



Test Valley News

In this issue...

Planning for the opening of new countryside space 3
Heavy horses make light work in Valley Park Woodlands 4

Supporting businesses up and down the borough 8
New cycle lane opens up in Romsey 9



Jubilee Events in Test Valley

Mayor's
Tea Party

Jubilee Church
Service

School Card
Competition

To find out more
see page 6

For many more events and event planning information visit:
www.testvalley.gov.uk/QueensJubilee

Council meetings

Members of the public can listen to the meetings live via the specific meeting's page at www.testvalley.gov.uk. Meeting details are correct at the time of printing. For more information, please visit the council's website.

March 2022

10.03.22	Northern Area Planning Committee	Andover	5.30pm
15.03.22	Southern Area Planning Committee	Romsey	5.30pm
17.03.22	Licensing Committee	Romsey	5.30pm
30.03.22	Cabinet	Andover	5.30pm
31.03.22	Northern Area Planning Committee	Andover	5.30pm

April 2022

05.04.22	Southern Area Planning Committee	Romsey	5.30pm
06.04.22	Council	Romsey	5.30pm
07.04.22	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Andover	5.30pm
14.04.22	Licensing Committee	Andover	5.30pm
21.04.22	Northern Area Planning Committee	Andover	5.30pm
26.04.22	Southern Area Planning Committee	Romsey	5.30pm

Different formats

Different formats of Test Valley News are available for anyone who has difficulty reading this publication. Please call the Chief Executive's office on **01264 368108**.

For your information

The aim of Test Valley News is to keep the borough's residents up to date with relevant information about the public services and facilities available to them, as well as other important local news.

Test Valley News is produced and distributed by Test Valley Borough Council.

Editor: Kathryn Binfield.

Design: Cammegh Davies Fleming.

Printing: Latchams.

Advertising:

Test Valley Borough Council has certain statutory and regulatory duties. Appearance of any advertising in this publication should not be considered an endorsement from the council of any organisation to which these duties apply. As part of the council's commitment to enhance and preserve the environment, Test Valley News is printed on recycled paper.

For more information see: www.testvalley.gov.uk or call the Editor on **01264 368108**.

Who to contact



You can contact the following at:
Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover, SP10 3AJ
 Telephone: **01264 368000**

Chief Executive	Andy Ferrier
Deputy Chief Executive	Carol Moore
Head of Legal and Democratic	Karen Dunn
Head of Finance and Revenues	Carl Whatley
Head of Housing and Environmental Health	Phil Turner
Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development	Graham Smith
Head of Planning and Building	Paul Jackson
Head of Environmental Services	Paul Wykes
Head of Community and Leisure	Dave Tasker
Head of Strategy and Innovation	James Moody
Head of Property and Asset Management	Paul Brooks

What's on in Test Valley

Here's a summary of forthcoming events around Test Valley. More information about many of these events can be found at www.testvalley.gov.uk/events.

Shows at a Glance

What's on at The Lights

Crimes, Camera, Action	15 March	7.30pm
Cream of Clapton from Paul Ruck	18 March	7.30pm
Blair Dunlop	19 March	8pm
The Circus of Horrors	22 March	7.30pm
Andover Music Club	24 March	7.30pm
Roving Crows 2022	25 March	8pm
The Bob Dylan Story	1 April	7.30pm
Mary Rose by J M Barrie	2 April	7.30pm
True Strays	7 April	8pm
The music of Lionel Richie	14 April	7.30pm
Little Grimm Tales	19 April	2pm
Happy & Glorious – Neil Sands	20 April	2pm
Sun Records: The Concert 2022	22 April	7.30pm
Shaparak Khorsandi: It was the 90s	29 April	8pm

What's on at The Plaza, Romsey

The Producers	15-19 March	7.30pm
Brothers in '85 UK Tour	25-26 March	7.30pm
Romsey Comedy Club	1 April	7.30pm
The George Michael Story Tour	2 April	7.30pm
Sounds like the Sixties	8 April	7.30pm
Supersonic Queen	9 April	7.30pm
Abigail's Party	26-30 April	7.30pm

Events information

For events at The Lights: Book online at www.thelights.org.uk or contact the box office on **01264 368368**.

For events at The Plaza: Please call the booking office on **01794 512987**.

TEAMING UP TO BOOST COVID VACCINATIONS

Test Valley Borough Council has teamed up with the NHS to help residents around Romsey and Andover get their Covid-19 vaccinations this winter.

Test Valley Borough Council has teamed up with the NHS to help residents around Romsey and Andover get their Covid-19 vaccinations this winter.

While Test Valley is above the national average for residents who have been double and triple jabbed, the NHS Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has been putting on a number of pop-up clinics where anyone over the age of 16 can walk in to receive a vaccination.

Clinics have been put on in Picket Piece, Augusta Park and Romsey Rapids among other locations, throughout January and February. The vaccination centre in the Chantry Centre, Andover, continues to operate and is listed on the national database for residents to get their latest Covid-19 vaccination.

Dr Andrew Baring, clinical director of the Andover Primary Care Network, said:

“Locally, we have seen a really fantastic effort from NHS staff and the amazing volunteers, and an equally fantastic response from the community, who have come forward in their droves to get vaccinated.

“I would really encourage anyone and everyone who is not fully vaccinated yet to take the chance to protect themselves, and others, if they possibly can.”

