

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

Voter ID is coming!

From 4 May 2023, you will need to show photographic ID to be able to vote in elections

You can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate if you do not have an accepted form of ID

You can apply online at www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate, contact Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) for a paper form, or visit the council offices in Andover and Romsey

For more information contact TVBC on 01264 368000 or 01794 527700, or email elecereg@testvalley.gov.uk






Voter ID set to come in later this year as residents urged to make sure they're prepared

Test Valley Borough Council is urging residents to make sure they are prepared for the introduction of voter ID later this year, as the government rolls out the major change to elections across the country.

By law, from 4 May 2023, all residents will need to show photographic ID when they go to a polling station before they receive their ballot paper. The government is introducing the changes to reduce and prevent voter fraud.

People can use various forms of ID, including a driving licence, passport, Older Person's Bus Pass, a blue badge or Disabled Person's Bus Pass. The full list of accepted ID can be found at www.testvalley.gov.uk/voterID

Residents can also use expired ID as long as the photograph is still a good likeness.

Anyone who doesn't have an accepted form of identification can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate at www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

Those unable to apply online can contact TVBC's electoral services team to request a paper form on 01264 368000 or 01794 527700, or by emailing elecrag@testvalley.gov.uk

The deadline to apply for a VAC for the Test Valley borough elections set to be held on 4 May 2023 is Tuesday 25 April, but residents are being encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

There will be no need for people to provide photographic ID if they vote by post.

And if anyone is registered for a proxy vote, which is where someone else votes on their behalf, then their proxy will need to provide their own ID, not the elector's.

More information about the changes can be found at www.testvalley.gov.uk/voterID

Cost of Living Grant Scheme update

Here is the update for the Cost-of-Living Grants awarded so far. There is just over £56,000 remaining in the pot, with a total of £43,478.31 awarded so far. In Mid Test there has been an award to the King's Somborne church and Longstock PC as follows

Somborne with Ashley Parochial Church Council	Community Choir and Lunchtime Soup To provide a warm space, a free lunch club, and community activities for all	£1,000
Longstock Parish Council	Longstock soup and sandwich lunch club To enable a free monthly lunch club to continue and welcome new local residents	£950

Kings Somborne Neighbourhood Plan

Regulation 16 Consultation

Test Valley Borough Council is consulting on the proposed Kings Somborne Neighbourhood Development Plan, which has been formally submitted by Kings Somborne Parish Council.

The consultation starts on **Monday 23 January and ends at Noon on Tuesday 7 March 2023**

Please be aware that all representations will be publicly available and may also appear on the Test Valley Borough Council website. For further information on how we use your personal data please visit <http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/gdpr>

Where possible, please provide any comments using the Consultation Form. Completed forms can either be emailed to neighbourhoodplanning@testvalley.gov.uk or sent by post to:

Neighbourhood Planning, Test Valley Borough Council, Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover, SP10 3AJ.

Reference copies of the Kings Somborne Neighbourhood Development Plan and supporting documents, along with paper copies of the representation form are also available at the following locations during their normal opening hours:

- Test Valley Borough Council, Former Magistrates' Court, Church Street, Romsey, SO51 8AQ
- Cross Stores, The Cross, Winchester Rd, King's Somborne, SO20 6NY

The documents are also available to view on at [King's Somborne Neighbourhood Plan \(testvalley.gov.uk\)](http://testvalley.gov.uk) and [Neighbourhood Development Plan | King's Somborne Parish Council \(kingsomborne-pc.gov.uk\)](http://kingsomborne-pc.gov.uk) which includes all the evidence base documents.

Following this consultation the comments received will be passed to an independent examiner, to be appointed by the Council, who will consider the representations and recommend whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be put to a community referendum.

If you have any questions please contact Neighbourhood Planning on 01264 868000 or by email to neighbourhoodplanning@testvalleygov.uk

Man sentenced for fly-tipping in North Baddesley after mispricing waste clearance job.

A man has been handed a prison sentence after fly-tipping a large amount of waste on a rural lane in North Baddesley in spring last year.

George Dibden, 29, of Parkside in Totton, was given three months in custody, to be served concurrently with a previous 38-month sentence for an unrelated incident and ordered to pay £240 compensation to the landowner.

Around 19 May 2022, Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) received a report of a large fly-tip, which was blocking a gateway to a private wood.

The waste consisted of vinyl floor covering, wood, bedding, plastic containers and furniture, carpet, loose plastic wrapping and a large number of black refuse bags containing household waste including food waste.

Evidence within it showed that it originated from two customers of G&D Services, Dibden's business, and they had paid him to remove the waste.

However, he dumped the rubbish after incorrectly pricing the jobs.

Appearing at Southampton Magistrates' Court on 16 January, Dibden pleaded guilty and apologised to TVBC for wasting their time.

Angling at Foxcotte Lakes and Anton Lakes Local Nature Reserve

Angling at Foxcotte Lake (Charlton Lakes) and Anton Lakes Local Nature Reserve are now being managed in-house at TVBC. Day tickets will be available to purchase through Challis Tackle in Andover and OJ's Fishing Tackle at Picket Piece. Information on fees and charges as well as rules for the site can be found on our website. Season tickets will be available to purchase through TVBC and will allow ticket holders to fish across all three sites in Andover including Rooksbury Mill Local Nature Reserve.



