



Hampshire County Councillor Report Juliet Henderson July 2026 Candovers Oakley and Overton Division

County Councillor Grants Scheme reopens

Hampshire County Council's County Councillor Grants Scheme reopened on 1 July. Each County Councillor has an annual budget of £5,000 to support worthwhile projects in their division, with grants generally available from £100 to £1,000.

The scheme can support not-for-profit organisations and community groups, including youth and sports activities, village halls, social-support projects, environmental and outdoor initiatives and equipment such as defibrillators.

If you wish to apply as a community group, with a suitable project please review the guidance and contact me. Applications will be considered against the scheme criteria and the benefit they can provide to residents.

Full details and the application form: [Hampshire County Councillor Grants Scheme](#)

Have your say on the future of policing

The Government is considering significant changes to policing across England and Wales, including the possibility of merging existing police forces into larger regional organisations. These decisions could reshape policing in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight for many years.

Policing works best when it understands and reflects the communities it serves. Whether residents support locally focused policing, see advantages in larger forces or have concerns about accountability and local identity, it is important that Hampshire voices are heard before decisions are made.

Complete the Police and Crime Commissioner's survey: [Police Force Merger Consultation](#)

Please help tackle hare coursing in rural Hampshire

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary has continued patrols and enforcement activity against hare coursing. This is not a harmless rural pastime: it involves trespass,

damage to crops and land, intimidation of farmers and residents, and organised criminality.

Residents should report suspicious vehicles or activity, particularly groups entering fields with dogs, to the police. Call 999 where an offence is happening or there is an immediate risk; otherwise report through 101 or the police online reporting service. Vehicle registrations, descriptions and locations can be extremely helpful, but nobody should put themselves at risk to obtain them.

Connect to Work: a new employment route for people with social care needs

A dedicated route has opened into the Connect to Work programme for people receiving social care support. This is a practical opportunity for residents with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental-health needs or other complex barriers to receive tailored help into sustainable employment.

Hampshire County Council has secured £18.7 million of national funding for the wider Connect to Work programme. Support is voluntary and individually tailored, and can include one-to-one help, training, job matching and continuing support for both the participant and the employer after work begins.

Employment is not simply about income. For many people it can provide independence, confidence, purpose and a stronger connection to their community. The right support can also help employers recruit and retain people whose abilities might otherwise be overlooked.

Information and registration: [Connect to Work](#)

Summer Reading Challenge

Children across Hampshire are being invited to sign up for this year's Summer Reading Challenge as it returns to Hampshire Libraries from Saturday 11 July. The 2026 challenge is called Read to the Beat.

Run nationally by [The Reading Agency](#), this year's challenge is being delivered in partnership with [Universal Music Group UK](#), using the theme of music to encourage children to read for pleasure over the summer holidays.

The Summer Reading Challenge is designed to keep children reading during the long summer break, when reading habits can easily dip without the routine of school. By taking part, children are encouraged to discover new books, build confidence and enjoy reading in a fun and relaxed way.

In Hampshire, last year's challenge saw 17,815 children start, with 10,590 going on to complete it. [Volunteers](#) also played an important part, giving 5,931 hours of their time to support the programme in 2025, and more are welcome to [get involved](#) this year.

Libraries across the county will be welcoming children and families to take part, with staff and volunteers helping young readers get started, track their progress and enjoy everything the challenge has to offer over the summer.

The challenge is free to join and open to children of all reading abilities. Whether they already love books or just need a bit of encouragement to get started, the Summer Reading Challenge helps make reading fun, achievable and rewarding.

For more information about the challenge, families can visit the [Hampshire Libraries website](#) or speak to staff at their [local library](#).

Hot weather and water safety

There was deeply distressing news from Testwood Lakes after a 15-year-old boy was reported missing while swimming on 24 June. A major multi-agency search followed, and Hampshire Police later confirmed that his body had been found. My thoughts remain with his family, friends and everyone affected by this tragedy.

The incident is a heartbreaking reminder that open water can be dangerous even in warm weather and even for confident swimmers. Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss the Water Safety Code with children and young people, including the “Float to Live” advice and the importance of calling 999 immediately in an emergency rather than entering the water to attempt a rescue.

Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership advice: [Water Safety for parents and carers](#)

Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/flooding>

Pavement problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/paving>

Broken or missing signs: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/brokensigns>

Faulty street lights: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/streetlight>

Faded or missing road markings: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/road-markings>

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.

