

Update from Hampshire County Council – August-September 2026

Young people across Hampshire to showcase climate-themed artwork made from old musical instruments

Young people from 12 schools across Hampshire are taking part in a countywide art project that turns unwanted musical instruments into public artwork



The project, Climate Unity: Circular Art, will be exhibited at West Downs Art Gallery, University of Winchester, from 14 to 22 July 2026, with a preview event on 14 July from 4.30pm to 7pm. The exhibition will showcase work created by pupils using old and damaged instruments that would otherwise have been thrown away.

Led by Hampshire County Council for a sixth year, the project invites schools to create 3D artworks by repurposing musical instruments and using recycled, salvaged or natural materials. The pieces reflect young people's views on sustainability, waste and care for the environment.

The work has been shaped by children and young people's own reflections on issues including pollution, protecting natural environments, reducing waste and using resources more carefully.

As well as producing artwork for public display, pupils have been exploring the idea of the circular economy – looking at how materials can be reused, repaired and reimagined instead of simply being discarded. The project also supports wider learning across the curriculum, with resources made available to schools to help them explore environmental issues through art, music and other subjects.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260713climateunity>

Please help us spread the word about battery and vape recycling



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We're asking all councillors to help remind residents about the importance of recycling batteries, vapes and electrical items correctly following a recent fire in one of our refuse collection vehicles. The incident was dealt with safely and no one was injured. However, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service attended the scene, taking resources away from an already busy service.

Investigations found several items in the waste, including a vape, laptop, mobile phone and household batteries. We believe the fire may have been caused by an incorrectly disposed vape.

As lithium-ion batteries become more common in everyday items, the risk of fires during waste collection and processing continues to increase. These fires can endanger crews, damage vehicles and cause disruption to local services.

Residents can recycle:-

- batteries at supermarkets, retailers, and Household Waste Recycling Centres
- vapes through participating retailers or Household Waste Recycling Centres
- electrical items, including laptops and mobile phones, at Household Waste Recycling Centres

More information about local recycling options is available on the HCC website.

https://www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling?utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery

Thank you for helping us promote safer recycling and reduce the risk of preventable fires across Test Valley.

£15 million programme underway to improve Hampshire's roads this summer

More miles of Hampshire's roads will be strengthened and repaired this summer, following a £15 million investment by Hampshire County Council in highway maintenance

The funding will be used for planned maintenance and reactive repairs during the summer period to address the significant deterioration over the winter as a result of the adverse weather the county experienced. Work includes:-

- 35 resurfacing schemes to repair the roads most in need: in total this year, 113 resurfacing schemes are expected to be completed totalling nearly 40 miles.
- Additional surface treatment locations – in total this year, 139 schemes are expected to be completed totalling over 129 miles. Since April, 102 locations have been completed, with the funding allowing for more sites to be included.
- Multiple additional gangs undertaking patching treatments to replace damaged sections of road - these are localised repairs used to fix specific defects such as potholes, cracking, rutting, or surface failure without resurfacing the entire road. It comes after 90,000 potholes and road defects were repaired over the last financial year.

Highways teams are working day and night to strengthen and prolong the life of Hampshire's roads. In the 12 months since April 2025, we have completed around 90,000 pothole and road defect repairs, following an increase in reports over the winter months. Work continues to deliver our annual resurfacing programme and respond to issues as they arise.

Years of insufficient national highways funding, combined with rising costs, inflation, heavier vehicles and more extreme weather, are placing increasing pressure on road networks across the country. Hampshire's highways maintenance backlog is now estimated at more than £550 million and has grown over the past two years as a result of insufficient national funding.

Over the summer months and into autumn, a range of surface treatments and other works will be carried out. Roads are assessed and prioritised using condition data, ensuring limited funding is focused on those most in need of improvement.

Information about road closures is available at: <https://one.network/>

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260723HighwaysInvestment>

Grants help Chilbolton Village Shop and Tearoom grow and expand

A popular village shop and tearoom in Chilbolton is investing in its future after receiving more than £21,000 in grant funding from Test Valley Borough Council.

Nicky Bond, owner of Chilbolton Village Shop and Tearoom, has secured £13,400 from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and £8,300 from the Rural Enterprise Grant to support improvements to the business and help it expand its food offering.

The funding has enabled the shop to be reconfigured, bringing together its freshly prepared food service with an upgraded coffee machine and display fridge. The new layout provides better customer experience, improves staff efficiency, and creates more space for food-to-go. The post office counter has also been moved to the rear of the shop, giving customers greater privacy when using the service.

Alongside the improvements to the shop, Nicky has established an offsite kitchen at Stonefield Park on the outskirts of Chilbolton. The additional facility will allow the business to increase production of food to go and ready meals, while also supporting the growth of its catering services for private and corporate customers. The grants have contributed towards the purchase and installation of specialist kitchen equipment including a gas oven, freezer, chiller, and dishwasher.

Nicky and her husband Andy recently celebrated 10 years at the shop and are proud to support local producers by stocking a wide range of high-quality local products. The business also plays an important role in the community by catering for a variety of local organisations and events.

