



Winchester City Council July 2025

My grandmother often reminded me that 'self-praise is no recommendation', an adage many prominent politicians might bear in mind. Praise by others is rather different. Two notable examples:

Climate Change

We are pleased to report that Winchester City Council was marked as the 'top performing' district councils in the country for work on the climate crisis by the organisation Climate Emergency UK which has scored all UK councils on their performance in addressing the climate crisis. Winchester City Council has been awarded a score of 68% overall (an increase of 19% compared to the last score card in 2023.) It leads the way by far in Hampshire with a 22% higher score than the next highest performing council in the county.

The Climate Action Scorecard system was devised by Climate Emergency UK to rank councils on how they're tackling climate change. It makes an assessment based on seven areas:

- Building and heating
- Transport
- Planning and land use
- Governance and finance
- Biodiversity
- Collaboration and engagement
- Waste reduction and food

The City Council scored particularly highly in in the categories of Buildings & Heating and Planning & Land Use, reflecting both work to increase the energy efficiency of its buildings and housing stock and the carbon reduction policies in the emerging local plan. Collaboration and engagement were recognised as a particular strength of the council – visible in the collaborative work it's doing with partners, businesses and organisations to be a carbon neutral district by 2030.

We will not be resting on our laurels, we have plans in place to reduce carbon emissions and improve our score even further, such as our food waste recycling service, and our nature improvement plan, upgrading from our Local Nature Recovery Strategy, to increase biodiversity, launching this autumn.

Nutrient Mitigation

Winchester City Council has been shortlisted for a prestigious planning award by no less a body than the Royal Town Planning Institute. It has shortlisted the 'Winchester Nutrient Mitigation Strategy' under its 'best project' award.

The joint submission from the City Council and the Partnership for South Hampshire was based on the work that Winchester City Council has undertaken to protect and improve the water quality of important chalk streams across the district, while still being able to provide new homes.

In March 2022 Natural England highlighted the damaging effect excessive nitrates and phosphates had on our chalk streams and ultimately on the Solent where it caused severe eutrophication/algae bloom. Natural England is concerned that without measures to prevent it, new homes can contribute to adding excessive nutrients into the water. Henceforth, all new developments had to demonstrate that they would not contribute to the problem. This in effect stopped all development.

Winchester City Council has been proactive in tackling this key issue and developed a number of nutrient mitigation schemes to reduce the damage by upgrading city council owned waste-water treatment works (WWTW).

An initial pilot scheme, funded by the city council, to upgrade two WWTWs was completed last year. Working with Partnership for South Hampshire, the city council has been able to access the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund (LNMF) to start work on upgrading a further 10 WWTWs this year.

The process of upgrading private systems funded by nutrient credits is cumbersome, some are now going ahead locally. As all villages upstream of Alresford are without mains drainage this is the only way that OUR river quality will be improved. Regrettably, Hobbs Close is a technical and financial challenge.

We are also retrofitting council owned properties with water efficiency measures, this will not only reduce the damage done by abstraction, and reduce the carbon footprint of providing potable water but also reduce people's water bills.

A not unrelated local problem in Alresford

Some residents will be aware of the sewage spill in Alresford, due to the breakdown of two pumping stations. Our MP Danny Chambers (alerted by your local councillors) is in touch with the CEO of Southern Water regarding this, surprisingly and worryingly, he knew nothing about this problem. We will keep you informed about this.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Survey launch

The joint LGR survey is now live at
<https://ourplaceourfuture.commonplace.is/>

This survey has been jointly developed with 12 of the 15 councils across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It is hosted on a platform called Commonplace and has four sections to complete: Your Local area and community; what you want from your council, proposals for new councils (this will display the three options which includes a map showing potential boundary changes) and then an about you section. We would be grateful if parishes could promote this on local information networks.

Be warned, use of the maps can result in the whirling wheel of doom, we have reported this, and there is a text option, but may not be fixed quickly.

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