



Hampshire County Councillor Report Juliet Henderson December 2025

Protecting our Hampshire Landscapes

At a meeting of the full council, I tabled a motion to protect Hampshire's National Landscapes. There is nothing more restorative than a beautiful landscape. We heard recently from the Princess of Wales how nature really helped her recovery, and I think all of us know how we've come back from taking in a beautiful landscape feeling restored.

Ultimately, this motion is about strengthening what already makes Hampshire special. It supports wildlife, protects landscape character, enhances community wellbeing, and ensures that future generations inherit a countryside that is not diminished on our watch.

This month sees the launch of Hampshire's [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) – shaped by two years of collaboration with partners to embed nature recovery into Hampshire's future. We are lucky in Hampshire to have an exceptional natural environment where 23% of land is already designated for nature – but wildlife has declined sharply, so our plan is all about managing more land for nature in the future. We need everyone to help, so that together, we can protect and enhance our natural environment.

Fostering-We need more Foster Carers

Residents interested in fostering can learn more and take their first step by visiting [Hampshire County Council Fostering Service](#).

With the colder months upon us, the Hampshire County Council campaign encourages people to consider whether fostering could fit into their family life. Told from the perspective of a foster carer's birth child, [a new heartfelt video](#) showcases the warmth, friendship, and lasting bonds that fostering can bring for the whole family.

Every child deserves a safe and loving home. This winter, we're asking Hampshire families to consider fostering .

Hampshire County Council's Fostering Service has been working hard to reduce the number of children coming into care. In Hampshire, the gap between the number of children needing a loving home, and the number of foster carers available, continues to widen. For every child we can find a home, others are waiting.

Carers are not required to own their own homes or to have previous childcare experience and will receive excellent training and competitive allowances. Ongoing support is provided by a dedicated social worker and via the [Hampshire Hive](#) project, a support network of local groups which create an 'extended family' for foster carers and their children in communities across Hampshire.

Mayoral Elections Postponed

The Government has informed us that it will delay the planned elections for new Mayors in four areas of England, including Hampshire. This means the Mayoral election originally scheduled for May 2026 will be postponed by two years, until May 2028. This is a link to the Government's press release;: [More homes and improved high streets for new mayoral areas through 30-year funding package - GOV.UK](#)

The decision to propose a delay has been made solely by central Government; none of the upper tier local authorities (Hampshire County Council, Southampton and Portsmouth City Councils and Isle of Wight Council) requested a postponement of the May elections. The rationale given is to allow the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process to be completed first, before Mayors take office.

Leaders of Hampshire's upper-tier authorities have stressed that the decision to delay the mayoral election was made solely by the Government. In a joint statement, the leaders of Hampshire County Council, the Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council confirmed that none of them requested the postponement.

They said all four had instead asked for further clarification on the implications of the Government's move. The statement said that while it is "regrettable" that the mayoral election will be pushed back, the priority remains progressing the region's devolution deal. It added: "This process promises greater local decision-making authority, increased investment, and stronger representation for our region. "Given the size and significance of Hampshire and the Solent, it is essential that our regional perspective is represented at the national level. "Until a mayor is elected, we suggest that once formed, the Leaders of the Combined County Authority act as the representatives on the Council of Nations and Regions, so that our economy and communities have the influence they deserve."

Hampshire County Council leader Nick Adams-King said he had been “reassured” that the delay will not affect the creation of the new combined authority or the transfer of powers and funding from Westminster. Cllr Adams-King said: “Devolution will still begin next year, bringing real benefits to Hampshire and the Solent. “Given the size and importance of Hampshire and the Solent, it is vital that our voice is heard nationally.”