

# Mid-Test Matters

An annual report for Houghton Parish Council

## Test Valley Borough Council – A year dominated by Covid-19

£440k	Provided £440,000 of council tax support to more than 2,000 households
2,705,424	Collected 56,363 bins per week - that's 2,705,424 bins since lockdown began in March
£56m	Paid out £56m of grants and rate relief to support over 3,200 local businesses
181 days	We suspended parking charges for 181 days to support people picking up supplies
£23k	Provided £23,124 to 54 community groups to help them deliver food supplies and prescriptions to residents
1,966	Worked with 1,966 volunteers providing vital support to their local communities
79,075	We responded to almost 80,000 customer enquiries
3,003	Answered 3,003 calls to the Test Valley Community Helpline
440	440 households helped into housing

## Mid Test Borough Councillors – supporting our communities

- Despite restrictions we continued to attend most Parish Council meetings via Zoom sometimes even having to attend three in the same evening. These meetings remain a key focus for us in keeping us abreast of local issues and concerns. We have continued to help on any issues raised with us.
- We issued monthly editions of Mid Test Matters and the circulation has now been extended either directly or via a co-ordinator at virtually all the community Covid-19 volunteers.
- We continued to fully represent Mid Test in TVBC with two of us being Cabinet Members, two Planning Committee Members and one as a representative on Overview and Scrutiny. These meetings together with full Council meetings were all attended via Teams.
- During the last 12 months there have been 490 planning applications. In Houghton, there were 35 planning applications (including 9 tree) considered. Many were relatively straight forward but some required considerable effort on our part answering residents' questions, providing advice on the planning process, site visits, acting as an interface with the Planning Officers and of course the planning meetings themselves. The two applications for proposed development at The Bungalow, Stevens Drove involved such activity.
- We helped a number of community projects with grants during the last 12 months
  - Houghton Parish Council - £1000 for speed indicator
  - Test Valley School - £1000 for improvements to the animal area
  - Stockbridge Town Hall - £6250 for theatre curtains
  - King's Somborne School - £1000 for eco garden
  - King's Somborne Village Hall - £642 for web site
  - Nether Wallop PC - £1000 - NDP support
  - Wallop Pre-School - £1000 – Tapestry project
  - Longstock Allotments - £800 – Community garden
  - King's Somborne PC - £1000 – Preschool canopy
  - King's Somborne Village Hall - £22,167 for audio/visual system
- Councillor Alison Johnston is lead member for Test Valley Borough Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP). This was approved in June 2020

and is being continuously reviewed and updated as issues/opportunities change. There will be a pilot event for information sharing following a survey with town and parish councils.

❖ Cllrs Alison Johnston, Ian Jeffrey and Tony Ward

