

Update from Hampshire County Council – January 2024

Hampshire County Council champions National Apprenticeship Week 2024

Hampshire businesses are being offered practical advice and support to ensure their workforce is equipped with the skills that will be needed for the future by accessing funded training and in developing high quality apprenticeships



Apprentices learning in a work setting

During National Apprenticeship Week (5 to 11 February), Hampshire County Council is hosting 'Skills for Business' sessions at a range of venues as well as online to help employers grow their business and secure employment opportunities for residents.

As well as providing support to local businesses, Hampshire County Council also supports individuals and parents looking to find out more about [apprenticeship opportunities](#) in Hampshire.

As a major employer, the County Council champions one of the largest local authority apprenticeship programmes in the country. This has seen more than 2,000 people enrol onto 130 different career paths since 2017.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20240131NAW>

Hampshire County Council sets out £2.6bn spending plans for local services in 2024/25

Spending proposals for 2024/25, totalling £2.6bn, to keep delivering hundreds of local services to Hampshire's 1.4 million residents will be considered by Hampshire County Council's Cabinet next week

At their meeting on Tuesday 6 February, the Authority's Executive Members will review spending proposals for the coming financial year which aim to continue to deliver important public services while supporting the most vulnerable children and adults in Hampshire.

Setting a responsible, balanced budget for the year ahead is one of our key duties, ensuring we make the most of taxpayers' money to deliver important local services to the people of Hampshire. However, these remain challenging times for everyone, including across local government nationally, as we have to keep finding ways to stretch the budgets that we have available, to meet inflation pressures and increased costs associated with higher numbers of the most vulnerable children and adults who need our help – which in Hampshire will cost an extra £152m from April.

The proposed three-year programme includes:

- £173m to safeguard the long-term viability of the Older Adult care estate.
- £192m investment in new and extended school buildings to provide school places for children in Hampshire - delivering a further 5,312 school places and giving a total of 19,989 new school places by September 2027.

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- £163m for structural maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges.
- £73m of Integrated Transport Plan schemes including £43m of schemes focused around walking and/or cycling improvements.
- £76m to address condition-based enhancements to schools.

A final decision on the County Council's budget for 2024/25 will be made by the full County Council on 22 February 2024.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/30012024Cabinetbudgetproposals>

Advice for staying safe and well during the cold snap

UKHSA and the Met Office have issued an Amber Alert for cold weather, which is expected to continue until this Friday (19 January). Severe cold weather has the potential to affect anyone, not just more vulnerable people

3 minute read (589 words)

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During this period of inclement weather, the advice is for residents to follow a few simple steps to help keep themselves and others safe and well.

Follow these top tips to help yourself and others stay well during the cold snap:

Keep warm

- A cold home can increase the risk of health impacts, particularly for more vulnerable people.
- Try to heat rooms you spend a lot of time in, such as the bedroom or living room, to at least 18°C (65°F), day and night - and keep bedroom windows closed. You may prefer your main living room to be slightly warmer.
- Wear several layers of thinner clothing rather than one thick layer – this will help keep you warmer.
- Use a hot water bottle to keep warm in bed.
- Draw curtains at dusk and block out draughts

...plus many more. See here:-

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/240115coldweather>

Household Support Fund community grants available for the final time

Hampshire County Council is inviting community organisations to apply this month for a share of £285,000 to help local people cope with the cost of living

This will be the final opportunity for Hampshire groups to apply for grants from the government's Household Support Fund, with the application window open until 26 January.

For the financial year ending in March 2024, the County Council set aside a total of £1.3 million for community grants from its settlement of more than £14 million from the fund. This included £800,000 for district-based organisations to create initiatives tailored to local need helping to provide vulnerable households with food, utilities and to keep warm. The figure available is the remainder of this, plus £60,000 for organisations to deliver advice services.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20240104communitygrants>

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