Leader of Test Valley Borough Council, Phil North, added:

“My considerable thanks go to the local NHS teams who have been running and organising these clinics at various community locations across the town - and my thanks to colleagues and council officers who joined me in delivering leaflets to get the message out to people.

I would also echo the message from medical experts and the national government to get vaccinated to help protect our communities.”

BMX TRACK SET TO BENEFIT FROM BRAND NEW LED FLOODLIGHTS



Andover’s BMX track is to become the only floodlit track outside London and the Midlands after Test Valley Borough Council threw its weight behind the club’s £75,000 investment.

Andover BMX Club has gained support from British Cycling as well as TVBC, with the council pledging to deliver the work subject to planning consent. It would increase the club’s ability to host midweek events at its Charlton Sports Centre base.

At a cabinet meeting in January, councillors added the project to its capital programme, building on the sport’s popularity following the Tokyo

Olympics last summer. The current seasonal limitation of the track means that midweek coaching and training sessions are restricted to summer only, but the planned work, if approved, would see LED lights surrounding the track.

It is expected that work would begin in spring this year, with the project being coordinated with the resurfacing improvements at at Charlton Sports Centre’s overflow car park, adjacent to the track.

Ruth Miller, lead cycling delivery manager, British Cycling, said: **“It is fantastic to see the ambitions of the club being realised, and to be on hand to support them and the borough council through the process so far, including their successful Places to Ride grant funding application.**

“The volunteers have led a huge amount of work on the project, and

the floodlights, as part of wider development aims of the club, will make a big difference to making the track more accessible to new riders, as well as allowing some inspirational coaching and racing under lights through the dark months. We’re excited for the future and will ensure we help the club develop its capacity to cater for the surge in interest.”

NEW OPEN COUNTRYSIDE IN THE MAKING



Climate emergency and countryside portfolio holder, councillor Alison Johnston, said: **“These projects are really exciting to be a part of. Planning for the change of land and coming up with management strategies that allow this area to thrive is definitely a challenge, but one that is incredibly rewarding.**

“Our ambition is to see wildlife succeed here in what we hope will be a fantastic space for the public to enjoy.”

Work is well underway to open up land to the public after being purchased by TVBC.

Bury Hill is situated to the west of the village of Upper Clatford and was historically an iron age hill fort. When the land next to the ancient fort was purchased last year by the council, it was being used as agricultural land, but work has begun to start the changes needed to open it into a recreational green space and countryside.

Upon purchasing the land, officers were tasked with evaluating the options and finalising plans for the management of the site, ensuring everything is in place to successfully open it up as an area for the public to enjoy.

Consent for a change of use from agricultural land to amenity use and permission to construct a gravel car park is underway, while the sowing of the meadow has begun.

If everything is approved, work to build the car park is expected to begin later this spring, with the site potentially opened to the public in the summer or autumn.

In the current plans, approximately 12 hectares of species-rich chalk grassland will be created, with around three hectares of new mixed native woodland. Accessibility will be maintained with kissing gates that include radar key operation.

HEAVY HORSES MAKE LIGHT WORK OF ASH DIEBACK



A pair of heavy horses have been helping as part of the operation around ash dieback disease down at Valley Park Woodland Local Nature Reserve.

This winter, two Comtois horses, Rita and Tookie, have been hard at work moving the felled ash trees out of the woods. Sadly, due to ash dieback, many of the borough's ash trees need to be felled to ensure the public's safety.

The traditional method of using heavy horses to extract timber means less damage and disruption to the nature reserve. The trees are safely felled, hooked up to the back of the horse's equipment, and then carried out of the area along the woodland floor.

The council is carefully managing ash trees with this disease, and where felling is required for safety reasons,

the authority will adopt an appropriate replanting strategy.

Most of the wood that has been felled will then be used as biomass for powering electricity. While previous ash dieback work has taken place across the borough, Valley Park Woodlands has been the focus in 2022, with replanting still to be carried out.

The disease restricts the flow of water and nutrients leading to rapid decline of the tree. Unfortunately, estimates suggest that the disease is likely to lead to the loss of 95 per cent of the ash trees across the country over the next five to ten years.



The septic tank, sewerage tank and soakaway experts

DRAINAGE SERVICES

Sewage Treatment Plant Installation
 Septic Tank Replacement
 Retro fitting to older systems
 Drainage Field installation
 Clearing blockages
 Pipe Lining
 Emergency Callouts
 Servicing and Maintenance

SURVEYS & INSPECTIONS

Off-Mains Drainage Insurance Survey
 Homebuyers Drainage Survey
 2020 Regulation Compliance Checks
 Off-Mains Foul Drainage Advice & Evaluations
 Full Jetting and CCTV Surveys

See our reviews on Trustpilot



"Absolutely happy to recommend Proseptic to anyone. Right from the initial site survey through to completion they have been superb and easy to work with."

Michael

Providing a reliable, professional service for all commercial and residential drainage systems.

At Proseptic we create bespoke drainage systems and provide components that deliver quality and efficiency with minimal disruption and hassle. We strive for a very high level of customer service: from the initial site meeting and communications stages through to the tidy and efficient delivery of our installation and servicing. For this reason, we continue to receive a large quantity of work from our glowing client referrals.



**** Free, no-obligation quotes available on request ****

Get in touch to book a visit from one of our experienced and friendly engineers.

