

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

Cllrs Alison Johnston, Ian Jeffrey, and Tony Ward

## **Applications now open for Cost-of-Living Grant scheme**

Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has launched its new £50k Cost of Living Grant scheme to help organisations that are supporting people who are struggling with rising costs.

It is available to a range of groups, including charities, not for profit and voluntary organisations, parish and town councils, and schools as part of their wider community work.

Groups can bid for up to £1,000, and the applications can be for up to 100 percent of the total cost of a project. Any organisations looking to run larger projects can contact their local community engagement officer by visiting [www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers)

To find out more and to apply for a grant, visit [www.testvalley.gov.uk/costoflivinggrantscheme](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/costoflivinggrantscheme)

The move follows a special meeting of the Test Valley Partnership in August, which was hosted jointly by leader of TVBC, Councillor Phil North, and leader of the opposition, Councillor Celia Dowden. The meeting brought together a host of different organisations, including Citizens Advice Test Valley, Hampshire County Council, Department for Work and Pensions, Andover Foodbank and Romsey Community Services.

Following the meeting, the council set up a Cost of Living Support Hub, which provides useful information and signposts people to the various agencies and groups that can offer a range of help, from local food banks to financial advice. The information can be found at [www.testvalley.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport)

The partnership also agreed to take forward various other actions and projects over the coming months that will help organisations to provide targeted aid to residents and make it as easy as possible for people to access the support they need when they need it.

Leader of TVBC, Councillor Phil North, said: "It is so important that we all work together to ensure that organisations on the frontline can support those in need. I would urge any groups that are providing cost of living help to take a look at the website as soon as possible."

Leader of the opposition, Councillor Celia Dowden, added: "This fund will provide critical support to the groups and organisations impacted most by the increasing demand on their services due to the rising cost of living. We are working closely with partners across the borough to ensure that those feeling the strain have access to the help they require, whether they are the organisations providing the services, or those accessing them."



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## Funding now available to make homes more energy efficient

Test Valley Borough Council residents can now get help with their rising energy bills by applying for a grant of up to £25,000 for sustainable home improvements.

The new Sustainable Warmth scheme funded by the Government is managed by City Energy working in partnership with Test Valley Borough Council. The grants will cover up to 100% of the costs for various energy-saving improvements such as installing insulation, heating system upgrades, energy efficient hot water solutions, solar panels and energy efficient lighting (among other improvements).

The funding is targeted at residents who are most likely to be impacted by the high cost of rising bills, it will help towards decreasing their energy bills and in turn have a positive impact on climate change by helping residents to reduce their carbon footprints, which will contribute towards meeting the UK's target to become net zero by 2050.

Grants range from £5,000 up to £25,000 depending on various factors, including household income and the property's Energy Performance Certificate and the current fuel source. The grants are for homeowners and those living in private rented properties. If the property is rented, then the landlord may be required to contribute towards the cost.

Residents can find further information and check if they are eligible at [www.hampshire-applications.co.uk/](http://www.hampshire-applications.co.uk/), or telephone City Energy on 02921 680951 and press one for scheme applications. City Energy is the supply partner and will manage the process.

Housing and Environmental Health Portfolio Holder, Councillor Tracey Tasker, said: "This is great news for Test Valley residents at a time when so many are struggling with the rising cost of living. These grants will help support homeowners and those in private rented properties who meet the eligibility criteria to make their homes more energy efficient. And, of course, making your home more energy efficient is also fantastic news for the environment! I would urge people to take a look at the scheme as soon as possible and hopefully residents across the borough will be able to benefit from the grants available

## Test Valley Borough Council scoops top small business friendly award

Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) scooped best All-Round Small Business Friendly council for the south-central region at the Federation of Small Businesses Local Government Awards on Friday 14 October.

During the virtual event, the FSB praised the council for the speed in which it delivered the national lockdown grant schemes and the Additional Restrictions Grant. It also noted the authority's support for start-ups and small medium enterprises, which has seen the council distribute 52 start-up grants to a value of £37,500 between March 2020 and March 2022, which in the past has meant that business survival rates have exceeded the national average.

