the latest information.

Hampshire County Council's role

Hampshire County Council is leading the local response to helping Ukrainian families moving to the area through the Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme.

On the Hampshire County Council website, you will find:

[Guidance for sponsors](#), which includes key information for those looking to host a Ukrainian family.

[Information for Ukrainian guests](#). **Continued on page 5**

[Other ways to help](#)

Donating to support Ukraine

We are recommending that those who wish to provide support to Ukrainian families donate to UK charities that have launched appeals.

These include but are not limited to:

- [British Red Cross](#)
- [Action Against Hunger](#)
- [CARE International UK](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)
- [World Vision](#)

The reason we are recommending this approach is that these charities have the infrastructure, experience and connections on the ground to be able to make a difference. Financial support will also allow them to direct the relevant resources to where they are needed.

Advice for family members of British nationals in Ukraine

If you are a resident with friends and family in Ukraine and need information or support, contact the [Ukrainian Embassy](#)

The Government has published advice for family members of British nationals who usually live in Ukraine. Click the links below to visit GOV.UK.

[Support for family members of British nationals in Ukraine, and Ukrainian nationals in Ukraine and the UK](#)

Ukrainians Welcome

www.ukrainianswelcome.org is a "one-stop shop" of useful websites, helplines, and other information - anything from where to get basic travel and housing advice to opening a bank account and understanding your rights as a worker.

Dormouse footprint tunnels at Ladies Walk

Two local volunteers assisted countryside officers in undertaking a dormouse footprint tunnel survey at Ladies Walk over this last month. The Hazel Dormouse is a European Protected species and a brilliant indicator of healthy habitat.

Footprint tunnels are proving to be the most effective method of noting presence or absence of Dormice and is the only method that does not require the guidance of a licenced person. Having installed them on 8/4/22, the first check took place two weeks later. Much to everyone's surprise, we had positive results! Since then, we have had even more footprints up the opposite end of the walk, showing that they are using the whole stretch of hedge. You can see the little footprints in the photo below and a female Dormouse having a snooze.



Making of the Houghton Neighborhood Plan

The Houghton Neighborhood Plan 2020 to 2029 was 'made' following the positive referendum on 19 May 2022. The Plan forms part of the Development Plan for the parish and will be used to guide planning decisions in Houghton.

The referendum result is as follows:

Response	Votes	Percentage
YES	122	91.73%
NO	11	8.27%
Turnout	39%	

The made Plan, Decision Statement and declaration of result can be viewed at: [Houghton Neighbourhood Plan | Test Valley Borough Council](#)

From 20 May, the Houghton Neighborhood Plan is subject to a six-week period where applications can be made to the High Court on the grounds that the plans are not within the appropriate powers and/or a procedural requirement has not been complied with. This six-week period of legal challenge ends on 1 July 2022.

West Dean and West Tytherley Neighbourhood Plan

The West Dean and West Tytherley Neighbourhood Plan 2022 to 2035 was 'made' following the positive referendum on 17 March 2022. The Plan forms part of the Development Plan for the parish and will be used to guide planning decisions in West Dean and West Tytherley.

The referendum result is as follows:

Response	Votes	Percentage
YES	176	94.1%
NO	11	5.9%
Turnout	26.64%	

The made Plan, Decision Statement and declaration of result can be viewed at: [West Dean and West Tytherley Neighbourhood Plan | Test Valley Borough Council](#)

The final decision statement was issued on 11 May 2022 and from this date the West Dean and West Tytherley Neighbourhood Plan is subject to a six week period where applications can be made to the High Court on the grounds that the plan is not within the appropriate powers and/or a procedural requirement has not been complied with. This six week period of legal challenge ends on 22 June 2022.



Have your say on your future!

WE WANT YOU TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON OUR NEXT CORPORATE PLAN!

THE CORPORATE PLAN IS THE CENTRAL DOCUMENT THAT SHAPES WHAT TEST VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL DOES FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS.

WE NEED YOUR VIEWS ON WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT.

GOT A FEW MINUTES? CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT OUR SURVEY.

Test Valley Borough Council WWW.TESTVALLEY.GOV.UK/CORPORATEPLAN2023

TVBC is working on our new central document that shapes our vision for the next four years – and we need you!

We're busy working away to put together our next Corporate Plan, which is what we look to when making decisions and setting our priorities for the four-year period. Before we put that together, we need to know what our communities think and what matters most to them.

So, this is where you come in. We need your voices to tell us what our priorities should be throughout the organisation, from countryside to bin collections, to town centres and leisure facilities. It takes a few minutes and could help shape our future.

[Click here to fill out the survey](#)

Why not come to speak to us this summer?

Throughout the spring and summer months, council officers and councillors will also be at various community events up and down the borough to speak to residents about what your priorities are.

So, if you'd like to come down to speak to us at one of these events instead of filling out the survey online, why not check out where we'll be and when on our events calendar below:

Corporate Plan consultation events



Area	Activity	Date
May		
Awbridge	Awbridge Village Fete	Saturday 14 th May
North Baddesley	North Baddesley Village Day	Saturday 21 st May
Long Parish	School May Fayre	Saturday 21 st May
June		
Andover	Jubilee Street Festival	Friday 3 rd June
Hurstbourne Tarrant	Jubilee event	Sunday 5 th June
Braishfield	Beer race and Jubilee event	Sunday 5 th June
Kings Somborne	Village Fete	Saturday 25 th June
July		
Romsey	Mayor's Picnic	Sunday 3 rd July
Romsey	Beggars Fair	Saturday 9 th July
Andover	Carnival	Sunday 17 th July
August		
Andover	Four Fun Fridays	Friday 5 th August
Stockbridge	Trout n About	Sunday 7 th August
Andover	Four Fun Fridays	Friday 19 th August
September		
Romsey	Food Festival	TBC
TBC		
Shipton Bellinger	TBC	TBC
The Wallops	TBC	TBC
Sherfield English	TBC	TBC

EV on street parking survey

Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council are keen to support residents / visitors to Test Valley who choose to use Electric Vehicles (EVs) as a more environmentally friendly alternative to traditional petrol and diesel cars.