01794 517 770 sales@proseptic.co.uk www.proseptic.co.uk



FURTHER SUCCESS IN FLY-TIP INVESTIGATIONS

Thousands of pounds in fines and costs continue to be handed down to those who have committed fly-tipping and other waste offences after investigations by Test Valley Borough Council.

Prosecutions so far this year include totals of £6,000 to pay after a caravan was dumped in Wellow, while a Southampton man was handed a suspended prison sentence after fly-tipping three times in the space of six weeks across the south of the borough.

Kenneth Dibden, of Salisbury Road, Southampton, left the waste at two laybys in Luzborough Lane, Romsey, in February last year, followed by a further fly-tip at Tanners Lane, Wellow, the next month, before a final offence at Abbey Park Industrial Estate, Romsey, at the end of March.

An investigation was launched by Test Valley Borough Council after Mr Dibden had been spotted at his first offence in February last year. Then, the authority received a report of a man acting suspiciously in the Stonemarth car park. He then left in a vehicle after realising he had been noticed on March 20.

That vehicle then travelled to Tanners Lane, by the industrial units at Tanners Court, where Dibden was observed by Test Valley's Deputy Leader leaving a bath, wooden door and plasterboard in a layby. Then, a further fly-tip occurred further down the same road at a layby opposite a residential property. Hazardous waste, concrete, broken tiles, insulation and broken furniture were all dumped.

Finally, eight days later, TVBC received a report of a fly-tip at Abbey Park Industrial Estate, where three double mattresses, a single mattress,

three divan bases and broken furniture were left. Mr Dibden's vehicle was clearly seen on CCTV.

At Southampton Magistrates Court, he was ordered to pay £500 costs for each of the three offences, and a £128 victim surcharge, on top of the prison time suspended for 18 months. He was also banned from driving for three months.

The successful prosecution follows a year in which the council lost no cases of fly-tipping prosecutions in court. During 2021, a total of 21 people were prosecuted for waste-related offences, with the authority's enforcement team continuing to work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

A further example saw two men ordered to pay more than £6,000 in total after a caravan was unlawfully dumped along Hackleys Lane, Wellow, last summer. Last month, Jason Stone and Jerry Mukoyi were found to be responsible, with Mr Stone failing to attend interviews.

Every single case is investigated thoroughly, with evidence being found through various means, including covert cameras. These are positioned at multiple locations all around the borough, but are moved regularly so that the chances of capturing a criminal are greatly increased.

Prison time, suspended custodial sentences and tens of thousands of pounds in fines are just some of the results over recent prosecutions for waste-related criminal activity.



Portfolio holder, councillor Nick Adams-King, said:

"Often I say how grotesque fly-tipping is, or any offence to do with waste, for that matter. I was glad to be able to play a part in bringing this offender to justice. We often see things that seem suspicious, if you do then please let the council know, you never know when it will help an investigation and a prosecution."

"It is absolutely not right that these criminals can leave their waste somewhere and expect somebody else to clear it up, and then leave the taxpayer to foot the bill. That is why

our approach is one of zero-tolerance so that we can find those responsible, and make sure that they are the ones who pay, both literally and from a justice perspective. I really hope that this approach continues to deter criminals, as we have one of the best prosecution rates in Hampshire for waste-related offences.

"I think it's also vital that we highlight the level of work that goes on among our environment service's enforcement team, the legal service and every other branch of TVBC that works together."



What to put in your brown bin

We only collect **paper, cardboard, tins and cans, aerosols and plastic bottles** for recycling. They must be clean, dry and loose. Please do not put any other materials in your brown bin. **If in doubt, leave it out!**



No plastic bags or black sacks

Keep me as a reminder!



PUBLIC ASKED TO SHAPE BOROUGH'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Communities are being asked to help shape future development plans as Test Valley Borough Council has launched a consultation on a major planning document.

The Local Plan (Regulation 18 Stage 1) is the first draft of policies and guidelines for new developments. At this stage, it focuses solely on strategic matters and includes the number of new homes required by government and other strategic planning priorities, such as tackling climate change.

The council will use people's comments and feedback to refine the document and draft more detailed

policies, which will include identifying the location of major development sites. This additional information will be included in the Regulation 18 Stage 2 Local Plan, scheduled for public consultation later this year.

The consultation will last eight weeks and closes on 8 April. Members of the public can view the Local Plan and submit their comments at www.testvalley.gov.uk/localplan2040

Planning portfolio holder, councillor Phil Bundy, said: *"The Local Plan plays such a pivotal role in making sure that people have access to good quality homes to rent and buy, access to jobs, schools and medical facilities. It can help people who have grown up in a particular village to continue living in the same area when they choose to move out of the family home, or to downsize from it. It has a very real impact on people's lives and so it is incredibly important that our residents and communities are able to help shape future development in their area."*

"We have committed to making this process as transparent and accessible as possible. Please do take a look at our plans and share your thoughts, as your feedback is absolutely critical to the creation of the new Local Plan for the borough."

MARKING THE PLATINUM JUBILEE IN TEST VALLEY



A number of events are set to take place across Test Valley this spring and summer to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's platinum jubilee. In February, The Queen became the first British monarch to celebrate the milestone of 70 years' service.

To commemorate this, and the Royal Family's connections to the borough, tree planting is to take place up and down the borough, while schools will have the opportunity to design a card sent to Her Majesty from the mayor, councillor Mark Cooper, on behalf of all the borough's residents.

