

Basingstoke

& Deane Today | Autumn 2024



What's happening in your borough | The newspaper of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council | www.basingstoke.gov.uk

Food waste collections for 2025

Helping residents to recycle more in Basingstoke and Deane

Residents will be able to recycle more in the borough when kerbside food waste collections are introduced in Basingstoke and Deane in October 2025.

The new weekly food waste collection service will allow residents to take out over a third of what would normally go into their grey bin.

Basingstoke and Deane currently has a recycling rate of just 29%, sitting 269th out of 317 authorities across England and fourth from bottom in Hampshire.

Introducing the new food waste service in October 2025 would put the borough ahead of the 2026 deadline set out in the government's Environment Act 2021.

The Act aims to make what is collected for recycling more consistent across the country, increasing what can be collected at the kerbside, as well as reducing the amount of packaging that just gets thrown away.

Hampshire County Council is proposing to create new and better waste sorting facilities that will allow us to collect even more things in green bins for recycling in the future.

Increasing the amount our residents can recycle means very little will be left in the grey bin and provides us with the opportunity to redesign our waste collection service to meet challenging statutory targets to cut waste alongside our commitment to cut carbon.

Cabinet Member for Residents' Services and Housing Cllr Laura James said: "Basingstoke is at the bottom of the recycling tables. We want to see our recycling rates go up and the only way to do this is to help residents to recycle more and waste less.

"Introducing food waste collections could boost the borough's recycling rate from 29% to as high as 52%. And our recycling rate will rise even higher with further changes being proposed by the county council in the future."

Read more on pages 6 and 7

Pawsome stray dog service



Our stray dog service and our licensing team have been given a round of a-paws after winning the RSPCA's top PawPrint Awards.

For the 10th year we've achieved the highest award for the treatment and welfare of stray dogs and our promotion of responsible ownership.

Our work to provide licences to businesses that deliver services such as animal breeding and boarding, and making sure they meet animal welfare regulations, gained gold.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/AnimalResponsibilities

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Help to save money with our free home energy surveys.

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Rubbish and recycling collection dates this festive season.

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Sign up

You can sign up for email updates on council services, news and events.

www.basingstoke.gov.uk/SignUp



Basingstoke and Deane

Welcome... to the winter 2024 edition from the council's Leader Cllr Paul Harvey and Co-Leader Cllr Gavin James



This edition gives a snapshot of the progress we are making to deliver on our promise to focus on what residents most want from their council.

As well as boosting front line services, like street cleaning, to give people pride in their neighbourhoods, we're investing more in play areas – see page 5.

Our recycling rate has seen us at the bottom of the league tables for years. Now we're introducing food waste collections next year – and

have plans to boost our recycling rates even higher – see pages 1, 6 and 7.

While we are working on projects to transform Basingstoke town centre, we've been busy improving its look and feel today as you can see in the article opposite.

Supporting our residents to find the best housing options for them has been a key focus – see page 4 – and we're finalising proposals to create a replacement for the much-loved Aquadrome – see the

article on page 3.

We're completing the complex deal that will finally see work starting at Manydown – see article below.

Nothing is more important for the future generations in our borough than tackling climate change and the ecological emergency and we've been focusing on that.

One of the key things we said we would do is listen, so please let us know what you think by emailing CouncilLeader@basingstoke.gov.uk

New lease of life



Local artists have teamed up with the community to create a colourful mural that celebrates the landscape and biodiversity in South View.

Fátima Pantoja (pictured left here with volunteers), and other artists Rachel Davis and Jacky Purtill, have worked with students from The Vyne Community School and South View Junior School, South View Residents' Association and local residents to transform a block of garages off Lyford Road.

The new mural celebrates the area's biodiversity and follows a project to improve open space between Lyford Road and Basingstoke train station.

Alongside the new mural, a new natural sculpture, which will provide a new habitat for insects and other wildlife, is being commissioned and additional seating is set to be installed later this year.

Balancing the budget

Have your say on how the council plans to continue funding work to improve the borough and deliver high quality services as part of budget proposals for the next year.

The proposals, which are set to be considered by the council's Cabinet on Tuesday 5 November before the launch of a public consultation, include ongoing investment in frontline services and projects aimed at giving people pride in their neighbourhoods and ensuring the borough remains a great place to live.

To help cover rising costs for our services, an average £5 a year increase in the borough's part of council tax is being proposed and we have reviewed the fees and charges for additional services we provide to bring them in line with other councils and providers.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/budget2025 from Wednesday 6 November and share your views before the consultation closes on Friday 3 January 2025.

