Hampshire Climate Action Network 25 October 2025

at St Lawrence Parish Room, Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9LH

MINUTES

Present:

Anne Stephenson, FoE
Caroline Dibden, Community Planning Alliance, Hambledon Parish Council
Cathy Guy-Murrell, Blackwater Valley Friends of the Earth
Chris Holloway, WinACC
Jo Crocker, WinACC
Liz Batten, Transition Southampton
Mark Howell, Church Crookham
Mona Soussi-Tafraouti, FoE
Naomi Briggs, HCAN
Phil Gagg, WinACC Transport lead
Rod Painell, ACAN
Sarah Wood, Blackwater Valley
Sue James, Havant Climate Alliance
Tony Flahive, Tadley Town Council

Welcome to Mona Soussi-Tafraouti of FoE SE, Tony to his first meeting, and welcome back to everyone returning after a break

1. **Chalk streams -** Liz Batten, a member of Southampton River Rights (formerly Itchen Rising) would like to hear from any River Rights or other water campaigns and interest groups in Hampshire, as they're building a database. (**lizBatten44 at gmail.com).**

2. **Water -** Sue James reminded everyone of the on-going campaign against the new Havant Thicket reservoir. She will let us know when the public consultation opens.

3. **Tree-planting -** Hampshire Forest partnership is again offering free trees to plant, and applications are open for the Disease-Resistant Elm Trials Hampshire Forest Partnership - Winter 2025/26 Funding Eligibility Check Applications open until **17 November 2025.** Trees must be planted by **31 January 2026.** Spread the word.

4. **Planning and Infrastructure Bill** - good Wildlife Trust briefing here Planning & Infrastructure Bill. More detail in this blog: Planning & Infrastructure Bill: Nature at a crossroads in the Lords. In response to huge pressure the Government amended the Bill to add some environmental safeguards in July. In October the Lords voted to add important protections for chalk streams to the Bill. Crucially, the Lords also voted to back amendment 130, which would prevent Part 3 of the Bill applying in areas where it could hurt wildlife. MPs will be voting in November on whether to accept the Lords amendments. Contact your MP to ask that they stand up for wildlife when voting on the Lords amendments.

5. **Tips for engaging with more people**

    1. Give people something, they'll reciprocate
    2. Ask people for their op[tyion rather than giving them yours
    3. Don't focus on "climate" but on something specific - for example "Beat the Heat" in Southampton
    4. Less doom, more solutions
    5. Talk to young people about their future; learn from ACAN's Young ACAN that goes to schools and gets pupils doing a video
    6. To explain where energy is used, a pop concert is an example that engages people go to people where they are, don't expect them to come to you
    7. Check Climate Outreach and More in Common Britain Talks Climate & Nature: up-to-date and in-depth analysis of what 7,000+ people across Britain think and feel about climate and nature.

8. Include climate justice

6. Changes in voting behaviour - implications

1. Increase in choosing to vote tactically - can we influence people? How do we take part in the debate?
2. How to approach parties who don't share our interests? Focus on long term costs? (NB not all Reform voters are anti-climate.
3. How to respond to inaccurate statements?
4. Are smaller parties useful? Independents?
5. Can we foster alliances of people and parties sympathetic to climate action? Support coalitions?

7. Local Government Reorganisation into unitary councils

Chris presented a brief slideshow on the proposed boundaries, implications on councillors and potential role of parish councils.

Local Government Reorganisation will abolish existing councils (unitaries, county and districts) and replace them with unitary councils larger than districts to deliver local government services instead. The Government asked the local authorities in Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight for their proposal(s) on how they will organise themselves into unitaries to work together in the overarching strategic authority.

Three-quarters of the local Councils have proposed these 3 options:

Outline of the three option variations of the four new mainland and Isle of Wight unitary model

