

## DRAFT MINUTES

Hambleton Parish Council  
02 Mar 2026; 7.30pm; Hambleton Village Hall

### PRESENT:

Cllr Encke (Chair); Cllr Clarke; Cllr Mills-Goodlet; Cllr Piper; & Cllr Wale

### In Attendance:

Mrs Joanna Tester (Clerk); Cllr Wallace (HCC & WCC; arrived 8.12pm, left 8.44pm); Cllr Lee (WCC; 7.46pm, left 8.44pm); Cllr White (WCC; 7.46pm, left 8.44pm); and four members of the public.

Meeting started at 7.30pm

Item No.	Item	Discussion & Decision	Action
2918	Co-option of Parish Councillor	<b>Resolved:</b> that councillors have approved the co-option of Phillip Wale as a PC member.	
2919	Acknowledgements	Councillors paused and remembered in silence the contributions of all villagers who have passed away since the last meeting.	
2920	Apologies	Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Hand & Lamb. Apologies also received from PCSO Wheeler-Osman.	
2921	Disclosable pecuniary interests	None.	
2922	Requests for dispensations	None received.	
2923	Public questions & comments	<p>Standing orders suspended for maximum 10 mins. Comments from members of the public as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closure of the Fareham Road for SW over-pumping — considers road closure unnecessary. Tanks could be situated on farmland adjacent to the Pumping Station &amp; tankers positioned on B2150. Suella Braverman MP has been involved and a meeting with SW held last week. Will be continuing to put pressure on SW.</li> <li>• SW (Floyd Cooper) did not know who to contact in Hambleton (councillors/Clerk confirmed that this was not correct; Floyd has been involved in meetings with the PC in the past and contacted the Clerk directly 26/02/26).</li> <li>• Hambleton Vineyard - planning app on agenda tonight is in the process of being withdrawn. Looking at bigger picture in terms of renewable energy etc.</li> </ul>	
2924	Resume standing orders	Agreed.	

2925	District councillor's report & questions arising	<p>Report received (see Appendix A). Additional points discussed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiting for LGR update. Strategic Change Order will then have to go through parliament. First LGR Programme Board has been appointed. Money is being spent already.</li> <li>• District/parish elections to go ahead this May.</li> <li>• Council tax rises (WCC and HCC) have been announced.</li> <li>• WCC Local Plan update due. Unmet housing needs - SDNPA, still to be resolved.</li> <li>• Private landlords - new rules. Workshops being offered to educate landlords in the hope that this will limit non-compliance. WCC will have new powers to enforce new rules.</li> <li>• National Planning Policy Framework Consultation. Inspector approved of new WCC Local Plan, but Government's new NPPF would roll back progress. PC's encouraged respond to consultation &amp; if nothing else to Q18 (over-heating; carbon standards; on-site renewables etc).</li> <li>• Recycling - consultation closes 08/03/26. Hard plastics recycling has been delayed until Oct 2027. HCC has responsibility for building the new recycling plant and this has not yet been done.</li> <li>• 20s plenty - may be beneficial for local parishes to join forces (economy of scale). Signs have to go on private property.</li> <li>• Hockley Golf Course planning consent - SDNPA may be seeking a judicial review (application originally refused; appeal was approved). The outcome could have implications for the Corhampton Golf Course application.</li> <li>• Review at next SDNPA Planning Committee meeting of planning enforcement procedures. Considering using drone technology.</li> <li>• Flood and Biodiversity Challenges in the Central Meon Valley (CMV) and East Hampshire (EH) River Catchment — Summary Briefing. Harm to community and also what's getting into the substrate, streams, rivers etc. Probably needs a multi agency approach. What are EA and Forestry Commission doing? Need to ensure we don't get deterioration in river catchment areas. May need to wait until after elections. Evidence base from Hambleton? To be considered going forward.</li> </ul>	<p>All cllrs</p> <p>Clerk/All cllrs</p>
2926	County councillor's report & questions arising	<p>Report received (see Appendix B). Additional points discussed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SW issues - Stuart Fox (HCC's Emergency Planning and Resilience team,) has been tackling SW as well. Need to arrange SW-HCC-PC meeting once current crisis resolved.</li> <li>• Update on new Mayoral Combined County Authority. Likely to be legally set up this year. Mayor elected 2028. Authority will start taking responsibility for transport &amp; highways planning, skills &amp; economic development etc. Office &amp; staff will be in place for when Mayor is elected. Five 'Chairs' will sit on the Board. Voting for major decisions must be unanimous. Most will be passed through to other organisations until Mayor in place. Statutory instrument must be passed before this can take place.</li> <li>• LGR. Should find out this month.</li> </ul>	