Landmark Manydown deal to create new communities

A landmark deal will kick-start work to create new communities at Manydown.

Manydown was originally bought under a long lease with an option to purchase the freehold by the borough council and Hampshire County Council in 1996.

After extensive and long-running negotiations, all the many legal documents for the complex purchase of the freehold for the land were due to be completed with both councils and the Manydown Company Ltd at the time of going to press.

Following the completion of a deal to purchase the land, the councils' development partner Urban&Civic can now prepare for early work to get the site ready

for development including access for construction, roads and installation of utilities, before new homes will be built.

The site has outline planning permission for a new community of up to 3,520 new homes, including 1,400 affordable homes; a 250-acre countryside park; two primary schools with land reserved for a potential secondary school; two local centres; businesses; shops and community facilities.

For the latest updates visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/Manydown



Rejuvenating our historic heart



We've been busy delivering a package of improvements aimed at breathing new life into Basingstoke town centre.

Our teams have been out repainting safety railings, refreshing the planters and carrying out a deep clean of pavements to make sure the area is looking its best. And to support businesses, we have also launched a new scheme offering grants to improve and maintain their shop fronts.

This forms part of a plan we have developed setting out targeted action to improve the look and feel of the Top of the Town to ensure it is a welcoming place for residents, businesses and visitors.

As part of our work to support a thriving culture and music scene in the area, we worked in partnership with venues in the Top of the Town to deliver Listen Up – a new live music event that celebrated homegrown talent.

Cabinet Member for Major Projects and Regeneration Cllr Onnalee Cubitt said: "The success of our Top of the Town is incredibly important to us. Alongside our support for businesses, we have been working incredibly hard to improve the look and feel of the area."

Find out more at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/TownCentreFuture

Supporting Basing View businesses

Additional parking has been created at Basing View as part of our work to support businesses and attract new companies to the borough.

Following feedback from businesses, unused land between Village Hotel and Fanum House has been brought back into use to provide an additional 100 temporary car parking spaces. Further improvements will see additional lighting installed in car parks across Basing View later this year.

Progress on water park resort

Major US-based leisure operator Great Wolf Resorts is progressing with proposals to bring an indoor water park resort to Basingstoke on land next to the Leisure Park.

We have agreed a conditional long lease for the land so that Great Wolf Resorts can start the work needed to submit a planning application.

The proposed resort could feature a 500-bedroom hotel, an indoor water park, conference facilities, and leisure offerings including mini-golf, mini-bowling, ropes course and a games arcade, with restaurants, cafés and bars.

The site is currently home to Basingstoke Golf Centre, which will stay open until any development progresses and the council is investigating opportunities to provide replacement golf facilities elsewhere in the town.

More information at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/water-park-proposal



Plan for greener Aquadrome replacement

The search for a leisure specialist to design, build and run a new water and leisure complex to replace the Aquadrome is set to begin.

The first step in the formal search for a partner will begin in November and will see leisure operators invited to express their interest in delivering and running the new facility.

Facilities are set to include a 25-metre eight-lane competition pool, 20-metre four-lane teaching pool, leisure waters with flumes, a 150-station gym, three studios and a spin studio, an indoor clip and climb, indoor adventure soft play, party rooms and café.

The modern new complex would be far more energy efficient and designed to cut carbon, helping make a massive contribution to meeting the council's climate change targets.

Proposals for the new complex would see it moved to a more prominent central site at the leisure park on land currently used for car parking next to Buzz Bingo, subject to getting planning permission.

The move would allow the current Aquadrome to remain open until the new water and leisure complex is ready, with the council and operator Serco continuing to invest in the building to ensure users can continue to benefit from the facilities.

Once a preferred leisure specialist has been chosen, following a detailed procurement process, they will carry out work to finalise the design before submitting a planning application for the new complex.

We are also investigating how parking could be better provided to support facilities on the park and free up more space for new attractions as part of discussions with leisure operators wanting to come to Basingstoke.

Find out more at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/LeisureParkProposal



Help to find a home

Extra support is now available from our housing team to help residents to explore the best housing options for them.

People who are applying to join our housing register for social rented properties can now receive more support thanks to funding to provide two new housing officers.

Strengthening the housing team has enabled us to work more closely with residents to understand their needs and support them when bidding for homes on our choice-based lettings system, Basingstoke Homebid. We are also working to promote the use of mutual exchange as an option for existing housing association tenants.

As part of this work the team has reviewed the housing register and has been working with applicants who have not logged on or bid for eligible properties on Homebid for a long period of time and may have been successful if they had bid.