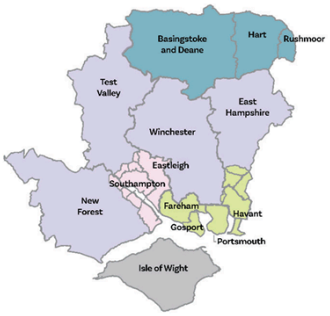
Option 1



Option 2



Option 3



North Hampshire: Basingstoke and Deane, Hart, Rushmoor	**407,465**	**North Hampshire:** Basingstoke and Deane, Hart, Rushmoor	**407,465**	**North Hampshire:** Basingstoke and Deane, Hart, Rushmoor	**407,465**
Mid Hampshire: East Hampshire, New Forest, Test Valley, Winchester	**598,823**	**Mid Hampshire:** East Hampshire, Test Valley, Winchester	**417,159**	**Mid Hampshire:** East Hampshire, New Forest, Test Valley, Winchester	**484,546**
South West Hampshire: Eastleigh, Southampton	**423,221**	**South West Hampshire:** Eastleigh, New Forest, Southampton	**604,885**	**South West Hampshire:** Eastleigh, New Forest*, Southampton, Test Valley*	**510,102**
South East Hampshire: Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth	**554,741**	**South East Hampshire:** Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth	**554,741**	**South East Hampshire:** East Hampshire*, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth, Winchester*	**582,137**
Isle of Wight	**146,351**	**Isle of Wight**	**146,351**	**Isle of Wight**	**146,351**

East Hampshire*: Clanfield, Horndean and Rowlands Castle
New Forest*: Totton & Eling, Marchwood, Hythe & Dibden and Fawley
Test Valley*: Valley Park, Nursling & Rownhams and Chilworth
Winchester*: Newlands

Two local Councils, Hampshire County Council and E Hants DC, have proposed this alternative:



Timetable (informed guesswork. Devolution in blue, Local Gov Reorg purple

Now	Political parties selecting their mayoral candidates
Sept-Dec 2025	Mayoral candidates drafting manifestos
Nov/Dec	Government public consultation on Hants & Solent unitary boundary proposals
Jan (?Feb) 2026	Government announces decision on unitary boundaries
Jan-Ap	Mayoral manifestoes published; mayoral campaigning
7 May	Mayoral elections
May-June	Hampshire & Solent Combined Strategic Authority set up
May 2027 (or maybe 2028)	Election of councillors to new unitary authorities (to act as "shadow" authorities for one year)
May 2028 (or maybe 2029)	Unitaries come into official existence (operational delivery probably carries on along old district boundaries for a year or two while things settle down)

Discussion included these points:

- how much influence the Mayor will have over unitaries on non-Mayoral functions
- Can unitaries level up - eg bus journeys per person a year vary from 100 (S;ton) to 17 (HGCC)
- CPRE has decided to mirror unitaries' boundaries
- But it will be harder to involve local people in a much larger area
- Good to work together
- WinACC has set out some of the options for climate and nature groups to work together.
- Can we list groups and where they are? Maybe ask groups to tell us of groups they know in their area (Havant, S'ton and WinACC have lists); or we could ask people to ut pin in a map
- It's not the role of HCAN to tell local groups what they should do when their existing local authority is replaced with a larger unitary. However, people at the meeting felt that the next HCAN meeting on 28 Feb 2026 should discuss options to support local groups to make decisions. (There may be some public sector groups too eg Rushmoor BC has a Climate Group

8. Devolution

To influence Mayoral candidates, **VOICE for Climate and Nature (Hampshire & Solent)** is the name of our project to influence the Mayoral candidates. More about VOICE VOICE aims to:

- get community views for the environment, climate and nature reflected in the manifestos of Mayoral candidates and the draft strategies and frameworks being prepared for approval by the elected Mayor and Combined Strategic Authority after the elections in May 2026
- get community views for the environment, climate and nature reflected in the strategies and policies of the Mayor and Combined Strategic Authority thereafter.

VOICE will shortly send round a link to its website, where there will be statements on the key Mayoral functions. Please can all groups circulate this to their members, inviting them to sign up for mailings, support the statements, and send in any comments.

They will then be published more widely to collect support from the wider general public.

Suggestions to add to the contents of the statements:

- Heat networks
- Aviation, shipping
- Flooding - coastal as well as rain

Ways to make it appealing:

- Vocabulary
- Refer to heat/health
- Warmer homes
- Safe children (walking to school)
- Nature
- Chalk streams

HIWWT are planning to organise hustings - one party candidate at a time and/or together. In person, or hybrid? What scale?

The English Devolution and Empowerment Bill is now at Committee stage in the House of Commons. An amendment to make action on climate a legal duty was to be discussed on Tuesday 28 October.

ADDITION: The amendment was not approved. So we need to press our MPs to raise it when the Bill is debated in the whole House of Commons at the Report stage, in about **2 weeks from now**. This is the big debate in the commons which all MPs can join in. MPs will bring forward an amendment. **ACTION:** Contact MPs to "sign on" and back the amendment. Please use any contacts you have as a constituent/councillors lobbying MPs or with your local groups to contact these MPs.

9. Future meetings

at St Lawrence Parish Room, Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9LH 1.00-4.30 on 28 Feb, 9 May, 18 July, 12 Sept and an AGM on 5 Dec.