

## **Helping Hampshire's Local Charities**

Across Hampshire there are over 6000 registered charities and many more local groups who offer vital community support to residents across our County - but where do these groups go when they need help? A new resource has been established - the Hampshire Council for Voluntary Service Network is an alliance of 10 local organisations who work together to provide development services and the specialist skills needed for local groups to grow and meet the challenges facing their local communities.

In a recent survey of their members, over 50% reported an increase in demand for their help from Hampshire residents. Similarly, many charities also report that it is becoming harder to find people who are able to volunteer their time and talents to help. In response, the Hampshire CVS Network has launched a new website that is designed to help local charities and community groups connect with network partners to provide clear and easy access to the skills and resources they need. The site provides access to information on Hampshire's volunteering development services, information on training available across the county and a toolbox of resources for groups and charities that covers everything from transparent and effective governance to raising vital funds to carry out their work. To find out more visit <https://www.hampshirecvs.org.uk/>

## **Preferred Choice Secondary School**

Of the parents applying for a September 2018, Year 7 place at a Hampshire secondary school, 98 per cent have been offered a school of their choice - with more children (over 92 per cent) being allocated a place at their preferred first choice school. The County Council received 13,981 on-time applications this year, up by 428 from last year.

Pupils who did not secure a place at one of their chosen schools have been allocated a place at a school near to where they live, with available spaces. Parents have the right to appeal in these situations and their child's name will be added to the waiting list for their preferred schools. Places do become available if parents change their mind, or families move home. The admissions team is now busy processing primary school applications with offers due to go out to parents on 16 April 2018.

## **Young Musicians**

Did you know that Hampshire Music Service supports more than 60 ensembles, orchestras and choirs across the County for young people aged between 5 and 19 years? There are groups for all levels, from beginners trying out instruments, to advanced musicians looking for more challenging material and performance opportunities. The Hampshire Youth Orchestra are preparing for their next big performance, at the Royal Albert Hall in April, in front of an audience of 2,000 people.

To find out more about the variety of groups, ensembles, choirs and orchestras available across Hampshire, visit Hampshire Music Service or follow @hantsmusic on Facebook and Twitter. The main Hampshire County Youth Ensembles are currently open for applications, with a deadline of 31 May. See how to apply <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hampshiremusic/ensembles/countyensembleHampshire>.

## **Council Tax**

At full Council held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 elected members agreed a 5.99% increase in the council tax precept for 2018/19 (which is made up of a 2.99% core council tax increase which Government now expects all councils to implement, and 3% specifically to support adult social care pressures). Residents in the average band D property will pay £1,200.96 for Hampshire County Council services in 2018/19 – or around £1.31 extra per week.

Hampshire's council tax precept will still be nearly £100 lower than it would have been when measured against inflation since 2010 and remains one of the lowest in the country, whilst still protecting valued services. This has been no mean feat when factored alongside the very tough decisions we have needed to make in order to live within our means given the reduction and eventual removal of the Revenue Support Grant and the £480 m of savings we have to make by 2020.

Despite those challenges and the need to make economies the Cabinet and Conservative group have agreed to save all Hampshire household waste recycling centres, as well as community transport schemes and school crossing patrols. Reductions in these services had been under review but the pressure was eased by an extra 1% council tax increase Government authorised us to make for social care and in the final adjustment of the local government settlement by the Government, when additional funding was allocated to Hampshire. All that helped to offset demands on the budget, although it should be noted that social care costs HCC significantly more than £1 million every day!

### **Recycling Plastic**

For a number of years the County Council has worked through various local government networks to lobby and influence central government and the supply chain to re-think the types and amounts of plastics that are used in packaging. Recent publicity [the Chinese government's decision to stop accepting waste plastic and paper from the UK] has been helpful in raising the priority of this issue, leading to its inclusion in the recently published Defra 25 year Environment Plan. The County Council is leading on a project for the HIOWLGA Board that is looking to develop a business case for a new Super MRF that would be able to accept and separate a wider range of plastics than at present. In time, this will lead to an increase in the range of accepted plastics in the kerbside collections carried out by district and borough partners.

### **£3 million Refurbishment Plans**

Buildings at three Hampshire schools are to be refurbished as part of a £3 million project to modernise classrooms and reduce energy costs. Work at the Westgate School in Winchester is due to start this summer.

### **£1 million for Leisure Centre**

The County Council has agreed to give £1 million towards the cost of a proposed new sport and leisure complex at Bar End, Winchester.

### **Funding for Hampshire's Athletes**

Hampshire's most promising athletes have been awarded funding by Hampshire County Council to help them on their journey to sporting success. This year, 191 sportsmen and women have been picked for the Hampshire Talented Athletes Scheme (HTAS), funded by the County Council and managed by Energise Me. Of the 191 athletes awarded support this year, 119 will receive grant funding worth a total of £40,825. The scheme provides athletes with grants for competition and travel costs, physiotherapy and sport science support, free access to leisure centres and bus travel, plus public speaking training to inspire children during school visits. Two former HTAS athletes include Winter Olympic 2018 skeleton racer Gold Medalist, Lizzy Yarnold and alpine skier Laurie Taylor.

Patricia Stallard

County Councillor for Winchester Southern Parishes [Denmead, Boarhunt, Southwick, Wickham, Knowle, Newtown, Soberton]

Executive Member for Public Health; Supporting Families Programme; Emergency Planning & Resilience  
Hampshire County Council

pgstallard@aol.com