For those first-time buyers who are looking to get onto the property ladder but cannot afford homes on the open market, we've also launched a new low-cost home ownership appointment service.

People can book one-to-one appointments with our team to get information and guidance on the process and things they will need to consider when buying their first home.

The appointment service is part of our work to open up more opportunities for residents to own their home in the borough, alongside the council's home ownership register and regular low-cost home ownership drop-in events.

To find out more about housing options in the borough visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/housing

Stay warm for less



You can save money on your energy bills and keep your home warm this winter with a free home energy survey from our Green Team.

Every household in the borough could potentially save hundreds of pounds each year and cut their carbon emissions by booking themselves in for a free in-person home energy survey with our eco experts.

The home visits take around one hour and aim to help you understand what you can do to keep your home warm while reducing the amount of energy it takes to heat and power it.

Afterwards, you'll get a free report with quick, free and easy top energy-cutting tips along with

recommendations for more impactful energy-saving home improvements, like solar panels and insulation. The team will also let you know about grants that could partly or fully pay for these types of home upgrades, depending on your individual circumstances.

This money-saving help is available to everyone in the borough. It does not matter what type of home you live in, how the property is heated, who owns it or where it is in Basingstoke and Deane.

To book your free home energy survey, go to www.ThermafyHome.co.uk/Basingstoke

Calls for borough's Local Plan to progress

Proposed government changes to planning rules that could increase the number of new homes that need to be built in the borough are being strongly opposed by the council.

A national consultation on amending the planning framework that guides how councils create local plans to guide development in their areas was proposed at the end of July. In our response, we objected to the planning changes, that would set a higher number of homes to be built in the borough. The Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan was moving towards being finalised before the changes were announced.

Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Cllr Andy Konieczko said: "We've already engaged extensively with local residents and communities on the draft Local Plan and we're keen to get it finalised.

"As they currently stand, these government proposals would have a

huge and dramatic impact on our borough. We do not agree with them. We don't believe that the higher housing number proposed in this consultation is achievable or right for Basingstoke and Deane.

"Moving the goalposts now could undo all of the hard work over the past few years and risks leaving us open to unwanted speculative development in our area."

For more information visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/LPU



Advertisement



National Trust

Wonderland Christmas at The Vyne

20 November – 5 January

House 11am-3pm, Gardens 10am-4pm. Closed 24 & 25 December.

nationaltrust.org.uk/the-vyne



Major makeovers for more play areas

Five more play areas in the borough will be transformed this year as part of our commitment to ensure these spaces are inclusive, well maintained and fun places for families.

We are investing just short of half a million pounds through our play area refurbishment programme to replace the play areas at Sidlaw Close in Kempshott and Buckskin ward, Upper Sherborne Road in the Norden ward and Roseberry Close in Hatch Warren and Beggarwood. The play areas at Abbey Road in Popley and Fennel Close in Chineham are also being refurbished.

Earlier in the year we asked people in those areas to give their views on the type of play equipment they would like to see included. These comments are now being used to help shape the final designs which will be installed in the next six months.

This work follows makeovers of the play areas at Hatch Warren Park and Mathias Walk in Brighton Hill, Moorhams Avenue in Hatch Warren and Oakfields Close in Ecchinswell at the beginning of the year.

We are also refurbishing the play area at Sinclair Drive in Brookvale following drainage repair work on the open space near the site.

The borough council is responsible for over 150 play areas across the borough. Find out more about the current refurbishment projects at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/current-projects

Discover different places to play outdoors for free across the borough at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/PlayAreas

Extra maintenance

We've doubled the money we spend on maintaining and repairing damaged or aging play equipment, noticeboards and benches at our play areas and parks across the borough.

Recently we have installed a new rubber safety surface and an inclusive swing to replace the broken wheelchair swing at Eastrop Park, replaced the zip line at Crabtree Plantation and replaced a vandalised slide at Carter Drive in Sherborne St John.

Making a difference on the streets

Our new team tasked with boosting street cleaning in the borough has been busy tackling areas in need of some extra care and attention.

Since the beginning of the year, the Make a Difference team has targeted sections of Popley, Brighton Hill, Norden, South Ham, Winklebury, Kings Furlong and Eastrop.

The work has seen small unkempt areas in these wards, identified by the teams using feedback from residents and working with ward councillors and partners, transformed into much more pleasant spaces.

This has included chopping back overgrown areas deep cleaning paths, walls and litter bins, removing moss and weeds and, where appropriate, tidying up signage or street furniture.

This complements the work of our existing street cleaning teams across the borough who

carry out litter picking, sweeping, emptying litter bins, clearing leaves and removing graffiti.