HCC have installed some charge points across the county and are investigating the possibility of installing publicly available charge points in on-street locations to increase the numbers and connectivity of the EV network. Please fill out the following survey to help HCC identify where demand is greatest. [On-street electric chargepoints and your views \(office.com\)](#)

HCC are currently only collating information to inform their strategy, but requests are being recorded for subsequent installation, subject to technical feasibility and budget

Waste and Recycling Collection Update

Periodically, we carry out a review of our waste and recycling collection rounds to ensure they remain efficient and effective. We have just completed a review and we are making some small amends to our rounds which will result in day changes for some residents. All affected households are being written to this week, and the round changes will take effect from week commencing 6 June 2022.

The Local Police and Beat Surgeries from their Newsletter

Meet the team...Left to right -PC James Batt, PC Tristan Pugh, PCSO Marie Stubbington, PC Vern Gook



The annual parish council meetings have started to take place and we are looking to attend all of them. Marie has so far been to Braishfield, Wellow and Awbridge where she received a warm welcome. She has Sherfield English, Kings Somborne, West Tytherley, Ampfield and Mottisfont and Dunbridge booked in for this month.

Marie also spent time at Lockerley beavers talking to the children about the role of a PCSO in the community as well as how and when to make a 999 call.

Beat Surgeries have now started back up again on a regular monthly basis. Marie will be accessible to her local community and a list of dates are located at the end of this newsletter...

Below are two of the latest beat surgeries in Awbridge and with Councillor Nick Adams-King at West Tytherley.



Helping Young Carers

Did you know that Romsey Young Carers look after [10 Young Carers in the area of Mid Test](#)

Romsey Young Carers as a Registered Charity has recently faced unprecedented times, yet throughout the pandemic, have continued to support our young carers and their families.

During lockdowns, whilst they were unable to hold their various weekly clubs or offer outings, instead they held regular zoom calls and offered individual families remote support in every way they could.

As the country emerges from the pandemic, but continues to face the challenge of rising inflation, they are finding that some local companies that offered support in the past, are no longer able to resume their support.

Competition from funding from grants has become extremely competitive and as a result, **they are now facing tough decisions, including potential closure of the project within the next twelve months**, an eventuality they sincerely wish to avoid.

Their aim is to raise over £10,000 in the next few months, which will ensure they can continue operating into 2023 and potentially longer.

Whilst their incomings have remained stable or reduced, the number of young carers they support is higher than it has ever been. They have **130 young carers on our records**, from 100 families, many of which are increasingly from children's services. Their patch is much larger than just Romsey itself, where there are 72 young carers alone. They provide our service to the outlying areas north of Romsey, out towards Southampton and the New Forest.

Each year it costs c**£10,000 to provide a young carer with support**. For this cost, each young carer has: a space at a fully staffed and supported youth club during term time.

- At least one activity and outing during each school holiday
- Access to several whole family support or activity days
- Opportunities to go on residential breaks
- Opportunities to attend funded activities through partner organisation
- A dedicated link worker who is available to support the family and attend and support at meetings with school and other services.
- A support service that works closely with the school to offer 121 sessions as needed, as well as deliver/ exploration sessions, which help a young person to understand what it means to be a young carer.

Each club session-costs around £80-£100 with staffing costs, food and resources, there are also unpaid volunteers attending each club. The work supporting young carers and their families is an important intervention, which makes a huge and positive impact on people's lives and can reduce pressure on the NHS in the long term.

Given all of this, **they really need to hit the target of raising £10,000 in the next few months**.

They would welcome any support in the form of monetary donations, nominating them as your charity, or mentioning us in any Ward or Parish publications, or your social media profiles.

They have also set up a website donation page [Romsey Young Carers](#) or perhaps registering on

[EasyFundraising](#) nominating Romsey Young Carers as the chosen charity.

TVBC Instagram

In the next couple of weeks we're planning to soft launch a new TVBC Instagram account.

Using images and short videos, we hope to showcase the council's work to support our communities and keep the borough looking great.

If you have an Instagram account then please do give us a follow.



Target smashed for tree planting with almost 20,000 in the ground

Nearly 20,000 trees have been planted over the 2021/22 planting season, almost doubling the target set for Test Valley Borough Council.

Last year, the council announced its target to plant 10,000 trees over the autumn and winter months in a bid to help tackle climate change and improve the environment.

Now, climate change and countryside portfolio holder, councillor Alison Johnston, has revealed that a total of 19,325 trees have been planted across the borough.

CONTACT



Cllr Alison Johnston

01794 500610

cllrajohnston@testvalley.gov.uk



Cllr Ian Jeffrey

07859955327

1794 388872

cllrieffrey@testvalley.gov.uk



Cllr Tony Ward

01794 389649

07881 812958

cllrtward@testvalley.gov.uk

