

## DARK SKIES OF THE SOUTH DOWNS

The 2021/22 South Downs Astrophotography competition is now open!

Details of the Dark Sky Discovery Sites can be found on The SDNP [here](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/where-to-stargaze/). <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/where-to-stargaze/> For entry details and to download an application form click [here](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/enter-the-2021-2022-astrophotography-competition/). <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/enter-the-2021-2022-astrophotography-competition/>

There are three categories available to enter:

**South Downs Dark Skyscapes** – an image that captures the star-studded Dark Skies of the South Downs National Park. Judges will be looking for awe-inspiring photography that shows off the landscape and/or cultural heritage and the dark skies above it!

**Living Dark Skies: people and nature** – any image that captures human or wildlife activity. Ideas include images of people stargazing, people running or walking under the cover of darkness, or images of nocturnal wildlife or trees at night.

**Our Magnificent Moon and/or Milky Way** – judges will be looking for breathtaking shots of our nearest neighbour in the solar system and our home galaxy. The first prize for each category will be £100, with a runner-up prize of £75 for each category. **Deadline for competition entries: 12 January 2022 (Midnight)**



# Winchester City Councillor News Central Meon Valley

Season's Greetings

## Winchester City Council issues £5,000 in fly-tipping fines in three months

Winchester City Council has upped its efforts to rid the district of illegally disposed waste with four cases leading to successful prosecution over the summer. Residents continue to play a vital role in spotting and reporting fly-tipping.

To further tackle the issue the council has installed CCTV cameras at known 'hot spots' and launched a poster campaign to stop would-be fly-tippers.

Winchester City Council (WCC) is also asking local people to be aware of companies in the district who are offering to dispose of items for small sums of money. Whilst some legitimate businesses in the area offer this service under license, there are others who operate without license and who take the payment only to dispose of the waste irresponsibly. If residents pay a business to remove rubbish that is illegally disposed of, they could be liable for an unlimited fine when the waste is recovered and traced. This means that it is important to check an operator holds the necessary license to avoid unwittingly having your waste fly-tipped and risking a large fine. **Top tips for how to deal with fly-tipping in your area:**

### Do

- Check to see if it has a sticker attached to it. If it does, we're aware and we're arranging disposal.
- Use the MyCouncil app to log the exact location or lookout for the nearest landmark.

### Don't

- Approach the culprit. They're committing a crime - your safety is paramount.



**Climate Change** When it comes to tackling climate change, everyone has a role to play.

Your council has set ambitious targets for itself and our district around reaching net zero carbon in the upcoming years. Part of this means making sure our own teams understand the subject and can identify best practice in terms of achieving carbon reduction when carrying their day-to-day activities. Alongside a selection of other local authorities Winchester City Council shared successes following the roll out of

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COP 26 Cont/... our organisation-wide Carbon Literacy training programme. Winchester's team joined speakers from Somerset, Manchester, West Sussex and Wales for a fascinating insight into ways local authorities can get real results when tackling the climate emergency.

Below are a couple of takeaways for me from Cop26 - what are yours?

Changes in weather patterns, particularly increases in rainfall as a result of climate change, risk changes to our water quality by adding pressure to the ditches and sewage treatment works and networks. Our Drainage networks go back hundreds of years but many have been compromised by built development and having to cope with increased rainfall as a result of climate change. Simple measures can make a huge difference.

Natural flood management charity 'Slow the Flow' were at COP 26 highlighting the important role communities have to play in reducing the risk of flooding. Flooding might not be the first thing that springs to mind when we think about Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS), eg. Himalayan Balsam, Rhododendron and Japanese Knotweed, but their impact on biodiversity in native woodlands and wildflowers is widely understood. INNS can also contribute to increased flood risk by out-competing other species in an area and forming a total monoculture. Read more at 'Slow the Flow'. Changes in behaviour are also needed to tackle the climate emergency. The UK's chief scientific adviser Sir Patrick Vallance said behaviour change was starting to happen but needed to go further. He said he cycled to work, ate less meat and had taken the train to the climate summit in Glasgow. He also said the climate crisis was a far bigger problem than coronavirus and would kill more people if immediate changes were not made.

There is a monumental challenge ahead for mankind and although the personal contribution we each can make might seem inconsequential to changing the world we must engage and do our bit, not just for our own satisfaction but to encourage our next generation who will be inspired by our actions. Some small and some significant sacrifices can help reduce climate change - what will you be doing to help?

WCC want to know what you did for COP26, whether that's a pledge you've made or an event you've hosted, tell us about it so we can share your story with others to encourage them to follow your example. Please contact [lhayes@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:lhayes@winchester.gov.uk) with your details and a short description of what it is you've done