2926 cont.	County councillor's report & questions arising cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council tax - 4.99% rise.</li> <li>• SEND system needs changing. Costing too much and not doing what it should. Welcomed by local authorities, but adverse for some people currently receiving funding.</li> <li>• Bus service improvement programme. Some money from Government but not much.</li> <li>• Cllr advised Cllr Wallace that WCC has now paired up with U-power for solar energy. In the future will move to air source heat pumps etc.</li> </ul>	
2927	Mins of previous meeting (02/02/26)	Agreed as a true record.	
2928	Clerk's progress report	<p><b>Parish Lengthsman Agreement</b> - schedule for 2026/27: not yet received.</p> <p><b>Flooding @ bottom of Bury Lodge Lane</b> - no update.</p> <p><b>Flooding on road near Kings Rest</b> - reported to HH 13/10/23. Response 'could not locate defect'. Likely that they visited when there was no road flooding but didn't look into the cause of previous flooding. Suggest wait for next flooding, take photos &amp; re-submit.</p> <p><b>Useful/Emergency Info Leaflets</b> - WCC Small Grant fund awarded £150. On-going.</p> <p><b>Drain clearance</b> - e-mail sent 05/02/25 to Gina Chandler (HH) re blocked drains throughout Village. Response received from HH via Cllr Wallace 23/05/25 - 'We have made several attempts to identify and clear the various drainage features on Green Lane, with limited success. The site is currently with our colleagues in the Planned Maintenance team to develop and design a scheme to permanently resolve the issue.' No update.</p> <p><b>Footpath between footpaths 13 and 15b, Hambledon Vineyard</b> - HCC (Countryside Access Team; Harry Goodchild) has confirmed that they will continue to process the application for two reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. there were a significant number of users who put their names to forms; and</li> <li>2. there is a lack of any mechanism in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to withdraw a duly made application.</li> </ol> <p>Remove from report &amp; wait for application consultation.</p> <p><b>BASS Projects</b></p> <p>06/01/26 - Clerk sent Cllr Wallace brief details of issues progressing BASS projects. Info has been escalated within HCC.</p> <p>21/01/26 - Clerk e-mailed Cllr Wallace chasing an update. No response received from HCC Safer Roads &amp; Parking Team re SID installation.</p> <p>25/02/26 - Clerk e-mailed Cllr Wallace for an update. Awaiting response.</p> <p><b>CMV Parish shared P/T Ecologist/Nature Recovery Officer</b> - e-mail re queries identified at 05/01/26 meeting sent to Cllr Lee 20/01/26. Response received &amp; forwarded to cllrs. No progress at present time.</p>	

2928 cont.	Clerk's progress report cont.	<p><b>Speed Indicator Device</b> - it was anticipated that a response from HH would have been received and a formal proposal brought to the Mar PC meeting. Unfortunately, this has not happened therefore this item will need to be delayed further.</p> <p><b>Village entrance gates</b> - application will be submitted 26/02 if at all possible. Delay due to Clerk's workload, awaiting revised quotes and graphics from the supplier, and the need for new photographs and maps to accommodate the changes to the Three Corners placement.</p>																												
2929	Bank account	<b>Bank balance - £65,866.99 @ 28 Feb 2026</b> ; bank statement 1945 (01 Feb to 28 Feb 2026) has been forwarded to cllrs.																												
2930	Payment of accounts	<table> <tr> <td>Mrs J C Tester</td> <td><b>Clerk salary Feb 2026</b></td> <td><b>£993.14</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mrs J C Tester</td> <td><b>Clerk O/T Feb 2026</b></td> <td><b>£tbc</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>NEST</td> <td><b>Clerk pension Feb 2026</b></td> <td><b>£248.98</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hambleton Village Hall</td> <td><b>Hall hire Feb 2026</b></td> <td><b>£32.50</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Biffa</td> <td><b>Recycling bin collection Feb 2026</b></td> <td><b>£100.27</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>JH Tree Services Ltd</td> <td><b>Village maintenance Feb 2026</b></td> <td><b>£375.00</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Moritz Flohr</td> <td><b>Tennis coaching Jan 2026</b></td> <td><b>£20.00</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alfie Goodwin-Hudson</td> <td><b>Tennis coaching Jan 2026</b></td> <td><b>£140.00</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mrs J C Tester</td> <td><b>Reimbursement - tennis balls</b></td> <td><b>£33.85</b></td> </tr> </table>	Mrs J C Tester	<b>Clerk salary Feb 2026</b>	<b>£993.14</b>	Mrs J C Tester	<b>Clerk O/T Feb 2026</b>	<b>£tbc</b>	NEST	<b>Clerk pension Feb 2026</b>	<b>£248.98</b>	Hambleton Village Hall	<b>Hall hire Feb 2026</b>	<b>£32.50</b>	Biffa	<b>Recycling bin collection Feb 2026</b>	<b>£100.27</b>	JH Tree Services Ltd	<b>Village maintenance Feb 2026</b>	<b>£375.00</b>	Moritz Flohr	<b>Tennis coaching Jan 2026</b>	<b>£20.00</b>	Alfie Goodwin-Hudson	<b>Tennis coaching Jan 2026</b>	<b>£140.00</b>	Mrs J C Tester	<b>Reimbursement - tennis balls</b>	<b>£33.85</b>	Clerk
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2931	Planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SDNP/26/00395/HOUS &amp; SDNP/26/00396/LIS - Park Farm Barn, East Street, Hambleton, Hampshire, PO7 4SB. Internal and external alterations (retrospective), air source heat pump to garden (retrospective) and proposed replacement windows to the barn and cottage. [NO OBJECTION.]</li> <li>• SDNP/26/00448/PA14J - Hambleton Vineyard, East Street, Hambleton, Hampshire, PO7 4RY. Installation of roof-mounted PV solar panels on three buildings - 2 pitched roofs and 1 flat roof. [THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN.]</li> </ul>	Clerk																											
2932	Planning apps received after 24/02/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SDNP/26/00670/LIS - The Cobb House, East Street, Hambleton, Hampshire, PO7 4RX. Internal and external alterations, including reinstatement works and retention of unauthorised [NO OBJECTION.]</li> </ul>																												
2933	Planning decisions	Noted.																												
2934	Flood Action Group	Report received (see Appendix C).																												
2935	BASS WG	Report received (see Appendix D). Cllr Clarke to look into alternatives for siting of SIDs.	Cllr Clarke																											
2936	Tennis WG	<p>No report received. The Clerk explained that the current coaches will be unable to teach through term times from Sept 2026. However, there are two teenagers in the village who would be able to take over the roles but would need to swap the day from Saturday to Sunday. It has been noted by Church Wardens that parents/carers would not be able to use the Church carpark on Sunday mornings, and the 'rules' associated with use of the Glebe Field preclude ball games during times of worship (10.30am to 11.30am and after 6.30pm). Councillors agreed on the following actions going forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerk to ask new coaches re moving time to afternoon on Sunday.</li> </ul>	Clerk																											