Ensuring people are proud of

where they live is a key priority for the council and we have invested an extra £750,000 this year to help keep our streets clean, tidy and litter free.



Fun at Whiteditch



New table tennis tables, fitness equipment and a multi-use games area have been a big hit with visitors to Whiteditch open space in Oakridge.

The new equipment is among a number of improvements introduced at the popular area and funded through £390,000 of developers' contributions. These have included a new footpath and additional seating, tables and litter bins.

Trees, wildflowers, logs and stepping stones have been added along with woodland-themed sculptures and totems chosen by Oakridge Junior School pupils.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/local-parks

Working with you to waste

Weekly food waste collections will be introduced in Basingstoke and Deane in October 2025, ahead of the mandatory deadline set by the government. Currently around a third of what goes into our grey bins is food waste. These new weekly collections will boost our low

recycling rate and help us to work towards achieving the statutory targets being set for waste reduction and recycling.

Over these two pages find out more about the food waste changes. We also explain how to recycle all you can at the moment, the county council's proposals to increase what

we can recycle and our plans to redesign the waste collection service to provide best value for money for residents and cut carbon. There's also important information on changes to bin collection dates over the festive period and news on how we have already reduced our emissions by switching to low carbon biofuel.

Answers to some food waste questions you might have

What is food waste?

Food waste is any waste generated through the preparation of food, where there are leftovers after a meal or out-of-date food. This includes:

- fruit and vegetable peelings, cores and fruit skins
- teabags and coffee grounds
- plate scrapings
- raw and cooked meat and fish, including bones and shells
- dairy products and eggshells
- bread, rice and pasta
- pet food.



Why is it important to recycle food waste?

The recycling process turns food waste into Biogas, a natural gas that is a greener energy source than fossil fuels, and valuable soil products such as nutrient-rich compost and a liquid fertiliser.

Under the Environment Act 2021 all local authorities in England must provide weekly food waste collections by April 2026. Recycling food waste will help to improve our low recycling rate.

When will it be collected?

From October 2025, every week on the same day as your waste and recycling collection services.

Will containers be provided?

Yes, every property will be provided with a small container to use in the kitchen and a larger caddy to put alongside the waste or recycling bins for emptying.

What will be provided for flats?

Every property will be provided with a small container to use in the kitchen. We will provide a communal food waste wheeled bin for bin stores. Each site is currently being reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure we provide the right food waste containers for that site.

What do I need to do?

As we move towards the introduction of food waste collections in October 2025 we will provide more information at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/food-waste, on our social media channels [Facebook](#) and [X @BasingstokeGov](#), our regular online e-newsletter (sign up at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/enewsletter) and in this printed publication.

Closer to the start of food waste collections we will directly contact residents.

Recycle now

We know many of you want to recycle more items but are you recycling all that you currently can?

In Basingstoke and Deane we can only collect items that Hampshire County Council recycles.

These are:

- paper
- card
- plastic bottles
- tins and cans
- aerosols



Please make sure these items are empty, clean, dry and they are placed separately in your bin.

Don't bag it

To make sure we can empty your recycling bin and all items are sorted and recycled, do not put them in bags.

We collect extra recycling

You can order an additional green bin or glass box for free. Extra recycling for the green bin can be placed in a clear plastic bag next to your bin so the crews can see the items.

For more information visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/recycling

Recycling more through different weekly collections

Hampshire County Council is exploring plans for new and better waste sorting facilities so that more can go in green recycling bins.

In future, this will include plastic pots, tubs and trays and food and drink cartons being collected for recycling in the borough.

These proposed changes to what can be recycled and the introduction of weekly food waste collections in the borough mean that the amount residents need to put in their grey waste bin will be significantly reduced.

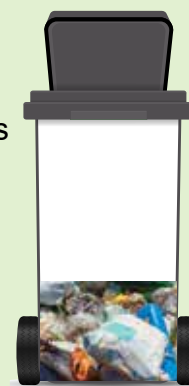
To provide the best value for money service for taxpayers, we are remodelling the waste collection service. This will see new style weekly collections - with food waste emptied every week alongside what is left in the grey bin one

week and recycling the next – introduced from September 2026.

We plan to introduce these different services and changes in phases to enable us to effectively communicate and support residents to use the new food waste service before introducing different weekly collections for the grey and green bins.



Based on the most recent sample analysis of the borough's bins, less than 35% of rubbish would be left in the grey bin once food waste collections are introduced and residents are able to recycle more from home. Many of these additional items can already be recycled at local supermarkets or recycling sites.



less and recycle more

Cutting carbon with greener bins



We've saved over half a million kilograms of carbon in six months after swapping our bin trucks to a low-emission biofuel.