Warning for residents to check who's removing their waste after woman sentenced for fly-tipping incident in West Wellow



Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) is warning residents to check if the people removing their waste are licensed, after a woman from Romsey found herself in court when someone dumped her rubbish in Foxes Lane, West Wellow early last year.

On 28 February 2022, TVBC received a report about a large waste deposit on the rural lane near Romsey.

It contained wardrobe doors, wood, broken furniture, an old TV, heater, some metal, a large tarpaulin, cardboard boxes and other items of general household waste.

TVBC officers found evidence within the rubbish that led them to 30-year-old Vicky James, of Malmesbury Road in Romsey.

They invited Ms James to attend an interview under caution where she stated that she had transferred her waste to a man who had cold called at the property.

The gentleman did not provide any transfer notes, and Ms James did not check to see if he was an authorised waste carrier before handing over £100 for him to remove the rubbish.

Appearing at Southampton Magistrates' Court on the 18 January 2023, James pleaded guilty to failing to ensure that her waste was disposed of properly and was handed a conditional discharge for six months and ordered to pay costs of £153 and a victim surcharge of £150.

Test Valley residents over 66 urged to come forward for Winter Fuel Payment help if they need it

People above the age of 66 in Test Valley, who may be in need of a little extra financial help, are being urged to come forward.

Towards the end of 2022, Test Valley Borough Council, Unity and Citizens Advice Test Valley launched a scheme where anyone who receives a Winter Fuel Payment, but doesn't necessarily need it, was able to donate it to help other pensioners in the area struggling with the rising cost of living.

At least £1,300 has already been given to Unity, and with TVBC match funding any donations, it currently has around £2,600 to distribute to those in need.

But it's important for people above the age of 66 to come forward and ask for help if they need it.

With the rising cost of living, many people will be in a situation where they need more help than before and may not know how to access support.

Anyone with an older relative who could do with a little extra financial help is encouraged to direct them to Citizens Advice, who are administering the funds.

Residents can contact Citizens Advice on 0808 178 6882 or go to their website www.testvalleycab.org.uk.

Top winter walks in Test Valley from the National Trust

The only way to style your way through the Winter is to tackle it head on, with a winter walk. Face into the wind, relish the rain pattering on your hood, and delight in those moments when the air is crisp and the sunlight sparkles on a frosty landscape.

Here in Test Valley, we have a number of brilliant locations to explore, including Mottisfont and Stockbridge Down. [Read more.](#)



Credit: James Dobson

TVBC Health Walks are back!

The TVBC Health walks start up again today, they are a great way for our community to keep active and healthy.

For more information on the walks email: healthwalks@testvalley.gov.uk



Batteries and electrical devices do not belong in household bins.

We recently had an incident where one of our waste collection teams retrieved a smouldering laptop from their collection vehicle before a fire took hold.

Thankfully, due to their quick and observant actions, the fire was taken care of before it got out of hand and crew members remained safe.

We are reminding the public that **batteries and small electrical devices do not belong in their black household waste or brown recycling bins.**

For guidance on how to safely dispose of these items visit: www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/smartliving/inthefhome/reuse-electricals



Southern Water unveils industry-leading £15 million Smart Sewer Technology in battle against pollution.

Southern Water is using artificial intelligence and 22,000 state-of-the-art monitors to dramatically cut the impact of fatbergs and other blockages that currently cause hundreds of pollution incidents every year. The £15 million project is already having an impact.

Machine learning software developed in the UK powers the system and alerts our control to risks before they become incidents.

The vast majority of sewer blockages are caused by 'unflushables' like wet wipes and plastics, as well as fat, oil and grease, gathering in pipes. These blockages can lead to environmentally damaging flooding outdoors and deeply distressing flooding inside homes and properties.

Tackling this issue is a priority for Southern Water, and this innovative technology is expected to cut pollution incidents by up to 40%. This equates to around 500 fewer internal floods between now and 2025, and about 7,000 fewer external floods during the same period.

The roll-out of Smart Sewers builds on Southern Water's existing improvement in tackling external sewer flooding, where last year we reported a total of 3,944 incidents - well below our target of 4,141. Meanwhile, sewer network cleaning, other blockage reduction activities and an intensive focus on repeat issues are also helping us maintain our best ever performance in this area.

The monitors, which are being installed across high-risk areas of the 39,500km sewer network, communicate digitally with our Operational Control Centre, where technicians are warned about potential blockages forming long before any risk of a pollution spill from a manhole, or flooding directly into homes, schools, businesses or any other property.

The Test Valley Association of Parish and Town Councils meeting

The Test Valley Association of Parish and Town Councils meeting is being held on Thursday 23 February from 7:30pm via Microsoft Teams. Please could you share details of the meeting and encourage your local parish and towns to attend.

The meeting will include details of the outcomes of deliberative engagement work from the corporate plan development process and reflect on what this might mean for communities in Test Valley.

New Local Government Association Debate Not Hate campaign.



The new **Debate Not Hate toolkit** is designed to provide councillors with resources to raise awareness of the campaign's aims to challenge and reduce abuse against local politicians and encourage improvements in the quality of public discourse and political debate.

You can download the resources, to use on your own social media accounts, by clicking the button below.

[Download toolkit](#)

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