

Update from Hampshire County Council – July 2026

Boost for local communities as Hampshire County Councillors Grants Scheme opens this July

Vital support to local organisations, projects and initiatives that strengthen communities across the county will be available from Hampshire County Council's popular Members Grants Scheme which will reopen on 1 July 2026

The scheme allocates a budget of £5,000 for each County Councillor to support worthwhile projects within their community.

The grant scheme is open for applications of between £100 and £1,000 from a wide range of not-for-profit organisations and community groups such as sports clubs and youth groups. The scheme is designed to support a diverse range of community-focused projects and initiatives funded through previous Hampshire County Councillor Grants Schemes include arts performances, social support groups, outdoor projects and defibrillator installations.

Applications can be submitted online once the scheme opens on 1 July. Full guidance, eligibility criteria and the application form are available [here](#).

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260626MembersGrantsScheme>

Thousands of Hampshire residents to benefit from expanded weight management support programme

More Hampshire residents will be supported to improve their health and wellbeing after plans for continued investment in adult weight management services were approved today

Hampshire County Council has approved investment of up to £6.2 million from April 2027 to help residents across the county access practical support to lose weight, become more active and reduce their risk of serious long-term health conditions.

The expanded programme builds on the success of existing services, which already support around 5,000 residents each year, with many participants achieving clinically meaningful weight loss and developing healthier long-term habits. The future service is expected to support between 6,000 and 7,000 residents annually.

The new service model will provide a wider range of support options tailored to residents' needs, including face-to-face programmes, physical activity-based support, and specialist services for people living with severe mental illness or learning disabilities. Additional support will also be targeted towards communities experiencing the greatest health inequalities.

Across Hampshire, around two-thirds of adults are currently overweight or living with obesity, increasing the risk of conditions including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers.

The programme will continue to focus on long-term behaviour change, supporting residents to improve their diet, increase physical activity and build healthier routines that can be sustained over time.

The services will continue to be funded through Hampshire County Council's ring-fenced Public Health Grant as part of the authority's duty to improve population health and reduce health inequalities across the county.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260623WeightManSupport>

Hampshire confirms longer-term help for residents facing financial hardship

Hampshire residents facing financial hardship are set to benefit from a major package of support, agreed today by Hampshire County Council

At her Decision Day, Councillor Zoe Huggins, Executive Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, approved plans to allocate up to £33 million from the Government's new Crisis and Resilience Fund up to March 2029.

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The package includes direct crisis payments for eligible residents, extra support for households struggling with the rising cost of heating oil and continued backing for food support networks such as community pantries. Alongside this the County Council will invest in longer-term support to help residents build financial resilience and reduce the risk of future hardship.

Plans also include appointing a delivery partner to manage crisis payments and provide wider advice and support, as well as recommissioning an expanded Community Wellbeing Worker Service across Hampshire for adults who need more than simple signposting, including ringfenced funding from Public Health.

The [Crisis and Resilience Fund](#) replaces the previous Household Support Fund and is designed to help councils provide both immediate crisis support and longer-term financial resilience for low-income households. For 2026/27, Hampshire's allocation is £11.035 million, including £586,000 to support residents who rely on heating oil.

Further information on claiming grants and support in Hampshire can be found at [connect4communities](#).
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260623crf>

Free summer holiday activities now open to book in Hampshire

Families across Hampshire can now book free holiday activity sessions as the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme returns for summer 2026

Open to children who receive benefits-related free school meals, the scheme offers a wide mix of activities – from sports and outdoor sessions to crafts and creative workshops – alongside a healthy meal each day.

This summer, more than 190 schemes are running across the county, delivered by over 70 trusted local organisations.

The programme comes as families are increasingly looking for ways to keep children active, social and engaged away from screens. HAF offers a safe, structured way for children to get out, try something new and spend time with others during the long break.

The latest summer programme is funded by a £3.6 million Government grant secured in January for Hampshire to continue and strengthen delivery up to 2029.

Parents and carers can visit Hampshire County Council's new and improved [HAF booking page](#) to search and book sessions by area, age and activity. Families are asked to check session details carefully and attend booked places wherever possible.

More information and FAQs are available via the [connect4communities website](#). Queries can be sent to: connect4communities@hants.gov.uk.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260623HAFsummer>

Hampshire approach to domestic abuse highlighted at House of Lords committee

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Hampshire County Council's Director of Public Health has given evidence to a House of Lords committee, highlighting the strength of Hampshire's partnership approach to supporting victims and preventing domestic abuse.

Simon Bryant chairs the [Hampshire Domestic Abuse Partnership](#), which brings together organisations from across local government, health, policing, housing, education and the voluntary sector to tackle

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domestic abuse and improve support for residents. Simon explained how these agencies are working together to provide coordinated support for victims and survivors, while also focusing on prevention and early intervention.