Since April, the borough's waste and recycling collection vehicles have been swapping to hydrogenated vegetable oil as an alternative fuel with up to 98% lower emissions than diesel, according to government conversion factors.

The move to a more environmentally-friendly fuel has more than halved our carbon footprint, compared to the same period last year, and is part of our work to become carbon neutral in our operations by December 2025 to help tackle the climate emergency.

Find out more about how we're taking action on climate change at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/our-climate-action

Free glass boxes

If you need extra glass recycling collection boxes for bottles and jars over the festive period or throughout the year, you can collect a new or additional glass box for free from the council offices in London Road, Basingstoke.

Visit Deanes reception between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. You can also buy a glass bin as an alternative to a box if you have lots of bottles and jars to recycle. You can order a red 140 litre bin for £40 by calling 01256 844844.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/GlassRecycling

Fir real recycling

If you're planning on getting a real Christmas tree this year, don't forget you can recycle it.

Our Christmas tree recycling drop-off points will be available from Thursday 2 January to Friday 31 January 2025 for residents to recycle their real trees once the decorations are down. The trees collected are then transformed into ProGrow soil conditioner for gardens and wood chippings for our parks.

Garden waste collections stop on Saturday 21 December. Garden waste customers can put their old real Christmas trees out for collection with their garden waste when the service resumes from Monday 6 January.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/christmas-tree-2024

Alternatively, you can give a donation to St Michael's Hospice for their Christmas tree collection service. Visit www.StMichaelsHospice.org.uk



Christmas bin collection dates

Collection days will change over the Christmas break and the revised dates are shown in the table. Unless adverse weather affects bin rounds, collections will return to normal from Monday 13 January 2025.

There will be a two-week break for garden waste collections over the festive period. The service will resume on Monday 6 January and revised Christmas collection dates will apply to garden waste collections.

Normal collection date	Festive collection date
Wednesday 25 December	Friday 27 December
Thursday 26 December	Saturday 28 December
Friday 27 December	Monday 30 December
Monday 30 December	Tuesday 31 December
Tuesday 31 December	Thursday 2 January
Wednesday 1 January	Friday 3 January
Thursday 2 January	Saturday 4 January
Friday 3 January	Monday 6 January
Monday 6 January	Tuesday 7 January
Tuesday 7 January	Wednesday 8 January
Wednesday 8 January	Thursday 9 January
Thursday 9 January	Friday 10 January
Friday 10 January	Saturday 11 January

Festive rubbish and recycling

Christmas can mean extra rubbish. Therefore, for the first collection after Christmas ONLY we will collect extra rubbish sacks left by your grey bin.

But it is also an opportunity to recycle as much as you possibly can. We always collect extra recycling as long as it is inside a clear bin liner. In dry weather you can leave cardboard next to your recycling bin. Please ensure it is flattened and no bigger than one metre square. Most wrapping paper cannot be recycled so please put it in your grey waste bin.

Mayor's events

During the remainder of his mayoral year, the Mayor Cllr Dan Putty will host the following events:

Remembrance Sunday -
Sunday 10 November 2024
at 11am at the Civic Offices

Armistice Day - Monday 11
November at 11am at the
Civic Offices

Mayor's Carol Service -
Saturday 7 December at 6pm
at All Saints Church, RG21 3UT

Holocaust Memorial Day 2025
Monday 27 January 2025 at
10am at the Civic Offices

**Mayor's Spring Charity
Concert** - Saturday 8 March
2025 at 7.30pm at The Anvil.
A ticket fee applies.

More information about these is
available at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/MayorEvents

Winter support

The
Basingstoke
and Deane
Social



**Inclusion Partnership is
providing vital support to make
sure nobody is left in the cold
this winter.**

The best way to support
anyone sleeping rough is to donate
to the Real Change campaign.
By donating, you're enabling
organisations to continue helping
those most in need.

You can also let the council
know of anyone sleeping rough to
ensure they get the help they need
at www.TheStreetLink.org.uk

Donate and find out more at www.RealChangeBasingstoke.org.uk



Bringing our communities together



Community cohesion is the theme for Cllr Dan Putty serving his second term as Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane.

A borough councillor for the Hatch Warren and Beggarwood ward since 1995, Cllr Putty became Mayor in May having previously held the role in 2013.

Supported by the Mayoress Marie-Noelle, known as Ma-No, Cllr Putty has already attended many events including meeting with the borough's faith leaders (pictured), celebrating different cultures in the borough at World Party in the Park and joining people looking to get more active at the council's free sport and wellbeing day.