2936 cont.	Tennis WG cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If this is not possible, may need to consider starting lessons earlier on Sundays to avoid worship times and/or shorten lesson durations.</li> <li>• Clerk to find out from Alice G-H what feedback has been received from parents re their availability on Sundays.</li> <li>• Clerk to liaise with Church Wardens re car parking etc once timings have been drafted.</li> </ul> <p>Cllr Mills-Goodlet asked if it was acceptable to place sponsorship boards around the court. Clerk confirmed that there is already a banner on one side of the fencing. Cllr to approach local businesses.</p>	Cllr Mills-Goodlet
2937	Hambledon Greening	Report received (see Appendix E).	
2938	Great British Spring Clean	<b>Resolved:</b> that the PC will arrange a GBSC in the village, hopefully in March 2026, and appoints Cllr Piper to lead on the event, with the assistance of the Clerk.	Cllr Piper/ Clerk
2939	SDNPA CIL Funding	<b>Resolved:</b> that the PC does not proceed with an application for SDNPA CIL funding 2026 due to lack of capacity held by the Clerk at the current time.	
		Councillors noted that village info-boards could be a good future BASS project.	
2940	Reports & Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clerk &amp; Cllr Encke to attend the HALC Emergency planning/community resilience event in Newbury on Tuesday 24 March.</li> <li>• SDNPA Parish Meeting (virtual) - 04 March 2026; 6.30pm. Cllrs Clarke &amp; Piper hoping to attend.</li> </ul>	
2941	Date/time of next meeting	• <b>Wed 8th Apr</b> 2026 at Hambledon VH; 7.30pm.	
2942	Confidential matters	No confidential matters were discussed.	

**The meeting closed at 9.24pm**

**Signed:**

**Cllr Encke (Chair)**

**Dated:**

**APPENDIX A**

**Signed:**

**Joanna Tester (Clerk)**

**Dated:**

**Winchester City Councillor Report Mar 2026**  
Cllr Malcolm Wallace ([mwallace@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:mwallace@winchester.gov.uk))  
Cllr Danny Lee ([dlee@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:dlee@winchester.gov.uk))  
Cllr Suzanne White ([SWhite3@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:SWhite3@winchester.gov.uk))

### **Devolution Update – Hampshire and the Solent**

**\*\* See County Councillors report for latest update \*\***

The interaction of Winchester City Council and other districts before the 2028 mayoral election with the proposed ‘foundation’ Hampshire & Solent Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) remains unclear – we await the Statutory Instrument due to be published in Spring/Summer 2026 for clarity. Some early preparatory work by the ‘foundation MCCA’ is expected in 2026, including collaboration with Homes England on expanding social and affordable housing plus early spatial development strategy (SDS) activity, which re-introduces sub-regional strategic planning. The implications of this early work for Winchester’s ‘next Local Plan’ after the current emerging District Local Plan (2020–2040) (see below) is not yet known. WCC remains obliged to complete this ‘next Local Plan’ within 30 months of adopting the 2020–2040 Plan.

This will of course mean transferring progressed work into a new Unitary Authority under Local Government Reorganisation.

### Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

The government is expected to make an announcement on LGR for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight in March 2026.

#### Summary of timelines for Local Government Reorganisation.

Milestone	Description	Date
Decision to Implement	Secretary of State announces which proposals will proceed having judged the proposals in the round against the criteria and any consultation responses.	By early March 2026
Structural Changes Order Made	Legislation laid before Parliament to enact approved changes.	Pre/post summer recess 2026
Transition arrangements in place – Shadow Unitaries established	Existing councils will continue to deliver services whilst preparing for vesting day for new councils.	1 April 2027
New Unitary Authorities Established – Vesting Day	New councils formally come into existence and assume powers.	1 April 2028

#### District and Parish Elections

District Elections in May 2026 will go ahead as planned. The decision on whether to postpone parish elections rests solely with the government. Until any formal announcement is made, if you have elections this year **continue planning** for your scheduled parish elections this year.

