

UPPER MEON VALLEY WARD – PARISH UPDATE JULY 2025

Local Government Reorganisation

At last, there is now an opportunity for electors to comment on the plans for the future shape of local government in the Hampshire-Solent area. As briefed last month, there are now two separate groupings of local authorities that have been working up their chosen solutions. Winchester City Council, part of the broader working group of District Councils and existing Unitary Authorities, has embarked on a consultation with a dedicated webpage here: <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/no-listing/devolution-and-local-government-reorganisation> and comments will be accepted until 27th July. It would be good to 'spread the word' of this consultation as far as possible – perhaps a link could be included in village websites and/or parish magazines? There is a programme of 'drop-in' events through this month, though sadly none in the UMW Ward. The closest events are in Whiteley on Monday 7th July, Alresford on Thursday 10th July and Wickham on Monday 14th July. Separately, Hampshire County Council will announce its preferred way forward, supported by East Hampshire District Council, this month in the full council meeting scheduled for Thursday 17th July.

SDNPA Partnership Management Plan Consultation

The consultation on the South Downs Partnership Management Plan runs until 1st August 2025. There are separate surveys for the public and organisations such as Parish Councils. Both are accessed through this webpage: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/partnership-management/> As with the reorganisation consultation, it would be good to encourage residents to have their say, as well as Parish Councils submitting their views.

Winchester District Mayor's 'Scavenger Hunt'

Raising money for and awareness of his chosen charities is a key focus of the Mayor of Winchester, this year Cllr Sudhakar Achwal. Winchester Action for Climate Change, the charity for local homeless people, Trinity Winchester, and Home Start are the three that will benefit this year. On Saturday 19th July, the Mayor's Official Residence, Abbey House, will be open to visitors from 9-11 am and there will be the challenge of a self-guided Scavenger Hunt Trail for all to enjoy as part of the Mayoral programme of events. Tickets available here: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/mayor-of-winchester>

Summer Break

We will both be taking the opportunity for some time away, as doubtless will many of you. Our next Update will appear in September, but we will both continue to monitor e-mails and phone calls as far as practicable. Meantime, enjoy the summer!

Neil Bolton
Jerry Pett