He is raising money for North Hampshire Prostate Cancer Support Group and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation during the year, two charities that are very close to his heart.

Cllr Putty said: "I am honoured to be the Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane for a second term.

"I strongly believe that when communities work together, they become happier and more united places to live and work and this is why the theme for my mayoral year is community cohesion."

For more information visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/mayor

Councillor funding for community projects

Community groups and organisations can still apply for funding for small-scale local initiatives through our Councillor Community Grant Scheme.

Now in its fourth year, the scheme has so far seen more than 237 grants awarded to community and voluntary organisations to help them deliver small-scale, local initiatives that make a difference to people's lives and bring communities together.

This includes £1,000 awarded to Inspero charity for new raised beds and essential tree maintenance in its community gardens in Kempshott. This has given the charity more space to grow more organic food for their food bank, community children's

cooking classes and for volunteers.

Other items funded since its launch include sports, gardening and camping equipment, laptops and other IT-related equipment, tables and chairs, pots and pans, websites and promotional flyers, toys and instruments, tools and defibrillators.

Each of our 54 councillors has a total allocation of £2,000 which they can use to support organisations providing services or facilities that benefit the residents in their ward.

Councillors can individually support applications for grants of between £250 and £2,000. They can also pool funding with one or two other councillors within the borough to provide grants up to a maximum of £3,000.

D-Day veteran honoured

A special ceremony was held at the council offices, in June this year, to pay tribute and recognise the sacrifice made by those who took part in the D-Day landings 80 years ago.

Now in his 90s, Thomas Stonehouse, from Basingstoke, attended with his family. He received France's highest military honour, the *Legion d'honneur*, in 2018 for his role in liberating the country during the Second World War.

D-Day veteran Thomas (pictured with the Mayor Cllr Putty) said: "I was called up a few days after my 18th birthday. I landed on Gold Beach two weeks after finishing my basic training." Basic training for soldiers in 1944 lasted about 180 days.

After the ceremony, relatives and other military veterans had the opportunity to hear each other's stories about the bravery of those who took part in one of the most important military operations in the Second World War.



The grant funding can be used to support initiatives that contribute to key priorities set out in our Council Plan.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/cllr-community-grants



Fujitsu employees on a volunteering day with Inspero

Green taxi hits the road



Three new ultra-low carbon taxis have taken to the streets under our scheme to make it easier to travel green in Basingstoke and Deane.

Steve (pictured) was the first driver to sign up for one of our £5,000 grants and he is already enjoying the benefits of his new electrically-powered and wheelchair-accessible hackney carriage. "It's getting a really positive reaction from customers who love how quiet it is and the panoramic roof," he said. "It is really good to drive,

a totally different experience compared to my previous vehicle, and I'm saving money charging overnight instead of filling up on diesel."

Compared to diesel taxis, these vehicles emit around 16 times less carbon and can save drivers upwards of £150 a week on fuel.

Any local taxi driver can apply for a grant for one of these taxis at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/hackney-carriage-taxi

Keeping you charged

We're fulfilling our ambition for more electric vehicle chargers in coming years to make it more convenient for electric vehicle owners to charge in the borough.



We'll soon achieve our target for at least one public charging point in every ward in the borough, having installed new chargers in our car parks and at community centres at a rate of almost two per month so far this year.

Building on this, we're progressing our project with Hampshire County Council, which is responsible for on-street chargers, to create more of them near people's homes.

And, until Monday 4 November, we are asking companies and communities to have their say on our draft plans for how we help to create more chargers in the borough in the future.

Find out more and have your say at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/vehicle-charging-point



Double time for borough's conservation heroes

Time spent volunteering to help protect and enhance the borough's natural environment has more than doubled in a year.

More than 15,650 hours have been clocked up in support of our pledge to encourage nature recovery in the borough and tackle the ecological emergency, through our newly-adopted biodiversity strategy.

This includes 9,874 hours of work completed by 227 conservation volunteers across 17 volunteering groups and over 1,385 hours recorded through council-organised corporate working days.

This tremendous effort supports the work of our ranger team which manages over 300 hectares of green space across the borough, alongside our biodiversity, tree and grounds maintenance teams.

With support from us and our partner Natural Basingstoke (representatives pictured), the conservation volunteer groups help to restore and manage borough council-owned sites.

Success stories include work carried out to restore Wigmore Heath in Tadley and Mill Field Local Nature Reserve in Old Basing.

