

# Mid Test Matters

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

Cllrs Alison Johnston, Ian Jeffrey, and Tony Ward

## **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.**



# Romsey Future

## TVBC endorses Romsey Future's vision for the town

Council chiefs last night endorsed the vision for the future of Romsey

The Romsey Future partnership, which is formed of community organisations, local authorities and other groups, launched its revised vision for the town in spring this year.

Test Valley Borough Council is one of those partners of Romsey Future, with councillors endorsing the partnership's vision at a cabinet meeting last night.

The vision's main aims include ensuring the town is well connected, environmentally responsible with a sense of strong community, while the economy continues to thrive.

Last summer, Romsey Future ran a public consultation around the town to find out what mattered most to residents. These views were then put into a new vision document, refreshing its aims for the next 20 years.

Some of the partnership's projects include revamping the area south of the town centre and increasing cycling and walking links through the town. The vision, titled *A Vision for Romsey* has also been endorsed by Hampshire Constabulary, Unity and the NHS's local clinical commissioning group, as well as the Romsey and District Society.

Deputy leader of TVBC, councillor Nick Adams-King, said: "I'm very pleased that as a council, we are able to endorse this document. Romsey has a bright future ahead of it, with many exciting projects currently on the horizon. Lots of work has gone into this vision refresh, with hundreds of residents feeding back to us last year to tell them what really matters in their town and their community.

"I am also the chair of Romsey Future, and it's brilliant to see so many organisations endorsing this vision for the town as well as Test Valley Borough Council. With a new structure, the Romsey Future partnership is going from strength to strength and we're all looking forward to realising our ambitions."

To read the new vision from the Romsey Future partnership, click here: [https://www.romseyfuture.org.uk/files/ugd/1d43ed\\_0cf01977ae93494d981992447e71d6f6.pdf](https://www.romseyfuture.org.uk/files/ugd/1d43ed_0cf01977ae93494d981992447e71d6f6.pdf)

## Important TVAPTC Meeting - 6<sup>th</sup> July 17:15pm

The TVAPTC meeting scheduled to be held in May was postponed. We now have a revised date for this event which has been expanded to include a workshop which will be led by the Head of Environmental Services on the **review of waste services in Test Valley**. A second workshop will be on the new TVBC Corporate Plan.

It would be very much appreciated if you would be able to share the details of this event with your parishes and encourage them to attend.

The meeting will now be held in Stockbridge Town Hall (Horford Hall) in order to provide a better opportunity for representatives from parishes to be able to attend and have input into the two planned workshops as well as other items on the agenda. Sandwiches and other refreshments will be provided before the start of the meeting.

## Rapid transformation for crazy golf!

The crazy golf course at Romsey Rapids has been given a complete makeover ready for summer!

The course closed in May and work quickly commenced to replace all of the playing surfaces with synthetic grass, tidy and repaint all of the features, replace the edging and finish off the fencing which surrounded the course to protect users from any rogue balls from the neighbouring cricket pitch.

The course reopened on 11 June, and customers can book in advance on the Places Leisure website, or pay on the day at the main reception at Romsey Rapids.

Places Leisure and Test Valley Borough Council joint-funded the work.

Leisure portfolio holder, Councillor David Drew, said: "Romsey Rapids hosts a range of affordable activities that the whole family can enjoy. A number of people had contacted me to say that the crazy golf course wasn't looking its best and could do with a bit of a refresh. We took that feedback on board and made sure we pushed through the work as quickly as possible, so the site would be up and running again ready for the summer. With the rising cost of living, families are looking for fun and affordable activities, and a spot of crazy golf offers exactly that.

"I would like to thank everyone involved in the project for all their hard work to turn this around so quickly."

Matt Low, general manager at Romsey Rapids, added: "This is another good example of partnership working between Places Leisure and TVBC, which has resulted in a much-improved facility for the community to enjoy. Crazy golf is a popular family activity, suitable for all ages and abilities. The course really complements the family swimming programme at the Rapids and offers families the best part of a day out having fun and being active at an affordable rate."