As well as this, the annual civic service hosted by mayor Cooper will be held during the jubilee's bank

holiday weekend. The service will be followed by a reception and will be an opportunity to honour Her Majesty's decades of service.

TVBC's existing hanging basket scheme will be coloured with purple flowers to mark the jubilee for the year 2022 in prominent locations.

Two bespoke pieces of public artwork in Andover and Romsey have also been commissioned.

For residents wishing to hold a street party and close a road for the jubilee celebrations, TVBC has also waived the fee for the application to do so. For more information on this, and other upcoming events for the jubilee, visit: www.testvalley.gov.uk/queensjubilee

COUNCIL ANNOUNCES £1.2M OF FUNDING FOR CHARITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Charities and voluntary organisations are set to benefit from a £1.2M boost over the next three years, after Test Valley Borough Council announced the latest cycle of its Revenue Funding Programme.

A report to the council's cabinet in February recommended awards ranging from £2,500 to almost £270,000 per year to organisations delivering a range of services, including mental health support, activities for older people, Shopmobility, advice on debt, benefits and housing, youth provision and core support for voluntary groups across the borough.

Portfolio holder for communities, leisure and tourism, councillor David Drew, said: *"Test Valley's fantastic communities make the borough what it is and our local charities and voluntary groups are pivotal to their success. I am therefore delighted that we are able to once again make long term financial commitments to the sector."*

The report recommends that the funding for all the other organisations currently in the programme runs for the next two years, while the council works with the sector to develop a more accessible funding programme in time for the 2024-25 financial year.

Councillor Drew added: *"Historically, the funding programme has targeted specific functions. While this worked in the past, our new proposal is to make elements of this funding much more flexible and accessible in order to increase its impact. We look forward to working with organisations in the sector to develop this new model together."*

AWARD-WINNING SPACES ACROSS TEST VALLEY

Three Test Valley parks have won a coveted national prize of a Green Flag Award from UK charity Keep Britain Tidy.

Romsey's War Memorial Park, Rooksbury Mill in Andover and Valley Park Woodlands have all retained the prize, which is celebrating 25 years as the international quality mark for parks.

More so than ever before, green spaces in the borough have been of significant importance to residents and visitors. Lockdown gave an opportunity for communities to prioritise spending time outdoors in the fresh air, with many exploring new spaces and even discovering the beauty of Test Valley for the first time. Green spaces in Test Valley have provided the space to breathe and reset during challenging times and, never more than this year have they deserved to be acknowledged for their management.

Keeping in touch with nature remains a part of many people's everyday life. Now, the importance of taking a break and enjoying a change of scenery, even if it's a simple walk through the park to notice the colours of the leaves changing, is recognised. More than ever before, communities are making the most of what's on their doorstep.

Climate change and countryside portfolio holder, councillor Alison Johnston, said:

"Access to high quality, diverse open spaces and Nature plays such an important part of our wellbeing, and we are all aware of how fortunate we are to have beautiful green space in which to reflect, exercise, explore, appreciate and be with our friends and family."

"Our parks are a haven not just for us but a home for our local wildlife too. These awards are a testament to officers at the council who work tirelessly to ensure our green spaces are looked after and protected throughout the year, working with nature to release its full potential."

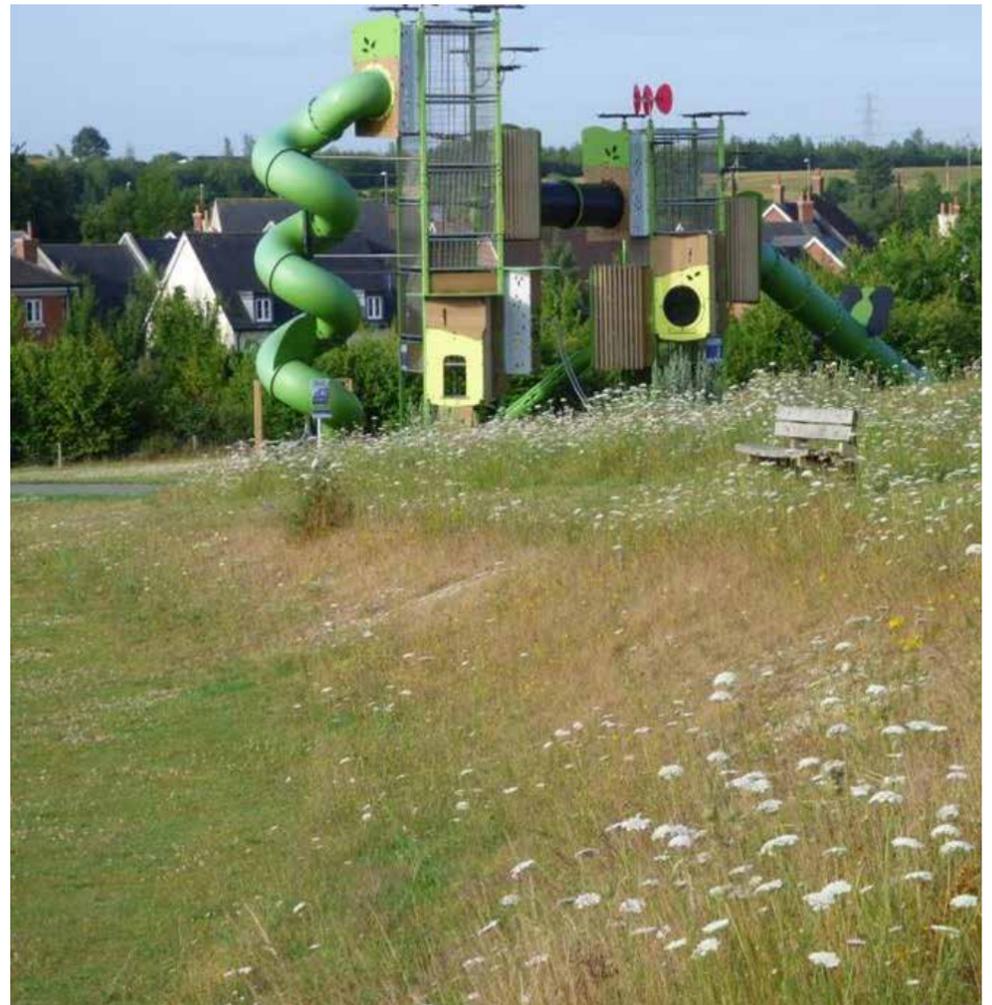
Portfolio holder for community, leisure and tourism, councillor David Drew, said:

"Yet again, green spaces in the borough managed by the council have been acknowledged by Keep Britain Tidy's Green Flag Awards."

"The borough's green spaces are truly spectacular. The council prioritises time and funds to ensure that these spaces are carefully maintained."



Next time you are in need of fresh air, why not explore Memorial Park, Rooksbury Mill and Valley Park in Test Valley? Find parking information and walking routes at testvalley.gov.uk/communityandleisure.



SPRINGING UP ACROSS TEST VALLEY

Urban meadows are springing up across the borough and look set to grow in numbers after a successful first year trialling the project.

In spring last year, TVBC changed the frequency of mowing grass across seven hectares of green space to encourage the growth of wildflowers and plants. One of the benefits to this change was to help reduce the number of visits, reducing the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere, and begin to improve the spaces' biodiversity value.

The sites across the borough include spaces at Picket Twenty, Smannell Road and Beech Hurst Park in Andover, Whitenap Open Space and Abbotswood in Romsey and a number of areas around Valley Park and North Baddesley. Volunteer recorders from Romsey and District Society, The Anton River Conservation Association (TARCA) and a number of local naturalists have been monitoring the sites over the summer and recording what species have popped up.

Now, the council is assessing the sites and looking to increase the area of urban meadows over the next two years with the aim to have a total of 18 hectares of urban meadow space across the borough.

Climate emergency and countryside portfolio holder, councillor Alison Johnston, said:

"The work creating these urban meadows has really given a wilder more natural feel to some of our green space. I'm delighted to say that the communities benefitting from these meadows have been positive about this change in management, and we are working to increase the area of meadows over the next two years."

"The benefits are clear to see from an aesthetic point of view, as well as our work on the climate emergency action plan. Reducing our mowing is a step towards changing the way we manage our spaces with the climate and environment in mind."

"We are keen to work with communities who have ideas on where mowing could be relaxed to improve biodiversity."

FURTHER BOOST FOR CHANTRY CENTRE BUSINESSES AS COUNCIL CUTS CHARGES BY A THIRD



Chantry Centre businesses have seen their service charge fall by a third since Test Valley Borough Council bought the mall in 2019, providing a much-needed boost to those impacted by the pandemic.

The charge, which covers the management, promotion and maintenance of the centre in Andover, has dropped from £1.2M in 2019 to £850K for 2022. But businesses will still receive the same level of support as they have in previous years, as the council has identified significant cost savings and more efficient ways of delivering the same services.

As part of this efficiency drive, the council is now managing the centre directly, rather than using a management company which has been the case historically.

Since purchasing the centre, the council has made a number of improvements, including refurbishing the lifts in the multi-storey car park and the toilets by the bus station, repairing the leaking roof and upgrading the CCTV system.

With the reduction in the overall service charge bill, the vast majority of tenants will see their service charge fall, while a handful will have their charges frozen at 2021 levels. Before the council acquired the Chantry Centre, tenants would generally see a year-on-year increase in their service charge.

Leader of Test Valley Borough Council, councillor Phil North, said:

“I am pleased that we have been able to reduce the service charge for the third year in a row. Many businesses have been hit hard by the pandemic and we will continue to do all we can to support them. As well as continuing to facilitate pop-up shops and indoor markets, we’re also planning to run a series of major town centre events this year to help drive up footfall.”

“Although we’ve got plans for a fundamental redevelopment of the Chantry Centre in the coming years, it’s imperative that we do all we can to keep those businesses in Andover in what is a really tough trading environment, so they can come on that journey with us. We will therefore continue to forensically analyse the service charge to identify any further cost savings without compromising the level of support and services the businesses receive.”

The council has written to all tenants with details of the service charge for 2022.

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES ACROSS THE BOROUGH



Thousands of pounds have been awarded to businesses up and down Test Valley through the borough council’s various grant schemes.

The Independent Retailer Grant and Business Incentive Grant have seen businesses and community groups supported as new companies are set up or continue to thrive.

In December, Aimee Lou’s Driving School was awarded £750 through a Business Incentive Grant after beginning her new business as a self-employed driving instructor.

Aimee said:

“The grant money was a real help and enabled me to take steps forward to employ two other instructors and help one of them to complete their training.”