Excellent work is also taking place in groups working across the borough in areas including Beggarwood Park, Black Dam Ponds and Crabtree, Chineham, Daniel Park in Whitchurch, Hatch Warren, Jubiloaks in Oakley, Kempshott, Marnel and Popley, Oakley, Old Down, Overton and South View.

Cabinet Member for the Climate and Ecological Emergency Cllr Chris Tomblin said: "As a council we have declared an ecological emergency which means we have committed to take action to reverse the decline of nature in the borough. We cannot do this alone.

"Through our work with Natural Basingstoke and the conservation groups, great gains are being made and this would not be possible without our wonderful volunteers."

Find out about conversation groups at <https://naturalbasingstoke.org.uk> or learn more about corporate volunteering at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/green-space-volunteering



Life-saving help

A new service is helping victims of domestic abuse in the borough to get the help they need.

Three new independent domestic violence advisers are working with the council's housing team to provide one-to-one counselling and personalised therapeutic, practical and emotional trauma-centred support within 24 hours of a victim or survivor asking for help. Individuals will also be supported to find appropriate accommodation or help to stay in their own homes.

Domestic abuse is coercive behaviour including physical, emotional, verbal, psychological, financial or sexual abuse.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/domestic-abuse or call 01256 844844.



Strengthening community grants

Eleven community and voluntary groups across the borough are now benefitting from over £130,000 of funding from the latest round of our **Strengthening Communities Grant scheme**.

A new youth club has launched at Ridgeway Community Centre in Buckskin, more community events organised and the toy library developed at The Link in Tadley (pictured) and more training arranged for volunteers to help maintain the bowling green in St Mary Bourne (pictured) – thanks to the funding.

Now in its third year, the grant scheme was designed to support groups to become more resilient and drive innovation to meet communities' needs.

Organisations could apply for grants of up to £15,000 to support a range of activities such as improving efficiency through better use of technology, increasing volunteer numbers, upskilling staff and volunteers or improving their marketing to reach more people and generate additional income to support their community activities.

Over 45 groups and organisations have now been helped since the scheme launched in 2022.

To see the full list of successful applicants visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/funding



Supporting access to exercise

New exercise classes in Buckskin, Popley and Oakridge have been set up thanks to our application for Hampshire Active Health Programme funding.

The free strength training and mixed Pilates and aerobics classes aim to encourage more people to be active and have been organised for each area based on feedback from the communities. As part of the project it is also planned to train a local person to continue running classes in the area to meet this need in the future.

The grant programme is managed by Energise Me, on behalf of Hampshire County Council, using funding provided from the Department of Health and Social Care.

The funding also includes access to an app offering support and top tips on keeping active and eating well for people in those areas.

Cabinet Member for Communities, Partnerships and Inclusion Cllr John McKay said: "Supporting our residents to access opportunities to be more active in their communities is important. Regular physical activity is proven to help both physical and mental health and this project allows more people to enjoy these benefits."



Find out more about the classes by emailing SportAndWellbeing@basingstoke.gov.uk

Stay warm at home and save money this winter

Book a free home energy survey to keep your energy bills down and your home warmer.

Book your free survey
www.basingstoke.gov.uk/home-energy-saving-initiatives

Get energy-saving advice 01256 845777
GreenTeam@basingstoke.gov.uk



Winter wonders for all the family



From discovering dinosaurs to glow in the dark delights, with some festive fun sandwiched in between, there's plenty to do in Basingstoke town centre during the winter half terms and Christmas break.

Organised by Love Basingstoke as part of our town centre programme, this October half term will be jam-packed with exciting events to enjoy including pottery painting on Tuesday 29 October (pre-booking is advised), a chance to learn new tricks at the Magic School on Wednesday 30 October or get spooky with Halloween-themed arts and crafts.

Dinosaur lovers will be in for a prehistoric treat on Thursday 31 October with the chance to explore a pop-up Dino Dome.

Check the Love Basingstoke website for full details and times.

For those who can't wait to get into the Christmas spirit, the Top of the Town will host free festive family fun including children's activities and music on Friday 15 November.

There will be plenty on offer for those with an eye for a bargain with market stalls to browse and extended opening times and sample festive treats from local businesses.

In the run up to Christmas, festive events will also take place at Festival Place, The Malls and other town centre venues.

Next year, the popular Let's Glow event will return with illuminations to brighten up the Top of the Town in February half term.

Find out more about events taking place this autumn and winter at www.LoveBasingstoke.co.uk



Event introduces ways to better wellbeing

Hundreds of people of all ages discovered ways to be more active during a free event at War Memorial Park in Basingstoke.