Picture L to R: Danny Churcher, Places Leisure contract manager, and Councillor David Drew, leisure portfolio holder at Test Valley Borough Council.

## Further success for TVBC's military community support

Work to support military personnel, their families and veterans by Test Valley Borough Council has been recognised for the second successive year with a national award.

Last year, TVBC boosted its support for the armed forces through the authority's Armed Forces Community Covenant. Now, the dedications included in that covenant has been given a silver award from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, carrying on the success from a bronze award in 2021.

It follows work identified to further strengthen TVBC's military support to communities. In December 2019, the council's scrutiny committee requested a review of the authority's commitment to the Armed Forces Community Covenant. They set up a dedicated panel to undertake the work, led by the council's Armed Forces champion, councillor Nick Matthews.

Having revisited challenges faced by Armed Forces personnel and their families, they looked at what TVBC had already put in place and found that, although the council was meeting its promises, there were opportunities for further improvement. They included enhancing communication with partner organisations, and leading on a more inclusive approach to supporting the Armed Forces community.

Armed Forces champion, councillor Nick Matthews, said: "I am truly proud and honoured that we have achieved this award. TVBC, our Civilian/Military Forum (CMF) and our partners have worked extremely hard over the past year. The partnership has now formed a veteran walk in breakfast club, a community engagement network and working with other national local authorities in assisting veterans nationwide. We have both physical and mental health work streams and support, including the ongoing project to achieve veteran friendly GP surgeries throughout Test Valley.

"We are also just beginning in our new business partnership, for local businesses to sign up to the covenant and support them in assisting our veterans during transition and including our current serving families job and career prospects. We have come such a long way, but still always we can do more. I cannot express my thanks enough to our officers and all our partners who have engaged so proactively and with passion, culminating in this most prestigious recognition".

## Man offering waste removal hit with fly-tipping fine

A man who was paid to remove a customer's waste has been hit with a fine and two nights in custody after he fly-tipped the rubbish at Green Drove, Upper Enham.

Scott Campbell, 34, from Winchester Road, Andover, appeared at Basingstoke magistrates' Court on Monday 27 June and pleaded guilty to dumping the items, which included an old carpet, child's scooter, ironing board, sun lounger, garden furniture, laminate wooden flooring, plastic bottle, cardboard box, cushions and other household waste.

Test Valley Borough Council received reports of the fly-tip on 7 April 2021, and when officers went to clear it up they found evidence that led to the owner. They contacted the owner who said that she had employed Campbell to remove the waste from her garden and paid him £30 to take it away. He had told her that he would take it to the tip but instead dumped it at Green Drove.

Having already spent two nights in custody, Campbell was ordered to pay a £320 fine reduced from £480 for an early guilty plea, £34 victim surcharge and £250 costs.

Portfolio holder for Environmental Services, Councillor Nick Adams-King, said: "I would urge anyone who comes across someone offering waste disposal services to check that they are licensed. In the world of social media, we see so many adverts from different people offering a huge range of different services every single day, and it is vital that people check to make sure that they are legitimate."

Residents can check if a waste carrier is legally licensed by visiting the Environment Agency website

at <https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/view/search-waste-carriers-brokers>

## Countryside team with a busy agenda!

For the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic, officers from the council's countryside service were out leading school visits at TVBC's nature reserves. Last week, staff were teaching and showing school children about aquatic invertebrates and their habitats at Tadburn Meadows Local Nature Reserve.

A sample of all the creatures collected from the river was taken, with pupils getting a close look at some of the weird and wonderful creatures that live there, such as the greater water boatman.

On Monday and Friday evening, two cubs groups spent time with countryside officers pond dipping at Abbotswood, with a high number of newt larvae being found.