#### Winchester City Council Budget and Council Tax Rise

Winchester City Council's budget for 2026/27, which has now been approved, outlines continued investment in services and priorities outlined [in the Council Plan 2025-30](#) including Healthy Communities, Efficient and Effective, and Greener Faster. It also allows for an increase in the pressures from rises in utility costs and lays out plans for investments in improving digital and online services for residents contacting the council, freeing up traditional contact for those who need it. The district council element of the Council tax bill was set at an increase of 2.95% (which relates to an increase of between £4.50 - £4.83 per year for an average band D property).

#### Local Plan 2020-2044 - Winchester

It is expected that Winchester City Council will receive the Local Plan Inspector's report shortly. A provisional date for a full council meeting for Local Plan adoption has been set for 18th March subject to the receipt of the inspector's report.

#### SDNP CIL funding:

Applications now open **until 31st March 2026**. <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy/revision-of-spending-cil/applying-for-cil-funds-for-an-infrastructure-project/>

#### Helping Landlords Prepare for New Legislation

Local landlords are invited to a **Landlords Forum** on **20 March**, 10am–1pm, at the **voco** Winchester Hotel & Spa.

The session will explain the forthcoming **Renters' Rights Act** and the major changes it will bring to the private rented sector. Officers from the City Council's Housing team will also be available to offer advice and answer questions. Please share with any landlords in your area who may find this useful.

[Register to attend the Landlords Forum](#)

#### Consultations closing soon.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Consultation – open until 10 March 2026

\*\*\*\*Major reforms to planning – the biggest changes since 2012 \*\*\*\*

Winchester's new Local Plan (due for adoption very soon) was praised by the Planning Inspector for setting higher environmental and energy standards. However, the Government's draft new NPPF would roll back progress. Parish councils, community groups and residents are encouraged to respond before the consultation deadline. Respondents do not need to answer every question.

<https://consult.communities.gov.uk/planning/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-f/>

If you cannot respond via Citizen Space, or you have supporting evidence to accompany your response you may send your response or supporting evidence by email to:

[PlanningPolicyConsultation@communities.gov.uk](mailto:PlanningPolicyConsultation@communities.gov.uk)

If you have limited time, **please respond to at least Question 18/ PM13 – Limits on Local Energy & Carbon Standards**. The consultation proposes restricting local authorities from setting local energy-efficiency standards (PM13: Setting Standards). If implemented, councils would no longer be able to set targets for:

- Energy use intensity
- Space-heating demand
- On-site renewable energy
- Embodied and whole-life carbon
- Overheating performance

Building Regulations—intended as a minimum ‘floor’—would become both the floor and the ceiling. This would weaken local Net Zero efforts, restrict councils’ ability to secure lower energy bills for residents, and reduce the quality and resilience of new development.

### **Support for responding to PM13 / Question 18**

A coalition of the Town & Country Planning Association, local authorities, the Good Homes Alliance and CIBSE has produced a template response and an open evidence base. These can be used in full or in part when preparing consultation responses. *Please adopt and adapt with your own wording for maximum impact.*

Template download -

[https://www.leti.uk/\\_files/ugd/252d09\\_ac73548e1d9844b48de62f9ceee87694.docx?dn=LETI%20NPPF%20template%20response.docx](https://www.leti.uk/_files/ugd/252d09_ac73548e1d9844b48de62f9ceee87694.docx?dn=LETI%20NPPF%20template%20response.docx)

### **The future of recycling consultation - Winchester City Council - closes 8th March 2026**

Winchester City Council is preparing for future changes in recycling and has released a survey asking for residents’ views. The short survey will help the council understand residents’ current knowledge about recycling and how much more they are likely to recycle in the future, when more options are available.

<https://www.winchester.gov.uk/news/2026/jan/council-to-ask-residents-for-views-on-future-recycling>

### **Model Code of Conduct – Updated Register of Interests**

A reminder for any parish councils that have adopted the Model Code of Conduct: members must register all relevant interests, including the additional category of Other Registrable Interests. The Monitoring Officer has issued a revised Register of Interests form for completion and return so it can be published. If you need a copy, email [democracy@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@winchester.gov.uk) If your council has adopted the Model Code, please notify WCC—confirming the date it took effect—by contacting the Monitoring Officer at [monitoringofficer@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:monitoringofficer@winchester.gov.uk)

### **Fixed Speed Camera Funding Extended**

The Police and Crime Commissioner has extended funding for yellow fixed speed cameras **until 31 March**. Town, parish, and local councils can apply for up to £20,000 toward the cost of installing a camera.

Applications must be submitted via the [online form](#).

### **Homes for Ukraine- Employment Support Project**

This project offers free support to Ukrainian guests, including:

- Help with finding training and employment opportunities.
- Support with preparing a CV and Cover Letters
- Preparing for interviews
- Qualification checks to compare qualifications to UK equivalent awards.

