



Winchester Councillors' Report June 2026

Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council

One of the updates given out at the Full Council on Tuesday 2nd June was the on the topic of the new Wards that will be used in the new Mid Hants Unitary Authority. For many councillors it drove home the fact that our old local authority of the Winchester District and Hampshire County Council will be going. Some of the parishes in the southern parts of the district are to be incorporated into either the new Southwest or Southeast Unitary authorities. The parish and town councils in the Alresford and Itchen Valley are not being affected. The new boundary changes are due to be settled by the end of June.

The timetable of the Local Government Reorganisation puts a limit on expenditure on new projects. The Council is endeavouring to progress Central Winchester Regeneration to detailed Planning Application stage in October. They are also working to find developers for the Bar End Depot site.

Small Grants

WCC recently opened three new small grant schemes for community and voluntary organisations, both in the town wards and across the wider district - click the links below to find out more about each scheme!

- **District Small Grants Scheme**: Grants of up to £700 available for community groups and charities outside of the Winchester town wards
- **Greener Faster Small Grants Scheme**: Grants of up to £1,000 available to support organisations that contribute to our Greener Faster priorities across the district. We are particularly keen to fund projects that:
    - Reduce energy use
    - Improve nature and biodiversity
    - Provide future protection against extreme climate events

If you're part of, or know of, a community group that could make use of a one-off grant to support community activities or sustainability initiatives, be sure to check out these funding opportunities! **grants@winchester.gov.uk or call 01962 848 269.**

Join us for the Climate and Nature Open Forum

Learn about our plans for supporting and improving nature across the district at our Climate and Nature Open Forum (CNOF) on Tuesday 9 June, 6.30pm to 8pm. The event will be online via Teams.

The forum will focus on the theme of nature, and will include an introduction to our Nature Improvement Plan for the district from our Ecology team. You'll also hear about the 'Magnificent Meadows' project, a CPRE Hampshire (Campaign for Rural England) project funded by the National Lottery, aiming to rejuvenate local grasslands and precious meadows in Winchester and across Hampshire. The Forum will feature presentations from a range of

individuals including the Winchester City Council Ecology Team, Rachel Remnant who will be talking about and Bishops Waltham North Pond Conservation Group.

Book your free place at the CNOF: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/climate-and-nature-open-forum-tickets

Nature Improvement Plan - Tackling the nature emergency, enhancing and protecting nature

There have been significant national and local changes relating to nature recovery in the last four years, since we published our Biodiversity Action Plan 2021. The Environment Act 2021 places a strengthened duty on local authorities to consider biodiversity in all our functions, and the Environment Improvement Plan 2023 sets out new national targets.

The council demonstrated the importance of nature locally, and the need for action to address its decline, by declaring a nature emergency in 2023. Following on from our Biodiversity Action Plan, the Nature Improvement Plan 2025-2030 outlines a new approach to ensuring the delivery of nature improvement across the district. It establishes guiding principles for all council functions in relation to biodiversity and sets measures for the next five years.

The full Nature Improvement Plan 2025-2030 Technical Report is also available to download as a PDF.

If you have any questions about the Nature Improvement Plan, please email naturalenvironment@winchester.gov.uk .

New stroke support group for Alresford residents

On the first Tuesday of every month, Alton Stroke Support Group is running free transport from Alresford and surrounding villages to Alton for people who have experienced strokes, their carers and loved ones. Using the New Alresford Town Trust (NATT) Community Bus, which can collect and return users to/ from their front doors, this is a new outreach scheme. If demand in Alresford is high enough, then an Alresford Stroke Support Group is the next step.

Support includes not only friendship, understanding, and reassurance, but also talks from experts on issues including rehabilitation, exercise, emotional difficulties and financial concerns.

The only donation requested is £2 for a hot drink and home-made cake at the meeting.

Clare Pinniger, the Trustee with oversight of NATT's community buses, says "We are absolutely delighted to be involved with this crucial scheme. It furthers our aim of increasing opportunities for residents in and around Alresford."

The bus leaves Alresford at 1pm, returning at 4.30pm.

Please call or email Elaine, the stroke support group's transport coordinator on 07340 739251 or admin@altonstrokesupportgroup.org.uk for more details and to book seat/s.

Margot Power 01962 734167
Russell Gordon -Smith 01962 733219
Clare Pinniger 07790 032349