And on Sunday evening, 13 volunteers from Friends of the Parks were out clearing birch saplings from the small heath in Zionshill Copse, Valley Park. Birch is a pioneer species which quickly establishes if left unmanaged.

## Major recycling changes on the horizon as Test Valley ready to embrace kerbside glass, plastics and food waste collections



Households across Test Valley will now definitely be set to benefit from the total transformation of local recycling services, with the introduction of brand-new weekly food waste collections, as well as kerbside glass and thin plastic collections.

At a Test Valley Borough Council cabinet meeting, proposals to introduce new blue bins and food waste caddies for all properties were approved, which will now enable households to recycle leftover food, glass, pots, tubs and trays at the kerbside for the very first time, starting in 2024.

Glass, plastics, pots, tubs and trays and other items will go into the new blue bin, leaving paper and cardboard recyclables in the brown bin. Due to how they're

processed the other side, it's not possible to have all the recyclables alongside the paper and cardboard in one bin.

A brand-new facility is being built by Hampshire County Council to process these materials, which is why TVBC will be able to bring these new measures in, which will begin in 2024.

One week, your new blue bin will be collected, with the brown bin the following week, and any other non-recyclable waste in your black bin, to be collected on the third week. Your food waste, however, will be collected every week, meaning we'll now be collecting two bins (a coloured bin plus a new food caddy) each week, rather than the current one, reducing the levels of waste in your bins!

And no, there's no cost - your new blue bin and food caddy will be provided free of charge, and collection days will remain the same. We'll be working with our communities over the coming months to iron out any issues should these proposals be brought in, so keep your eyes peeled for more information.

[Have some questions? We've popped together some FAQs!](#)

## Housing Affordability in Test Valley

The Local Government Association (LGA) produces comparative data on a whole range of subjects and recently looked at housing affordability.

On average, working people could expect to pay around [10.60](#) times their annual earnings on purchasing a home in Test Valley in 2021, up from [8.76](#) times earnings in 2011. This compares to [9.05](#) and [6.80](#) for England.

The median price paid for residential property in Test Valley increased by [141.05%](#) between 2011 ([£237,500](#)) and 2021 ([£335,000](#)); median individual annual earnings increased by [116.59%](#) in the same time period (from [£27,097.0](#) to [£31,593.0](#)).

The most affordable local authority among all local authority districts in South East in 2021 was Gosport, with house prices being on average 6.68 times greater than annual earnings, whereas Waverley was the least affordable, with house prices being 18.32 times greater than annual earnings.



## TVBC commemorates Armed Forces Week

Councillors in both Andover and Romsey commemorated Armed Forces Week by raising the Armed Forces flag at the Andover Guildhall and Former Magistrates Court in Romsey.

Those attending included TVBC's Armed Forces champion, councillor Nick Matthews alongside councillor Phil North in Andover. In Romsey, in the image above, mayoress councillor Celia Dowden was joined by councillors Neil Gwynne and Dorothy Baverstock.

Councillor Matthews wrote a poem that was read out at the Andover ceremony. To read it, [please click here](#).

## Andover goes alfresco! As new summer seating comes to the town



Test Valley Borough Council will be giving Andover residents a new place to relax in the High Street this summer, as outdoor seating area Alfresco Andover will soon be opening in the town.

Featuring a range of bistro furniture, the new outdoor space will provide an ideal place to spend summer when heading into the town centre. Visitors can sit and enjoy a takeaway refreshment from one of Andover's cafes or simply relax with friends.



## Bid made to help boost masterplan

In 2019, the Andover masterplan was formed, seeking to revamp the town centre and make more of the river than runs alongside and through the town.

Since then, TVBC has been conducting studies and seeking a developing partner to bring some of these plans to life, such as the new Town Mills area. This week, a bid was made to central government for the Levelling Up Fund to help fund some of this work.

Up to £20m has been sought as part of the bid to help towards accelerating delivery of the Andover masterplan and improving the lives of those who live in and around the town centre as a result.