There is also an ‘employment support guide’ that can be downloaded. Find out more:

<https://www.winchester.gov.uk/community-recreation/winchester-city-council-pledge-support-for-ukraine>

### **City and Spaces of Sanctuary**

The network of [Spaces of Sanctuary](#) is growing, with more organisations signing up to offer safe, welcoming places for peace and guidance without fear or prejudice. Two new venues have joined: Barnaby’s Community Coffee Shop in Swanmore and West Meon Village Shop. Barnaby’s, run entirely by volunteers, is a hub for relaxation and community connection. For other organisations want to learn more about

becoming a Space of Sanctuary, or feel like it's something they already offer and would like to raise the awareness of your space, contact [communities@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:communities@winchester.gov.uk)

### **Meon Valley Community Bus.**

The Meon Valley Community Bus Association website has all the current timetables and information regarding private hire: <https://meonvalleybus.co.uk/> They are also producing information leaflets for residents in the area covered by the bus. To find out more or apply to volunteer, contact Steve Houlding at [mvcba1985@gmail.com](mailto:mvcba1985@gmail.com)

### **Community Connect' newsletter.**

The Grants team at WCC have a newsletter for community organisations, with all the information on funding, support and opportunities in one place.

[Newsletter for community organisations - Winchester City Council](#)

### **Winchester City Council Community Hubs**

Join us for a FREE cuppa and a bite to eat at one of our Community Hub at Wickham or Winchester. Have a friendly chat with our officers about any issues relating to benefits, housing, and wellbeing. For informal guidance, information and signposting for anyone looking for support around the cost of living.

#### **Where and when:**

Alresford: Every 3rd Wednesday of the month 10:00 – 12.00pm at St Gregory's Church, Grange Rd, Alresford SO24 9HB. Wickham: Every 1st Monday of the month | 2.30pm - 4.30 pm. Wickham Community Centre, Mill Lane, Wickham, Fareham PO17 5AL.

Winchester: Every 3rd Thursday of the month | 10.30am - 12.30pm. Unit 12 Community Food Pantry, Winnall Valley Rd, Winchester SO23 0LD.

Winchester: Every 3rd Monday of the month | 10.00am - 12pm. The Carroll Centre, Somers Close, Stanmore, Winchester SO22 4EJ.

### **My Home Made Better**

An initiative launched by the Hampshire Environment Centre **My Home Made Better**. The aim is to inspire residents with one-to-one advice, case studies, videos, online resources, open homes, events and webinars, all designed to help individuals make more informed decisions about their properties. There is free training available for people who would like to become local 'energy champions,' who will then be able to provide energy efficiency information to help residents improve their homes. Contact Stuart Mills at WinACC for more information [stuart.mills@winacc.org.uk](mailto:stuart.mills@winacc.org.uk)

### **Other Home Energy Efficiency opportunities**

The following offers advice and support. But please carefully check eligibility for grants as they will depend on the type of home and your circumstances.

[?] [The Energy Saving Trust](#) . Guidance for the type of insulation for properties.

[?] [Energy Company Obligation \(ECO4\) scheme](#) - supports energy efficiency measures for homes in fuel poverty.

## **APPENDIX B**

**Hampshire County Councillor Report Mar 2026**  
Cllr Malcolm Wallace ([mwallace@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:mwallace@winchester.gov.uk))

### **Devolution Update – Hampshire and the Solent**

The County Council has received a detailed update on progress towards establishing the proposed Hampshire & Solent Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) – a body that brings together Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight to access additional Government powers and funding.

#### *1. Mayoral Election Deferred to 2028*

The Government has confirmed that the first election for a Hampshire & Solent Mayor has been postponed until May 2028. However, the new MCCA may still be legally created in 2026 and start operating before a mayor is elected.

#### *2. Establishing the MCCA (Pre-Mayor Period)*

The new authority will be created through a Statutory Instrument (SI) laid before Parliament. All four constituent councils will need to give their consent once the final wording is provided.

#### *3. Powers and Responsibilities Before the Mayor is Elected*

Even without a mayor, the MCCA would take on a range of functions, including:

- Transport and highways planning, including producing a Local Transport Plan.
- Skills, employment and economic development responsibilities.
- Handling major Government funding streams, such as the Highways Maintenance Block,
- Local Transport Plan Grant, and Adult Skills funding. These grants would be paid to the MCCA rather than to individual councils. In the first year, they are expected to be “passport-ed” straight back to councils to avoid disruption.
- Access to 40% of the long-term devolved investment fund (£44.6m per year when fully operational).

Mayoral-specific powers (such as raising a mayoral precept or designating a Key Route Network) would only apply after the 2028 election.

#### 4. Governance and Voting Arrangements

During the period before a mayor is elected:

- Hampshire County Council would have 40% of the voting share, lower than its 70% population share.
- To balance this, unanimous voting is required for major decisions (e.g. budget, constitution, key transport strategies).
- Each council will have a local veto on major issues. These safeguards are designed to protect democratic balance until a directly elected mayor is in place.

#### 5. Opportunities

The report highlights several potential benefits if the MCCA is created:

- Access to major national funding streams for transport, housing, skills, green energy and regeneration.
- Enhanced ability to work strategically across the region.
- Potential future powers over climate and energy programmes (e.g. local power plans, warm homes schemes).

#### 6. Risks and Uncertainties

The update also identifies key risks:

- Some grants could be delayed or disrupted if the MCCA is not fully established by April 2026. Councils may need to temporarily underwrite funding.
- Representation may feel imbalanced before the mayor is elected.
- New administrative processes may create short-term complexity.
- Several legal clarifications are still required, especially around transport authority status and grant-handling powers, though Government has committed to resolving these.