Nicky Bond said: "I am so grateful for the grants. If they had not been available, we would never have been able to make this investment. We'd been making-do for years, but I've now been able to realise my vision for the shop. I could not have done it without the help of my husband Andy and the fantastic support of my staff, the village and my customers. We are all thrilled with the transformation."

The UK Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund is part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund that provides capital funding for rural business and rural communities. TVBC received over £150k for 2025-26 which is being distributed between businesses and community organisations across the rural areas of our borough to help develop our rural economy. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.

For more information about business grants available through Test Valley Borough Council, visit the council's website.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2026/aug/grants-help-chilbolton-village-shop-and-tearoom-grow-and-expand>

Man fined after mattress, fridge freezer and furniture dumped in Andover

A man has been ordered to pay more than £1,300 after admitting to fly-tipping in Andover.

On 4 and 5 August 2025, the council received reports about waste dumped in Pasture Walk, Andover. The rubbish included broken furniture, a mattress, a fridge freezer and a chest freezer. An investigation showed that a nearby property had been recently vacated and the occupier, Joshua Scarlett, admitted to leaving the waste outside the home to be collected but it wasn't removed.

On 24 July 2026 at Southampton Magistrates' Court, Mr Scarlett was fined £425 and ordered to pay £947 in costs.

Residents can report fly-tipping online at www.testvalley.gov.uk/fly-tipping.

<https://testvalley.gov.uk/news/2026/aug/man-fined-after-mattress-fridge-freezer-and-furniture-dumped-in-andover>

Hampshire GCSE students praised for their achievements as results day support continues

Students across Hampshire receiving their GCSE results are being congratulated for their hard work and determination, as Hampshire County Council continues to offer free advice and support to help young people plan their next steps.

GCSE results mark an important milestone for many students, whether they are preparing to move on to sixth form, college, an apprenticeship, training or another learning pathway.

To support young people and their families, the County Council's exam results helpline remains open, offering free careers advice from experienced advisers at [Hampshire Futures](https://www.hants.gov.uk/HampshireFutures). The service can help students talk through their options, understand what is available locally and make decisions that are right for them.

The helpline can support students who are confirming places at school or college, considering vocational courses, looking into apprenticeships, or wanting to understand other routes into future careers. Parents and carers are also encouraged to use the service if they would like advice on how best to support a young person after results day.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260819GCSEresults>

Hampshire foster carers play key role in children's safe return home

Foster carers across Hampshire are playing a vital role in helping children return home safely to their families when that is the right and best outcome for the child, as shown in a new video released by Hampshire County Council.

For some children, foster care provides a safe and stable home while work takes place with their family to address the difficulties that led to them coming into care. When those circumstances improve, a planned return home can help children rebuild relationships with their parents and wider family and give them the stability and sense of belonging they need to thrive.

[In the video](#), a young person returning home after foster care thanks their carers and support network for helping them through a difficult time and enabling them to reunite with their family, highlighting the lasting impact fostering can have on children's lives.

The County Council has recently refreshed and strengthened its guidance to support children in care to return safely to their parents or others with parental responsibility. Known as a child's "Going Home" journey, the process depends on careful planning and support to make sure any move home is safe and sustainable.

Foster carers are a key part of that. They know the child's routines, needs and experiences, and can help them prepare for the move home. They also work closely with social workers and families, supporting contact, attending planning meetings and helping everyone understand what the child needs.

Hampshire County Council recognises that a child returning home can also be an emotional time for foster carers. Support is available throughout the process through supervising social workers and peer networks.

Anyone interested in fostering and making a difference to the lives of children and families across Hampshire can find out more and request an information pack [here](#).

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260701fosteringsummer>

Update from Hampshire County Council – August-September 2026

Funding available for local organisations helping Hampshire residents with money worries

Community and voluntary organisations across Hampshire are being encouraged to apply for funding to help residents build financial resilience and reduce the risk of future crisis

The [Crisis and Resilience Fund](#) Resilience Grants programme is open to community and voluntary organisations, charities, social enterprises, town and parish councils, district councils and other organisations that meet the funding criteria.

The grant funding is designed to support projects that help Hampshire residents manage financial challenges, improve confidence with money, access advice and reduce reliance on crisis support services.

Projects could include financial capability and budgeting support, income maximisation, debt advice, money management, advice and guidance services, community-based resilience projects, early intervention work, volunteer training and outreach to residents who may be vulnerable or facing hardship.

The fund is provided through the Department for Work and Pensions, with Hampshire County Council receiving Crisis and Resilience Fund funding from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029 to support activity that strengthens financial resilience, promotes early help and provides longer-term support for residents experiencing financial hardship.

Applications should focus on work that prevents financial hardship from escalating, supports early intervention, improves financial confidence, strengthens local support networks, and improves access to advice and guidance.

The programme is looking for projects that can show clear benefits for residents and communities, such as increased household income, improved money confidence, reduced debt, reduced food insecurity, better access to support and fewer repeat requests for emergency help.

Applications can be submitted at any time until autumn 2028. There are no fixed application windows or submission deadlines.

Applications will be reviewed by an independent CRF Funding Panel, which meets monthly to assess proposals against the fund's priorities, evidence of need, deliverability, value for money and expected outcomes.

Organisations can find full guidance and details of how to apply on the [Resilience Grants webpage](#).

David Drew

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