We teamed up with local groups and sport and exercise facilities to stage the Sport and Wellbeing Day to support people to make healthier choices while also showcasing the facilities at our town centre park.

The event gave people the chance to try sports and activities including tennis and pickleball, cricket, hockey, skateboarding, scooting, BMX and group exercise sessions. There were also dance, gymnastic and exercise displays to watch.

Our ranger team led a group on an Earth Walk to explore the natural surroundings in the park and there were music, nature and craft activities.

Cabinet Member for Sports, Leisure and Culture Cllr Kerry Morrow said: "Encouraging people to get outdoors and enjoy their local surroundings and support them to work on their wellbeing is a real priority for us. We all lead busy lives but it is important to make time to invest in your mental and physical health and to do the same for your family.

"The War Memorial Park offers many free facilities and lots of beautiful green space, we wanted to show people what is available to them on their doorstep

while also introducing people to other sports and activities taking place across the borough."

Find out more at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/sport-wellbeing-day



Green Flag for parks



Three popular parks in the borough have been awarded the prestigious Green Flag status this year from Keep Britain Tidy.

Beggarwood Park, War Memorial and Eastrop Park have achieved the international quality mark for parks and green spaces for being beautifully maintained, clean and safe, with good facilities for visitors.

This is the second time Beggarwood Park has achieved the Green Flag award, while Eastrop Park celebrates its 25th award and War Memorial Park its 17th.

Visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/green-flag-award

Advertisement



Christmas fun for all at Basingstoke Leisure Park!

www.BasingstokeLeisurePark.co.uk

Basingstoke Leisure Park, Worting Road, Basingstoke, RG22 6PG



Free tree giveaway



Don't forget to take a photo of your newly planted trees and tag in [f @SustainableBasingstoke](#)

Over 1,200 trees have been claimed for free in our 'Tree-mendous Giveaway' and there is still time to get yours.

Hundreds of people have already collected their trees under our joint initiative with the Hampshire Forest Partnership to help gardens across the borough flourish to encourage wildlife and capture carbon to help tackle climate change.

And you too can get involved and receive up to two free trees

for your garden but you'll need to act fast – our giveaway will stop when either stocks run out or we reach our deadline of Sunday 12 January 2025.

The 11 varieties up for grabs are spindle, guelder rose, wayfaring, blackthorn, hazel, elder, hawthorn, crab apple, field maple, bird cherry and rowan trees. You can choose two of the same or two different species.

The trees are currently around 20cm to 40cm tall and

will be available for collection on Wednesday 29 January at our council depot on Wade Road in Basingstoke. When you collect your trees, we'll also give you information about where to plant them in your garden and how to care for them.

To apply for your free trees before stocks run out, go to www.basingstoke.gov.uk/tree-mendous-giveaway

Where to get help

-  **Report it** - you can report any issues including missed bin collections, fly-tipping, overgrown vegetation, environmental health issues, benefits and council tax to us at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/report
-  **Severe weather** - if there is severe weather including flooding, snow or high winds you can find service information and helpful advice and contact details at www.basingstoke.gov.uk/SevereWeather
-  **Rough sleeping** - if you spot someone sleeping rough, you can contact StreetLink, a service who will connect that person with local services to help them. Report a rough sleeper at www.TheStreetLink.org.uk or by downloading the app.
-  **Hampshire County Council** - is responsible for road maintenance, flooding, faulty or blocked drains and gullies, fallen or broken trees, broken or faulty signage, faulty streetlights and damaged or empty grit bins. You can report any problems at www.hants.gov.uk/report or by calling **0300 555 1388**.
-  **Emergency school closures** - if there are emergency school closures, Hampshire County Council will update its webpage at www.hants.gov.uk/SchoolClosures



How to get in contact with us

There are plenty of ways to connect with us:

Visit the website

www.basingstoke.gov.uk

See social media updates on

 Facebook and  @BasingstokeGov

Call us on 01256 844844 Mondays to Fridays (except on bank holidays). In an emergency at the weekend, on a bank holiday or in the evenings call this number and stay on the line to be connected with the out-of-hours service.

Text phone and Minicom users can dial 18001 followed by 01256 845276 to contact us via the Relay UK service.

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Find out more and read our advertising disclaimer www.basingstoke.gov.uk/advertising-sponsorship-policy

find out more



Christmas opening hours

The council will be closed from **4.30pm on Tuesday 24 December to 8.30am on Thursday 2 January 2025**. For emergencies during this time call **01256 844844** to be transferred to the out-of-hours service.

This newspaper is also available in other formats, including large print. For a copy please call **01256 844844** or email communications@basingstoke.gov.uk



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