

### Advance notice of M27 closure between J9-J11 over Christmas and New Year

Drivers are being advised to plan ahead to avoid severe delays this Christmas and New Year as details are published for a full closure in both directions on a section of the M27 in Hampshire – this is scheduled from 8.00 pm, 24 December 2025 to 4.00 am on Sunday 4th January 2026.



The closure is needed to install a new dual carriageway underpass beneath the motorway - using an innovative time-saving engineering technique being used for the first time in Hampshire. Over the closure period, a giant pre-constructed concrete structure - weighing approximately 8,500 tonnes (2.5 times heavier than HMS Victory) - will be slid 65 metres into a trench cut into the motorway embankment, from its current construction location on the north of the M27. The motorway will then be fully reconstructed above it to watch the short film showing the box slide process visit - <https://vimeo.com/1123890323/a1330d6461>

The one-off closure of this section of the M27 to facilitate necessary improvements to a major component of the J10 improvement scheme, replaces what would otherwise have been many months of lane restrictions, speed limits, and overnight works. It has been timed to coincide with lower traffic levels over the holiday period.

Key information road users need to know during these works:

- The M27 will be closed completely, in both directions, between Junctions 9 (Whiteley) and 11 (Fareham), from 8.00 pm, 24th December 2025 to 4.00 am on Sunday 4th January 2026.
- There will be a signed diversion route along the A27, which is mostly two lanes in each direction, during the closure. This is expected to be busy, particularly between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm every day



- when drivers should be prepared for severe delays. Road users should plan their journey in advance and consider alternatives including public transport, travelling during less busy times, using different routes, or if their journey is really necessary.
- Drivers will be able to exit the M27 westbound at Junction 11 for Fareham and Gosport, and eastbound at Junction 9 for Whiteley and Park Gate. However, there will be no westbound entry to the M27 at Junction 11 for traffic heading towards Southampton or the A32 (Alton), and no eastbound entry at Junction 9 for traffic heading towards Portsmouth.
- For more information and updates visit [www.hants.gov.uk/M27-J10-xmas](http://www.hants.gov.uk/M27-J10-xmas)

The £100 million+ scheme is being delivered by Hampshire County Council, working closely with National Highways. It is fully funded by the Buckland Group, the developer of Welborne Garden Village, and by Homes England. The new underpass will connect Fareham with the Welborne Garden Village development, improving access to the M27 and supporting future growth in the area.

Once complete, the new underpass under the M27 will carry four lanes of traffic - two in each direction - along with a shared walking and cycling route, improving connectivity between Fareham and the new Welborne Garden Village development.

A series of complementary highways improvements on and around Junction 10 are being delivered by the County Council to support the development of Welborne Garden Village, which is due to provide up to 6,000 homes alongside schools and community services, just outside Fareham, and to provide better access to the M27. Under planning conditions for the development, more than 1,160 homes cannot be lived in until the new 'all-moves' Junction 10 on the M27 is completed and operational. The two-year construction scheme is due to be open to traffic in winter 2026.

## Budget Consultation

Hampshire County Council is asking people for their views on ways the Authority could balance its books over the next two years, up to April 2027, as costs and demand for local services keep rising alongside ongoing underfunding by central Government. County council budgets nationally have been stretched to the limit for many years, but in Hampshire, the County Council has worked hard to manage public money carefully – making every penny count, delivering high-performing services and maintaining the second lowest Council Tax rates set by county councils in England. By the end of this financial year, the Authority will have saved £734 million from its annual budget since 2008 - acting early to address financial challenges, often well ahead of other authorities, transforming and working more efficiently to save money, as well as being more commercial in some areas to help generate income.

Despite these steps, financial pressures remain not only in Hampshire but across the country, especially in high demand areas like social care for vulnerable children and adults, and school transport.

Without changes to how Government funds councils, Hampshire faces a budget shortfall of £143 million in 2026/27 and rising to £230 million the following year. We are not asking the Government for favours, just the tools to enable us to keep doing the right thing for our communities.

To give you an idea of the pressures we are facing:

- Every month, 30 older people who were previously paying for their own social care run out of money so we have to step in to cover the costs - adding £18.7 million to the annual bill.
- Residential care costs for older people rose by £15 million in the last year.
- The number of younger adults requiring complex care packages has risen dramatically and now costs an extra £5.28 million each year.
- The number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans to help support their additional needs at school has grown by 33% since 2022/23.
- School transport costs, including for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, have more than doubled in three years from £43 million to £94 million.



Until Government provides a fairer funding solution in areas like social care and school transport, and for local authorities to have greater flexibility to set Council Tax responsibly in their areas, many councils, like Hampshire, must look for even more ways to reduce their spending in order to balance the books, which they must do by law.

People can have their say until **11.59 pm Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2025**.

People can take part in the consultation via the online response form on the consultation webpage: [www.hants.gov.uk/budgetconsultation](http://www.hants.gov.uk/budgetconsultation).

The full information pack about the proposals in the consultation are available on this webpage, as well as details of ways people can respond, including how to request and return a paper copy.

## Support for Private Foster Carers

Are you caring for the child of a friend, neighbour or someone in your extended family? If the answer is yes, you could be in a private fostering arrangement

Private fostering is when a child under 16 years (or under 18 years if they are disabled) lives with an adult who is not a close family member for 28 days or more. This could be an extended family member like a cousin or great aunt, a family friend or even a neighbour.

It is a **legal requirement** for the County Council to be notified of a private fostering arrangement by the parent or carer of the child involved. This can be done by telephoning the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0300 555 1384.

## Hampshire County Council's Children's Services recognised in National Awards

The authority's Out of Hours team, which supports professionals and members of the public with urgent safeguarding or welfare concerns outside of normal office hours, has taken home the gold award for its inspiring teamwork. It was one of five finalists all vying to be named 'Team of the Year' at this year's awards.



The Out of Hours team forms part of the County Council's wider Children's Services, which were judged as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted last year for the second time in a row. The Out of Hours service operates during weekday evenings, over the weekends and on Bank Holidays, and also supports with social care issues involving adults. Support may include responding to safeguarding concerns, providing information and advice, or undertaking assessments or more in-depth social work.

The priority is to keep people safe until normal working hours resume.

### Did you know that .....

- Between the 2011 and 2021 Census, Hampshire's population has grown by 83,000 people or 6.3%.1
- Young people (aged 0-19) made up 23.5% of the population in 2011, this decreased to 22% in the 2021 Census.
- In 2011, 172,700 (13.1%) people were aged 70+. By 2021 this figure had risen to 228,500 people, or 16.3% of the population.
- Educational attainment is better than the national average with 68% GCSE pupils attaining grade four in both English and Mathematics. 67% of primary school pupils achieve expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in year 6 (age 10-11).
- The percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is 1.8%. Over 475 young people aged 16-17 years who are NEET are supported by the County Council to access further education or training.
- Physical activity: Hampshire has more physically active adults compared the rest of England, with 79.7% of adults participating in at least 150 minutes of exercise per week (compared with 66.3% of adults in England). However, one in five Hampshire adults are doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week.

### County Councillor Grants

Each County Councillor receives a small annual budget to help community groups with their projects. Grants are limited to a maximum of £1,000 per application and MUST address the strict grant criteria, see: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/grants/grants-list?filter=.County-Councillor>. Please note, applicants must contact their county councillor **before** applying for a grant to discuss the project and seek agreement in principle. See my email address below.

*And finally, may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and may the New Year see more Peace in the World.*

Patricia Stallard  
Hampshire County Councillor  
[Newlands, Denmead, Southwick, Boarhunt, Wickham, Knowle, Soberton, Newtown]

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