In addition, TVBC awarded 43 Andover Skills Training Fund grants between March 2020 and March 2022, totalling £42,192, and worked with the Department for Work and Pensions and three neighbouring local authorities to deliver a Youth Employment Hub initiative to support 16 to 24-year-olds into education, training or employment.

The FSB also highlighted the council's small grant offer to support town centres, with its Independent Retailer Grant increasing to £1,200 in 2021, and its decision to implement more flexible rules to enable pop-up shops in Andover's Chantry Centre to apply.

They also commended the council's work to support Romsey town centre and the University of Southampton Science Park Catalyst business accelerator programme, as well as their work alongside the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership to help businesses to start their journey to net zero.

"I am incredibly proud that the FSB has recognised the hard work we have put in to achieve this, and I am also unbelievably proud of the many amazing businesses that call Test Valley home. We have huge ambitions for our town centres, with the regeneration plans to transform Andover and Romsey continuing to progress, making it a fantastic borough for people to start and grow their businesses."

FSB Development Manager for Hampshire, Dorset and Isle of Wight, Nicky Kildunne, added: "I'm delighted to see Test Valley Borough Council recognised as the south-central area's most *All-Round Small Business Friendly* council.

"Over the past challenging period Test Valley Borough Council has continued to provide all round business support, adapting and adding to its business offer to meet local need. It adapted its Economic Development Strategy (2019 – 2023) to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 and as well as successfully delivering all the lockdown grants, it has continued to provide a comprehensive, all round business support offer. Its many activities have included strengthening support for start-ups, including distributing over 50 business start-up grants, increasing the Independent Retailer Grant, supporting the University of Southampton Science Park Catalyst business accelerator programme to enable high growth potential and working hard with all local businesses to help them become more sustainable and ultimately become net zero."



### **£300 for littered cigarette**

A woman has been ordered to pay £300 after she was caught throwing a cigarette butt out of her car while driving along the A3057 near The Mayfly pub in Fullerton.

Caprice Glasspool of Freemantle Road, Romsey, was spotted littering on 27 May by an officer from Test Valley Borough Council. She was later tracked down following a DVLA search.

The council issued a £75 Fixed Penalty Notice, which she failed to pay within the statutory 14 days, and so TVBC took her to court.

At a hearing at Basingstoke Magistrates' Court on 11 October Ms Glasspool was ordered to pay a £150 fine, £60 victim surcharge and £90 costs after pleading guilty by post.

Portfolio holder for environmental services, Councillor Nick Adams-King, said: "This individual was spotted littering purely by chance, and no doubt she would have got away with it had the officer not been there to see it happen.

"I would urge people to remember that you never know who is around, and given that it's the easiest thing in the world to just hold on to your litter and dispose of it when you get home, it really isn't worth the risk. And it certainly isn't worth damaging the environment."

## Restoring confidence in the quality of English rivers

Alan Lovell - Chairman of the Environment Agency

We are privileged to live in the Test Valley, which includes 85% of the world's unique chalk streams, rightly described as "national treasures". Yet in The River's Trust 2021 report on "The State of our Rivers", only 14% are in good ecological health, and none meet the chemical pollution standards. There are many reasons for this state of affairs. As we heard in last year's lecture on "Re-shaping the future of UK Farming" by Alison Field, agriculture is a significant factor, along with water treatment failures, abstraction and habitat destruction.

Alan Lovell who grew up in Upper Clatford and therefore has close connections with the area, will be the speaker at this event. Alan will explain the role of the Environment Agency and how it will address the challenge in restoring the environmental integrity of these unique chalk streams.

For more information and to get tickets [click here](#).