The same month, Tony Macdonald,

who previously worked as a mechanic, was also awarded a Business Incentive Grant after changing careers into painting and decorating.

Charlton and The Pentons ward councillor, Linda Lashbrook, said:

“This is exactly what these grants are for, and I’m pleased that we’ve been able to help Tony with his new business. I wish him all the best for the future.”

Earlier this year, FoneWiki, a phone accessories and repair shop in Andover’s Bridge Street, qualified for the £1,000 Independent Retailer Grant.

Business owner Mahinder Singh Poplee moved into the unit during early 2021, giving it a new lease of life before opening to the public.

Councillor Iris Andersen, said:

“This spot on Bridge Street is a great location and I am pleased to see the windows brimful of Mahinder’s merchandise.”



SUPPORTING PROJECTS AND PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES



A nursery and a charity in the north of the borough have benefited from a total of £50,000 in their bid to boost local community projects.

Through Test Valley Borough Council's community asset funds, Little Fingers Pre-School and the Enham Trust have each been awarded £25,000.

The pre-school currently runs from The Gospel Hall in Vernham Dean and is also a charitable organisation, providing early-years provision and education in the community for more than 25 years.

Once the opportunity to purchase the hall arose, the pre-school has received public support to buy it. After applying to the borough's community asset fund, it has been awarded the £25,000 as part of its bid to carry out the purchase, to secure its future for years to come.

Leanne Shuttleworth, manager of Little Fingers Pre-School, said:

"It has long been our dream for Little Fingers Pre-School to have its own home in Vernham Dean. We are delighted that, at last, we're starting the journey to make this possible, thanks to support from Test Valley Borough Council."

Enham Trust, the charity which is based

in Enham Alamein, has also been awarded £25,000 to go towards the refurbishment of their charity shop and tearooms, which contribute to the running of the charity itself.

The works will also make the building fully accessible and will provide increased work and volunteering opportunities for disabled people.

Kerrie Morley, Income Generation Coordinator at the Trust, said:

"We are so grateful to TVBC. The funding will ensure that disabled people locally will have a fully accessible space to browse for bargains and stop for a bite to eat with friends."

"Enham Trust will also be able to provide even more opportunities for disabled people to work within the shop and tearooms, and it will also be a fabulous place for everyone to shop and dine and reconnect after the isolation of the last couple of years."

PEDALLING ON AS NEW CYCLE LANE WORK FINISHES

A new environmentally-friendly transport route between Romsey and Southampton is now in place after four months of work.

The cycle lane has been put in place along the east side of Southampton Road. The lane begins from Lee Lane, running past Romsey Rapids and into the town's bypass roundabout that helps to connect the rest of Romsey.

The work, which finished two weeks early, means cycling to and from the edge of Southampton and Nursling into Romsey is now safer and easier.

The £300,000 project had been funded by contributions from developers around the town through the Community Infrastructure Levy, having been advocated by borough and county councillor, and current mayor of Test Valley, Mark Cooper, alongside former county council leader and local member, Roy Perry.



Councillor Cooper, said: *"This road is pivotal in connecting Romsey with areas to the south, both in the borough and in the city of Southampton."*



Harrow Way
Community School
Learning for life, success for all



Harrow Way is widely acknowledged as a very successful school dedicated to the achievement and well-being of all its students. Ofsted recognised us as a 'good school', a judgement of which we are understandably proud.

Our commitment to achieving exemplary standards has been recognised and praised by the Teacher Development Trust, which awarded the school its prestigious Silver Award.

We are also a CAS (Computing at School) Lead School, a Centre of Excellence for Geography and a Music Mark School. Harrow Way also has the 'Big Award' which recognises the work we have done around anti-bullying.

Our exciting and innovative curriculum offers a wide range of opportunities for students to succeed. Harrow Way is a popular, thriving establishment successfully serving the needs of the wider community as well as the school population.

Come and discover what makes this school so special and join in our success. Visitors to the school are always welcome.



COUNCIL SETS OUT LATEST BUDGET

Test Valley Borough Council has set out its budget plans for 2022/23 following a cabinet meeting last month, as the authority continues its recovery from the pandemic.

Council chiefs have discussed their finance plan for the coming year, which is set in the context of recovering from a budgeted £2.544M shortfall due to the impact of covid-19 in 2021/22, reduced to £1.050M thanks to government support grants.

The council had expected its income to return to pre-pandemic levels by the start of 2022/23, which has largely been the case apart from car parking which continues to lag behind the forecast due to a change in people's working habits.

And while the council's Project Enterprise initiative is expected to generate an income of £2.086M, increased costs and uncertainty over funding levels in the medium term mean that the authority is proposing to increase council tax by £5 to £153.91

for 2022/23. It also plans to make a modest draw from its reserves to top this up. Despite the proposed increase, TVBC's share of the council tax will remain more than £40 lower than the average for the rest of England.

To protect its most vulnerable residents, the council recently approved a local council tax support scheme for low-income households to safeguard them against the full impact of the council tax change.

The government also recently announced that households in council tax bands A to D will receive a £150 council tax discount - around two-thirds of all homes in Test Valley. In addition, the chancellor has confirmed that local authorities will receive a discretionary fund to help lower income households in higher council tax bands.

Finance portfolio holder, councillor Maureen Flood, said:

"It has been an incredibly difficult couple of years for everyone, and Test Valley Borough Council, like so many other organisations, has been hard hit by the pandemic. Rising utility prices have also had an impact more recently.