The money would be used to deliver a stunning riverside park along Western Avenue, transform the riverside footpath south of Bridge Street, demolish the former magistrates' court building, and create a spectacular new cultural hub in the town centre which would include the relocation of The Lights theatre.

## Look after your pooches with care!



With the summer here (certainly if today's weather is anything to go by!), many residents will be off on holidays. Some may take their furry friends with them, but others may be looking for somebody to look after them while they're away, instead.

Anybody who is looking after other people's pets needs to make sure they're up with all the regulations, and that's where TVBC comes in! If you're looking after pets for others, please contact us so our animal welfare officer, Rod, can help make sure everything is in place. Equally, if it's a business, ensure they are correctly licensed to give your friend the best

care possible while you're away.

Businesses who are offering day care or home boarding for dogs will also have a license or what's called an 'out of scope' letter, and those looking to start the new business doing so could be eligible for a start-up grant, too.

If you have any questions or want to speak to us, please contact 01794 527700 or 01264 368000 and you can contact Rod via those numbers too.

## A wheelie odd journey

You may have seen news coverage about a TVBC wheelie bin appearing on the Ukrainian border, we don't know how the bin got there. We have been contacted by several news agencies and sent out a statement.

One of the articles can be viewed on the BBC news site here: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-hampshire-61823451>

## King's Somborne Primary School Fete

Our Councillor Community Grant helped the school and other Community organisations put together a fantastic fete with all sorts of fun activities and stalls. Lisa Johnston and her team worked hard to bring the village back together after the pandemic in an event that might become part of the annual calendar. Certainly, all the feedback has been great.

I just wanted to share our good news. Thanks to your grant we managed to make Saturdays event a great community event. It wasn't just about the money but about bringing the village back together after the pandemic. I was a bit manic co-ordinating so didn't get to enjoy the day, but all the feedback has been great. All the community groups raised valuable funds with the school itself raising £3.4k which will help with some much-needed extras for the children.

Test Valley Borough Council had a stand collected everyone's opinions in a survey for the next Corporate Plan. Photos show Lisa, her team, Cllr Tony Ward, and his wife. Mr O'Brien the headmaster showed real dedication and courage being soaked on the Teachers Stand.





## CONTACT



**Cllr Alison Johnston**

01794 500610

[cllrajohnston@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:cllrajohnston@testvalley.gov.uk)



**Cllr Ian Jeffrey**

07859955327

1794 388872

[cllrijeffrey@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:cllrijeffrey@testvalley.gov.uk)



**Cllr Tony Ward**

01794 389649

07881 812958

[cllrtward@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:cllrtward@testvalley.gov.uk)

## Don't forget! Be a councillor events

If you know anyone interested in standing for the borough elections in 2023 there are a couple of informal events running where they can find out more about what it is like to be a councillor and the support and guidance available. The events are open to anyone who is passionate about their local community, championing different voices and causes and improving residents' quality of life.

### Dates and times:

Thursday 7 July at 5.30pm at Andover Guildhall - register here  
[www.testvalley.gov.uk/BeACouncillorAndover](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/BeACouncillorAndover)

Tuesday 12 July at 5.30pm at Crosfield Hall in Romsey - register here  
[www.testvalley.gov.uk/BeACouncillorRomsey](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/BeACouncillorRomsey)

Anyone interested who would like an initial chat about the councillor role can also contact Emma Horbury, democratic services manager, at [ehorbury@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:ehorbury@testvalley.gov.uk)

More information can be found at [www.testvalley.gov.uk/beacouncillor](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/beacouncillor)

Please share [this article](#) with your connections.

## Jubilee Celebration Grants

Councillor Community Grants helped boost community spirits for the Queens Jubilee celebrations in King's Somborne, Up Somborne, Longstock and Horsebridge as all across Mid Test Street parties were held.