#### 7. Next Steps

- The Statutory Instrument is expected in Spring/Summer 2026.
- The MCCA could be formally created later in 2026, operating without a mayor until the first election in May 2028.

### Local Government Reorganisation

The Government is anticipated to make its formal announcement in March, with transition planning taking place over the following two years before new councils come into effect in April 2028. Elections to a Unitary Authority are expected in May 2027, after which the shadow authority will lead the transition.

 For more information, visit: [Local Government Reorganisation | Hampshire County Council](#)

### County Council Elections – Key Dates Announced

Hampshire County Council has confirmed the timetable for the full County Council elections, which will take place on Thursday 7 May 2026. These elections normally happen every four years and will cover all 76 County Council divisions across Hampshire. The election was originally due in 2025 but was postponed by Government as part of the national devolution programme. The May 2026 election will now go ahead as planned.

#### Key Dates for Residents

- 25 March 2026 – Notice of Election published
- 9 April 2026 (4pm) – Deadline for submitting candidate nominations
- 20 April 2026 – Last date to register to vote
- 21 April 2026 (5pm) – Deadline for postal vote applications

- 28 April 2026 (5pm) – Deadline for proxy vote applications
- 7 May 2026 (7am–10pm) – Polling Day

### **Hampshire County Council Budget & Council Tax Rise**

Hampshire County Council has agreed its 2026/27 budget, which highlights significant ongoing financial pressures. The council faces a £101.9 million gap next year and will rely heavily on one-off reserves to balance the budget. By the end of the year, only £41.1 million will remain in the Budget Bridging Reserve, which is not enough to balance the following year's projected £179.7 million shortfall.

The County Council element of council tax *will increase by 4.99%*, the maximum allowed without a referendum, but this still does not keep pace with rising demand in social care, SEND services and home-to-school transport. Government funding changes will further reduce Hampshire's income: under the new "Fair Funding" arrangements, the council will lose £10.9 million next year, rising to £42.9 million per year by 2028/29. *Hampshire is expected to receive the lowest government funding per resident of any county council. There is also uncertainty around the Government's proposed High Needs Stability Grant, intended to address the deficit in SEND funding. This is not expected until Autumn 2026 and depends on Government approval of Hampshire's SEND reform plan. The Council's Chief Financial Officer has advised that, based on current forecasts, reserves for 2027/28 are "not adequate", meaning a Section 114 notice (the mechanism councils use when they cannot legally balance their budget) could become necessary during 2026/27 unless additional funding or support is secured. Despite these challenges, investment continues in key areas such as highways, schools and social care through the capital programme – but Hampshire's overall financial position remains extremely difficult. If you have questions about how this may affect local services, please feel free to get in touch.*

### **National SEND Reforms – What They Mean for Hampshire**

The Government has just announced a major package of national reforms to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system. Hampshire County Council, the NHS Hampshire & Isle of Wight, and the Hampshire Parent Carer Network have issued a joint response welcoming the proposals.

Local organisations say the reforms align closely with the direction Hampshire has already been taking — especially the focus on:

- *Earlier support for children*, so families get help before needs escalate.
- *More local provision*, allowing more children to be educated close to home.
- *Greater inclusion in mainstream schools*, backed by better training for teaching staff.
- *Stronger partnership working* between education, health and care services.

Hampshire has already been expanding specialist school places and investing in SEND support within mainstream schools, so this announcement reinforces work already underway. The partnership also welcomed the Government's commitment to proper funding, which will be essential for making improvements sustainable. Parents and carers may understandably have questions about what the reforms mean for their own children. More detail will come from Government in the months ahead, but the overall aim is clearer, earlier and more consistent support across the whole SEND system.

### **Hampshire Biodiversity Report 2026**

Hampshire County Council has published its first statutory Biodiversity Duty Report, covering January 2023–December 2025. It highlights extensive work across the county to protect and enhance nature, with several areas particularly relevant to the Meon Valley. County-wide achievements include:

- Management of 2,906 hectares of priority habitat and 2,611 hectares of designated land such as SSSIs, SACs and National Nature Reserves.
- Major restoration projects including chalk grassland, heathland, wetlands and coastal habitats; 18 woodland actions and 21 farming-for-nature actions delivered.
- Species recovery work for field crickets, helleborine orchids, juniper, marsh harriers and other priority species.
- More than 123,000 trees planted and 13.5 km of hedgerows created since 2023 through the Hampshire Forest Partnership, including disease-resistant elms.
- Over 50,000 volunteer hours supporting habitat management, surveying and community projects.

Meon Valley-specific relevance:

- *Chalk Grassland & Downland*: The report highlights extensive chalk grassland restoration, most notably at Butser Hill National Nature Reserve (230 hectares) – directly relevant to the wider downland landscape connected to the upper Meon Valley.
- *Meon Valley Trail*: The Trail receives active biodiversity management including vegetation scalloping and habitat-improving works along woodland edges.
- *Woodlands & Ash Dieback*: The report notes ash dieback affecting hundreds of hectares of woodland across the county, with safety and habitat implications for rural lanes and rights-of-way – a major issue along Meon Valley bridleways and village approaches.
- *Rivers & Wetlands*: The report emphasises nature-based flood management, SuDS, and wetland enhancements as key future priorities – all relevant to Hambledon, Warnford, Droxford, and other areas affected by groundwater and fluvial flooding.
- *Hedgerow & Tree Opportunities*: The Hampshire Forest Partnership’s hedgerow creation and disease-resistant elm trials align well with parish-led nature projects in Meonstoke, Soberton, Swanmore and West Meon, supporting local pollinator networks and landscape connectivity.