"Things are starting to improve but we are some way off plugging the hole in our budget left by covid. Thankfully we were in a strong financial position pre-pandemic so we are once again proposing to use a modest amount from our reserves. But it's critical that we continue to manage our money carefully and identify savings where we can. We don't take the decision to increase council tax lightly, and with many freezes over the years we have demonstrated that if we can avoid an increase then we will. But this will

enable us to protect the vital services we provide and continue to support our communities.

"The below inflation rise of £5 on a Band D – less than 10p a week means an average bill of £153.91 for an entire year of Test Valley Borough Council services. This includes waste collections, maintaining the borough's parks and open spaces, housing and homelessness, environmental health, managing benefits and grants, planning, licensing, economic development, leisure and supporting local communities. It also goes towards major projects, such as the regeneration of Andover and Romsey town centres.

"For most people, the proposed rise will be more than offset via the government's £150 council tax discount."

CELEBRATING 18 YEARS OF HEALTH WALKS!

Last autumn, Test Valley Health Walks marked 18 years, with the first one ever being held in Romsey back in September 2003.

They're still going strong and open for everyone to enjoy. Seven regular walks take place across every day of the week except Sunday.

Now, they're taking on a new name as well as new members, as they go under the title of Test Valley Wellbeing Walks. The Ramblers, who manage the national walking programme, have made this change to reflect the benefit to both their general wellbeing and physical exercise of the walks.

The walks are free and open to anyone as a great way to get fit or stay fit and explore what's on your doorstep. Each walk is led by qualified volunteer walk leaders and can cater for faster and slower walkers. They take around 60 minutes with most walks being between two or three miles.

They can only take place due to a small team of dedicated volunteers who lead the walks and TVBC is always keen to welcome new volunteers. As a walk leader you will be helping people to get active and healthy, help reduce isolation and walk in some lovely open space in the borough.

So a big thank you to all of our volunteer leaders and walkers, some of whom are still walking with us after 18 years!



Any questions about the walks interested volunteers can contact the council, either by email: wellbeingwalks@testvalley.gov.uk or call: 01264 368000 and ask for either Louisa Rice or Andrea Harris.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WASTE COLLECTION OPERATIVE



Whether through stormy weather, over the festive season or during the Covid-19 pandemic, TVBC's waste collection operatives never stop.

With so many residents showing their appreciation, one of our operatives, Gareth Rump, told us about the role, why he enjoys it, and what residents can do to help!

Gareth, who works on the council's 'round three' route, is up ready to leave the Portway Depot in Andover at 7am each day.

He said: *"We mainly work in the villages around Andover, such as Appleshaw, the Clatfords and Weyhill, and we also work in part of East Anton. My round is great to work on – I enjoy working with my team. We work hard, but we have fun too! Each week alternates, so one week we collect everyone's household waste from their black bins, and on the other week, we collect their recycling from the brown bins."*

"When we fill our lorry, we then take it to a transfer station near Andover. The household waste is then taken to an energy recovery facility where it is safely burnt to produce electricity. The recycling is taken to a materials recovery facility where it is sorted and sent for reprocessing."

Changes to recycling are set to come into play following the government's Environment Act 2021. It's now likely that glass, thin plastic and Tetra-Pak materials can all be included in the brown recycling bins at the kerbside in future. There could also be a weekly food waste service.

Gareth added: *"I am looking forward to the changes the act is bringing –*

it will change my job as we start to collect more items at the kerbside – the future is exciting in Test Valley.

"Some things we can't change like the good old weather, but I'm used to working in rain or sunshine! There are some things that our residents can do to help us, though. I check every recycling bin that I empty and, quite often, some of the wrong items are in there, meaning I tag that bin to help residents get it right for the next time. Contamination is a real issue for us and costs so much money to remove and properly dispose of the wrong items, so if residents could recycle more of the right things, that would help us a lot."

"It's really easy to recycle in Test Valley – we collect paper, card, plastic bottles, cans, tins and aerosols in the brown bins. Glass bottles and jars, textiles, foil and cartons can then be recycled at local recycling centres. One other thing that would help me each day is if the bin is on the edge of the property with the handle facing out. It might seem so insignificant, but each week we collect around 57,000 bins – that's a lot of bin moving! All in all, I enjoy working outdoors, working with a great team and doing my bit to help the environment."

"The council has just supported me in learning to drive an HGV and I have recently passed my driving test. I am looking forward to being able to help out more in the environmental service."

For any questions or information on recycling and waste facilities in Test Valley, contact environmental service on **01264 368000** or visit the council's website at www.testvalley.gov.uk

NIGHTINGALE LODGE OPENS ITS DOORS!

The new Nightingale Lodge development in Romsey has welcomed its very first residents. Providing state-of-the-art homes for older people, Nightingale Lodge is a brand new, 54-home development delivered by Places for People Living Plus in partnership with Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council.

Homes are now available to people over 55 and can be rented at an affordable rent or purchased through shared ownership.

Places for People partnered with Lovell Later Living, who constructed the 'extra care' accommodation; the building has aptly been named after Victorian icon and former Romsey resident Florence Nightingale. It boasts access to 24-hour on-site care and support commissioned by Hampshire County Council providing for planned and emergency care. In addition to the modern apartments, Nightingale Lodge offers a variety of

facilities for use by both residents and guests - these include a wellness suite, hair and beauty salon, a restaurant and landscaped gardens.