## Cost of Living Grant

The recently launched Cost of Living Grant has received its first applications and this week the following organisations have been awarded funding support;

Organisation	Project	Award value
Harrow Way Community School	Breakfast Club	£1,000
Romsey Cancer Support Centre – Jane Scarth House	Warm Space energy costs	£1,000
Freedom Centre – Community Hub	Warm Space energy costs	£1,000

For more information about and to apply for a Cost of Living Grant please visit: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/costoflivinggrantscheme](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/costoflivinggrantscheme)

Please also contact the Community Engagement Officer for the relevant ward to confirm the eligibility of the organisation and project: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/CEOfficers)

## Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries Review

The Boundary Commission for England intends to publish their Revised Proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries on **Tuesday 8 November 2022**. The consultation will close on Monday 5 December 2022. This will be the last opportunity to participate in the 2023 Boundary Review.

Please note that, although this is the Commission's current intention, it reserves the right to revise that timetable if necessary.

If you have any queries you can contact the team on 020 7271 1102, or [information@boundarycommissionengland.gov.uk](mailto:information@boundarycommissionengland.gov.uk), or visit their website at [www.bcereviews.org.uk](http://www.bcereviews.org.uk).



Remember, your recycling needs to be clean, dry and loose! This includes making sure all food residue is rinsed off and avoiding putting recycling in plastic bags.

You can recycle these five materials in your brown bin:

 Paper

Plastic bottles

Tins and cans

Aerosol cans

 Cardboard

Find locations to recycle items which can't be recycled from home, using Recycle Now's recycling locator tool [here](#).

We are working to provide you with more recycling options in the future.

You can read about future changes to our services [here](#).



## Annual Leaf Clearance

The council's annual leaf clearance will start on Monday 24 October and will take around eight weeks to complete. We are targeting areas that regularly accumulate a lot of leaves and we are responding to ad-hoc requests to clear debris. We will also clear any large accumulations reported before this date.

If you wish to report an area to be cleared or would like more information, please contact [Pete Legg](#), Environmental Services Manager on 8136.



## Update: Temporary Usage Ban in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

Southern Water have written to their customers and retailers with an update on the current drought situation and Temporary Usage Ban (TUB) in place across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

'The recent wet weather has improved water levels in the Test and Itchen, but we need to maintain these levels for 21 consecutive days before we can consider removing the TUB. We will review the situation again at the beginning of November.

The good news is that the TUB has helped reduce water demand in the area by 5%, so thanks to all of you for doing your part and helping us spread the water-saving message.'

Please find attached copies of the [letters](#) and [email](#) Southern Water have sent to customers and retailers, which also highlights what they have done to reduce leakage.



## Safe and Well fire safety visits to support the vulnerable

The [attached poster](#) has been produced by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service to raise awareness of fire risks and the Safe and Well visits that the service can provide. For more information, please visit their website here:

[Safe and Well - Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service, Official website of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service \(hantsfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.hantsfire.gov.uk)



If you're a landlord in Test Valley, join us for our FREE landlord's event next month!

On Tuesday 1st November from 6pm to 8.30pm, landlords can come together to learn more about our private rented initiatives scheme, Test Valley Lettings.

The event will be held at Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover SP10 3AJ. Refreshments will be available.

[Register your interest](#)

## Draft Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document

The council is undertaking a public consultation on its updated draft Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document, as approved by Cabinet on 26 October 2022. Consultation will commence on Friday 4 November 2022 for a period of 6 weeks ending 12 noon Friday 16 December 2022.

The purpose of the SPD is to explain the council's approach to using planning obligations to residents, developers and the wider community; explain the circumstances under which the council will collect Section 106 contributions to mitigate the impacts of a development on infrastructure; provide applicants with greater certainty on when planning obligations will be sought. It relates to the policies in the adopted Local Plan (2016).

The draft version of the document will be available to view on the council website: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planningpolicy](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planningpolicy)

If you require a hard copy of the draft SPD document, please contact the [Planning Policy Team](#).

Parish Councils will be made aware of the consultation for their information.

## Hypothermia recognition and prevention

The Hampshire Safeguarding Adult Board have asked for information to be shared on recognising hypothermia, which was developed by Dr Anneka Clarke, who is part of the ICB team in Frimley.

Hypothermia is a serious medical condition in which a person's body temperature falls below the usual level (>35°C) as a result of being in severe cold for a long time.

[Download the one page information document.](#)

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