Looking ahead, Hampshire plans further habitat restoration (300 ha), 15 new woodland management plans, expansion of pollinator corridors, more hedgerow planting and improved monitoring tools through 2026–2028.

### **Hampshire Bus Service Improvement Programme**

Hampshire has been allocated £14.88 million capital funding and £8.27 million revenue funding for 2026/27, with further indicative funding through to 2029/30 under the Government’s Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG). This investment will support a range of improvements including upgraded bus stops and shelters, additional real-time information screens, enhanced interchange facilities, and bus-priority measures at selected junctions. Passenger numbers across Hampshire continue to increase, reaching 26.6 million journeys in 2024/25, up 1.7 million on the previous year. While the funding is welcome, the report highlights that Hampshire faces particular challenges due to its size, rural geography, and the cost of operating services across dispersed communities. Much of the grant allocation is directed toward countywide infrastructure schemes, support for the broader commercial network, and preparatory work for future bus-priority projects. From April 2026, a new statutory requirement will also come into effect for councils to identify and protect “socially necessary” bus services, defined as routes that play an essential role in helping residents access work, healthcare, education, goods and services. Hampshire will undertake consultation over the coming year to compile this list, and this process will be important for ensuring rural voices are heard. However, the BSIP report confirms that this new duty must be met within existing funding, which may place additional pressure on available resources.

### **Free Advice to Reduce Your Home Energy Bills**

The Environment Centre has launched a ground-breaking service to make our homes warmer, greener and cheaper to run. It’s called *My Home Made Better*, and it offers free and impartial advice on everything from insulation and heating upgrades, to switching to new energy-efficient technologies. Experienced energy advisers will simplify complex information and dispel myths to guide you through your options and help you find the best ways to keep the heat in, lower your energy bills, and make your home more comfortable.

This is how it works:

1. You call 0800 804 8601 (or email) to chat with one of the friendly advisers. Lines are open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.
2. You’ll be asked about your property and circumstances, following which you will receive tailor-made recommendations and your own personalised plan. This will comprise a summary of everything discussed, including recommendations and things to consider before taking your next step.
3. When you’re ready, search the independent directory to find local suppliers and installers.

For more information go to [myhomemadebetter.org](https://myhomemadebetter.org)

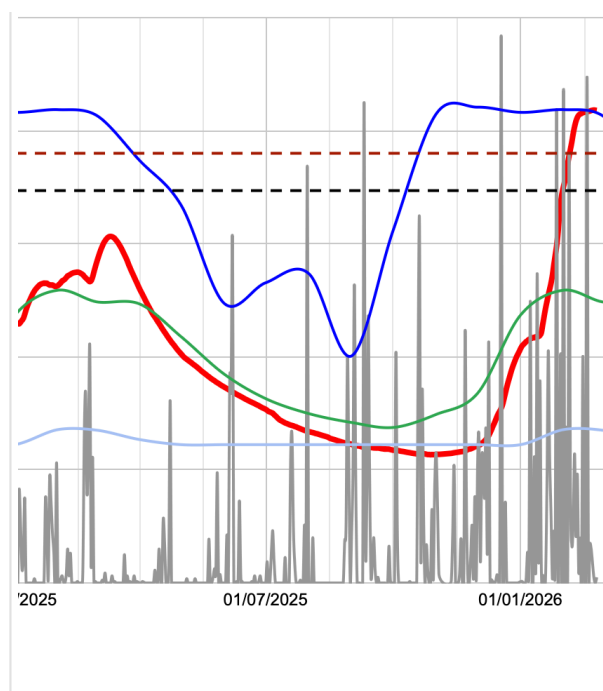
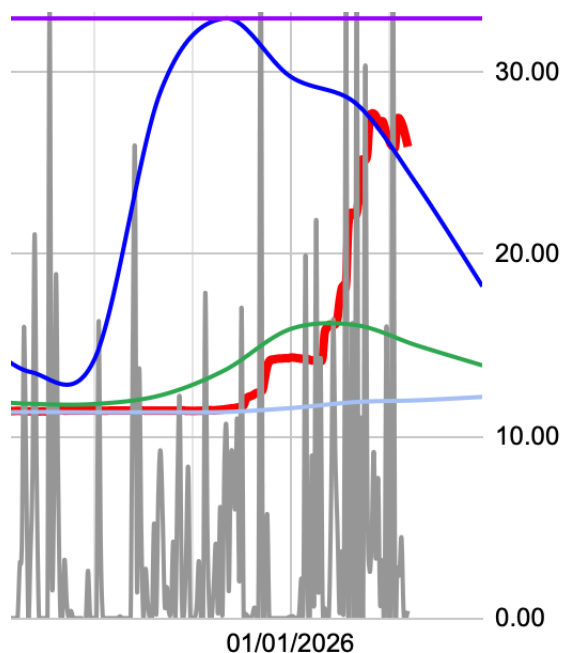
## APPENDIX C

Borehole latest state of play (25th Feb) isn't going down but not by much.