The brand-new development consists of one and two-bed apartments with 17 homes on sale through shared ownership, with residents able to purchase between 25 per cent and 75 per cent of the home's full value, and 37 properties available via affordable rent through Hampshire Home Choice for local people who have care and housing needs.

Andy Lomas, Managing Director, Places for People Living Plus, said:

"We are thrilled to welcome our first residents to Nightingale Lodge – it's been wonderful to see them moving into their new homes and enjoying living alongside like-minded people and embracing their new lifestyles – safe in the knowledge they can get support and professional care, if and when required. Our extra care developments offer residents and their family's complete reassurance

and peace of mind that they are living in a safe, self-contained yet engaging environment.

"Here, we're offering a new way of living for people over 55 with a focus on independent living for older people but with care and support on-site 24/7. We're excited to welcome our first residents and already looking forward to welcoming more over the coming weeks after a busy and sociable autumn and festive season."



Those interested in the affordable rented apartments can make enquiries to Test Valley Borough Council (**01264 368000**), or find more information about extra care housing on the TVBC website. Applications should be made via Hampshire Home Choice - www.hampshirehomechoice.org.uk

Interested parties for the shared ownership apartments can also reserve the homes for sale at the development by contacting Living Plus (part of Places for People) via: www.livingplus.co.uk/find-a-home/nightingale-lodge/

SEE IT SAFELY AT THE LIGHTS

Visitors to The Lights theatre this year can book safe in the knowledge that the venue has been working hard behind the scenes to ensure that visitors are safe and secure when they visit.

The Lights is delighted to be accredited with The Society of London Theatres and UK Theatres 'See It Safely' kite mark, in recognition of the steps taken to make the venue Covid secure.

A comprehensive web page full of information about covid security is regularly updated and the venue recommends that customers have a look before visiting: www.thelights.org.uk/visiting/covid-19



SPRING AND SUMMER LOOK VIBRANT AT THE LIGHTS

The new summer season at The Lights in Andover is guaranteed to help the sun shine this summer, with a range of shows to satisfy everyone.

Brimming with comedy, music, theatre and children's shows, The Lights is bursting at the seams with talent over the summer months. It is also the season that the venue plays host to productions from local creative companies and schools, proving that the road to stardom starts at home!

For those looking for a show to make them laugh out loud there are a host of top name comedians to choose from: Shaparak Khorsandi with *It Was The 90s* – the decade when there was nothing to be done but party; Richard Digance, comedian and songwriter and BAFTA nominated entertainer; Larry Dean with his tour *Fudnut* and the welcome return of Rich Hall with his *Hoedown Deluxe* – the musical, comedy locomotion keeps on rolling!

For something more theatrical why not enjoy a haunting and moving love story from the creator of *Peter Pan*, J M Barrie with the story of *Mary Rose* or the classic *Great Expectations* from perennial favourites, Hotbuckle Theatre.

Music is always a must too at the venue, with lots of original music

from *True Strays*, with their blend of American and blues rock, or for something completely different, *Tango Calor* – an exciting trio who will take you on a journey from the night clubs of Buenos Aires to the salons of Paris with their contemporary tango music. Not forgetting the tribute shows and big sounds from some of the greats including *Talon*, *Cloudbusting*, *Dirty DC* and *The Bob Dylan Story*.

There really is something for everyone to enjoy and experience at The Lights, whether you are a regular supporter or being tempted for the first time. We haven't forgotten the little ones either, with children's theatre – *Three Billy Goats Gruff*, *Little Grimm Tales* and a panto that's not at Christmas with *Alice in Wonderland* in June.

The Lights is more than just a theatre, it is a community hub for arts and entertainment in Test Valley. Why not come and see for yourself?

Please note that ticket holders can book confidently with the venue's 'peace of mind booking and refund policy' – part of a series of Covid related measures to make customers feel safe and reassured about booking and visiting the venue. More information about the steps taken to both make and keep the venue safer can be found at: www.thelights.org.uk/visiting/covid-19 Customers are encouraged to visit the page before booking and then prior to attending as advice may be subject to change.

CLIMATE DAY OF ACTION TO RETURN



Andover Vision's inaugural Climate Day of Action took place last June with schools, community groups, businesses and other groups taking part.

From pledges to use less plastic, to clearing up waterways, various actions to help our planet were carried out. Now, thanks to that success, the day is set to return in late September.

Andover Vision is hopeful that once again, groups of all ages will come together to help battle climate change and make our lifestyles more sustainable.

Keep an eye out at www.andovervision.org.uk for more!

HOMELESSNESS IN TEST VALLEY

This spring and summer, the council is re-iterating its pledge to support local residents who may be facing homelessness.

In recent years, the council has invested hundreds of thousands of pounds in local homelessness services and has outlined its commitment to ensure that any resident who faces sleeping rough will receive an offer of emergency accommodation.

The authority works with partners to prevent and relieve homelessness by focusing on people's strengths and aspirations, as well as trying to address the underlying issues that have led to them losing their home.

Anyone concerned about their housing situation should contact the housing service on **01264 368000** or **01794 527700**.

People can also report rough sleeping to the council through streetlink.org.uk

For the whole programme for this year and the next at The Lights, please visit www.thelights.org.uk