It comes as the House of Lords Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Committee is examining the impact and effectiveness of the Act, including how local authorities and partner organisations are delivering support and measuring progress.

During the session, Simon highlighted the value of the Act in strengthening local partnership working and ensuring organisations across Hampshire take shared responsibility for supporting those affected by domestic abuse. He also spoke about the importance of investing in early intervention, community-based support and services for children and young people impacted by abuse.

Simon's appearance at the committee coincides with the launch of a new Hampshire-wide awareness campaign highlighting the increased risk of domestic abuse during major men's football tournaments, ahead of this summer's FIFA World Cup. The campaign, which features the message 'When is kick-off at your place?', aims to encourage people experiencing abuse or controlling behaviour to seek support, while raising awareness that incidents of domestic abuse can rise by over 25%* during such events.

The Hampshire Domestic Abuse Advice Line (03300 165 112), run by [Stop Domestic Abuse](#), offers free, confidential and independent support for anyone affected by domestic abuse, including children and young people.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260610DAWorldCup>

Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority formally established following parliamentary approval

The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA) has been formally established following parliamentary approval of the statutory instrument, marking a major milestone in the creation of a new authority to lead strategic decision-making across the region

The new authority will provide a strong foundation for greater local leadership on priorities including transport, housing, skills, investment and economic growth. It will help unlock opportunities for stronger coordination across partners and deliver improved long-term outcomes for communities and businesses across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The establishment of the HSCCA represents an important step forward in the devolution of powers and funding from central government, ensuring that decisions about the region are made closer to the people they affect.

The HSCCA will enable a more collaborative approach to public investment and delivery, supporting councils, public bodies, businesses and investors to work together at scale on shared economic and social priorities, and to maximise the region's collective strengths.

HSCCA will now begin establishing an organisation that will deliver on its priorities across the region, building on the strong foundations already in place to realise the full benefits of devolution. This marks the next step for the HSCCA, moving from legal establishment to delivery. At its inaugural meeting, expected to be held in July, the new authority will establish itself as an operating organisation, adopting its Constitution and Local Assurance Framework, the governance that sets out its role, its decision-making and how it will work with partners across the region on its areas of competence.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260605HSCCA>

Boost for electric vehicle use as Hampshire County Council unveils plan for 17,000 community chargers

People across Hampshire are set to benefit from the introduction of around 17,000 electric vehicle charge points, with new infrastructure set to be installed in local areas where 'off-street' charging from home is not an option.

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This is part of a government-funded Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund - supported by significant private investment from Charge Point Operator, Believ - which is designed to meet the rising demand for places where drivers can recharge their electric vehicles. The Hampshire scheme forms part of a national strategy to expand neighbourhood provision, addressing the current challenges faced by households without access to private off-street parking such as driveways or garages. RAC data shows that a third (33%) of Hampshire residents don't have access to off-street parking options, with that figure rising to 38% in Winchester and Rushmoor, and 39% in Basingstoke.

The County Council has secured £6.662 million from the Department for Transport – which has unlocked significant private capital investment totalling up to £90million, enabling the programme to be delivered at no cost to the County Council. This also places Hampshire currently as the largest Local Authority-led EV infrastructure project in England. Moreover, the Local Authority will receive a portion of income from the scheme once operational.

Installations are expected to begin later this year, with around 500 charge points planned for delivery in the first year of the programme.

To register a location for consideration in the scheme, visit www.hants.gov.uk/transport/electric-vehicles.
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260506EVChargingScheme>

Boost for passengers as Hampshire County Council confirms funding for 100+ bus shelter upgrades

Passengers across rural areas in Hampshire are set to benefit from an improved travel experience as 41 parish councils have been awarded grants to refurbish or replace 137 bus shelters

The funding, totalling £554,124, has been made available through Hampshire County Council's bus shelter improvement scheme, supported by the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) 2025/26 Bus Grant.

The grant scheme is designed to help parish councils that own and maintain bus shelters to upgrade their facilities. Improvements could include upgraded structures alongside enhanced features such as new seating and lighting.

Parish councils were able to apply for a grant to carry out essential upgrades or replace ageing infrastructure. The grants will support a mix of refurbishments and new installations at existing sites.

Over this financial year, Hampshire County Council has an allocation of £14,877,662 of Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG) from the UK Government to deliver the priorities set out in Hampshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This funding supports a wide range of measures, including improvements to bus stops, stations and interchanges; real-time passenger information; bus priority schemes; zero-emission bus depot charging infrastructure; community-led transport grants; fare initiatives; and rural bus shelter funding for town and parish councils.

For 2024/25, there were 26.6 million journeys a year made by bus in Hampshire – an increase of 1.7 million journeys from 2023/24 levels.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260106BusShelterGrants>

David Drew

Test Valley Central Division, HCC
Harewood ward, TVBC