FAG Report Mar 2026

### Halfpenny Down

### Whitedale



The EA cannot force rain reliably more than 4 days ahead but on the whole they hope it is beginning to dry up (at least here) by end of February. Meanwhile, houses with wells are pumping and most houses with flood cellar are pumping or keeping a v close eye. A few pleas for help - altogether village coping ok with some key helpers stepping up.

Biggest issues really is the backing up of sewage. Many complaints raised and phone calls made has resulted in a few more tankers being moved in but the offload time for the full tankers is taking about 75 mins so that's not really helping.

Even bigger concern is the speed that cars are flying through the puddles and spreading the contaminated water around. Again quite a few requests for signage etc to point this out but so far no responses.

Huge thanks are due to the flood buddies and especially Chris Wilde (new-ish to village). Manor Farm owners keen to see if they can create some kind of drainage system via their pond - I have no clue but they are determined. Chris H I going to talk directly to them to find out more.

Huge disappointment (but no surprise) is Southern Water - probably costing them a fortune but no long term solution in sight.

## APPENDIX D

BASS Report Mar 2026

Unfortunately, not a lot of progress has been made this month, partly due to capacity (flooding/SW issues have had to take priority) and partly due to lack of response from HCC regarding SIDs. Brief updates as follows:

### Village Entrance Gates

Final application is in progress. Due to the change in location of the Three Corners gate (and also the small amendment to the position of one gate at Park), new photos have been taken, maps and plans amended, and new quotes/graphics obtained from the supplier.

### Speed Indicator Devices

No progress has been made on this since we are still awaiting a response from HCC with advice on poles and SID placement. We are hoping that Cllr Wallace's intervention will assist. It was decided not to apply for a County Councillor grant towards the purchase of the SID since Cllr Wallace advised that funds would likely be very minimal and disproportionate to the time and effort required to complete the application form.

## Correspondence with Resident

Correspondence has been received from a Park resident regarding progression with the change of speed limit in that area from NSL to 40mph. They were advised that it is still on the PC's plans but since it will require a TRO the likelihood is that it will be included in a wider application for traffic calming measures, and not until gates/SID projects are complete.

## **APPENDIX E**

## **Hambleton Greening Report Mar 2026**

### **Repair Café and Recycling:**

- The next Repair Café and Recycling will be in Hambleton from 10-12pm on Sat March 21<sup>st</sup>. We warmly invite any Parish Councillors to come along and see what goes on. You might be surprised at how popular and well-attended our sessions are!
- Rob Whitehouse, from the National Greening Campaign's Waste pillar, has very kindly produced a Hambleton Waste Directory (link below). It contains some very useful information to help people follow the waste mantra of Refuse, Reuse, Repair, Recycle! This has been put on the HGC website and sent to supporters: <https://greening-campaign.org/waste-diary-2/>

### **Biodiversity:**

- We have been in touch with a local NT volunteer, Barry Proctor, as recommended by NT Ranger, Sophie Bradfield. Barry has offered to support us in organising wild flower and butterfly surveys this summer. Barry is part of the Sober Newts, an active group from Soberton and Newtown who maintain key areas of biodiversity in that area. He will do a recce of Speltham Down, which he doesn't know, when the weather improves...

### **Retrofit and Community Energy:**

- Unfortunately our planned Open House for air source heat pumps has had to be postponed.
- As you may remember, we held a Future Energy Landscape workshop in the Village Hall in October, organised by Energise South Downs, to discuss different options for community energy sources. The report from that workshop is now on their website and is worth a read at the link below:
- <https://esd.energy/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Hambleton-FEL-report-FINAL.pdf>
- We were pleased to see that the Vineyard is applying for solar panels on three of their roofs, reflecting the increasing viability and popularity of this specific community energy source.

### **Hambleton Time Capsule Project:**

- We are in process of completing our submission for this exciting part of the Jubilee year. See details on <https://hhgtimecapsule.com/>

### **National Emergency Briefing:**

- In November 2025, the National Emergency Briefing brought together leading experts to present the latest evidence on the climate and nature crisis to politicians and other influential people in Westminster. The next step is to take this vital message across the UK, bringing together people from across local communities to hear the evidence and discuss how to respond. <https://www.nebriefing.org/the-event>
- To this end, the NEB is producing a 45-minute film which they would like all communities in the UK to show. It comes out in April and we have registered an interest. As soon as the film is released, we will book a viewing in the Village Hall and invite a panel for a Q and A afterwards.

### **Greening Fair:**

- Finally, a reminder of our Greening Fair coming up on Saturday May 9th from 2pm, in the Church and churchyard, with the vital theme of Making Space for Nature. A fantastic range of stall-holders are coming along, from national organisations like the RSPB and Woodland Trust to local specialists on bats, swifts and bees. With children's activities, live music, local homemade teas and an exhibition by local artists, it will be an afternoon for all the family. And it's free! Do please spread the word...

We are grateful as always for your support, both financially and at our events.

Dr Penny Mahon

(Secretary of Hambleton Greening Campaign)