



# Welcome to the Winter edition...

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Residents Approved

Credit: kasabubu Pixabay



OUT THERE PROJECT – FREE COURSES  
GOSPORT AND FAREHAM ADULT EDUCATION COMMUNITY COURSES JANUARY 2018 – MARCH 2018  
To enrol or for further information please telephone 023 9252 5704  
www.stvincent.ac.uk email: outthere@stvincent.ac.uk



St Vincent College



Course	Day	Start	End	Time	Cost	Weeks
Computers for Beginners	Monday	15 January 2018	5 February 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	4
Computers for Beginners	Monday	26 February 2018	19 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	4
Intro to Child Psychology	Monday	15 January 2018	12 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	8
Intro to Psychology	Monday	15 January 2018	12 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	8
Intro to World	Monday	15 January 2018	5 February 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	4
Intro to World Extra	Monday	26 February 2018	19 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	4
Back to Basics Maths	Monday	15 January 2018	12 March 2018	12.00 - 2.30	FREE	8
Craft Print Making - Lino Cutting	Monday	15 January 2018	26 March 2018	9.30 - 11.30	*£30	10
Arts and Crafts for Beginners	Monday	15 January 2018	12 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	*£30	8
Everyday ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)	Tuesday	16 January 2018	13 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	8
Intro to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)	Tuesday	16 January 2018	13 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	8
Intro to Criminology	Tuesday	16 January 2018	13 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	8
Intro to Forensics	Tuesday	16 January 2018	13 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	8
Makaton (L5 - 8)	Tuesday	16 January 2018	6 February 2018	9.15 - 11.45	*£30	4
Makaton (L1 - 4)	Tuesday	16 January 2018	6 February 2018	12.15 - 2.45	*£30	4
Intro to Health and Social Care	Tuesday	16 January 2018	13 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	8
Flower Arranging for Beginners	Tuesday	16 January 2018	13 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	8
Intro to Counselling	Wednesday	17 January 2018	14 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	8
Spanish for Beginners	Wednesday	17 January 2018	28 March 2018	9.30 - 11.30	FREE	10
Mindfulness/De-stress	Wednesday	17 January 2018	7 February 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	4
Intro to Cake Decorating/Toppers/Cupcakes	Wednesday	17 January 2018	14 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	*£30	8
Intro to Social Work	Wednesday	17 January 2018	14 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	FREE	8
Back to Basics English	Wednesday	17 January 2018	14 March 2018	12.00 - 2.30	FREE	8
Intro to Drawing	Thursday	18 January 2018	15 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	*£20	8
Intro to Watercolours	Thursday	18 January 2018	15 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	*£30	8
Intro to Bookkeeping	Thursday	18 January 2018	8 February 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	4
Intro to Bookkeeping	Thursday	1 March 2018	22 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	4
Intro to Pattern Cutting	Thursday	18 January 2018	15 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	*£25	8
Patchwork Project	Thursday	18 January 2018	15 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	*£25	8
Intro to Cake Decorating/Toppers/Cupcakes	Thursday	18 January 2018	15 March 2018	12.15 - 2.45	*£30	8
Confidence Building	Friday	2 March 2018	23 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	4
Computers Improvers	Friday	19 January 2018	9 February 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	4
Computers Improvers	Friday	2 March 2018	23 March 2018	9.15 - 11.45	FREE	4

Gosport Borough Council is committed to equal opportunities for all.

If you need this document in large print, on tape, CD, in Braille or in another language, please ask.

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Gosport Borough Council, Town Hall, High Street, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 1EB

Tel: (023) 9258 4242



**GOSPORT**  
Borough Council



It is important that you speak to the correct person or team when you contact us.

- If you are a council tenant and need to speak to your Neighbourhood Housing Officer or a member of the Tenancy Management team (including rent enquiries) please call 023 9254 5665.
- If you live in sheltered accommodation or need to speak to someone about your lifeline pendant please call 023 9254 5453.
- If you are not a council tenant and want to speak to someone because you are threatened with homelessness or need help to find accommodation please call 023 9254 5476.
- If you are not a council tenant and are living in temporary accommodation allocated by the council please call 023 9254 5586.
- If you are on the Housing Waiting list or have a query about the Choice Based Lettings scheme please call 023 9254 5682.



## CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

The Town Hall will close to the public at 5pm on Friday 22nd December 2017 and will re-open on Tuesday, 2nd January 2018 at 9am.

If you need to contact Gosport Borough Council in the event of an emergency during the holiday period please contact Kier on 0800 028 0835 who operate our 'Out of Hours' service for Gosport Borough Council.

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Welcome to the winter edition of At Your Service.

This has been a year of great change with the Borough's shared senior management arrangement with Portsmouth City Council and the implementation of the Housing Service Review.

We are delighted that our new structure is now in place and we can focus on improving how we deliver our key services to you.

We would like to thank all the staff in Housing who have worked hard to implement the changes and we know that we can count on them to continue to work with us as we develop the Housing Service moving forward.

2018 will bring us new challenges, such as the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act and Universal Credit Full Service, but we are confident that we can respond to these changes and continue to deliver an excellent customer service to you.

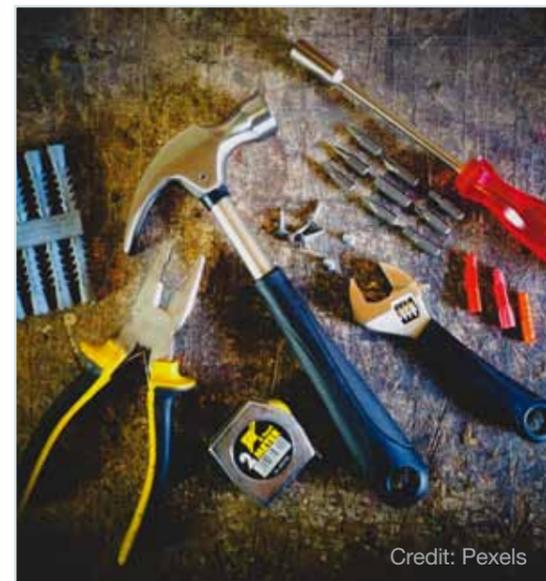
On behalf of all the staff at Gosport Borough Council, we would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Councillor  
Graham Burgess  
Chairman



Julie Smith  
Head of Housing



Credit: Pexels

## REPAIRS



You can report any repairs to our repairs contractor Kier in the following ways by:

- Telephoning Freephone number 0800 028 0835.
- Reporting emergency repairs (including boilers) 'out of office' hours by telephoning 0800 028 0835.
- Texting non urgent repairs to 07786 204386.
- Emailing non urgent repairs to [gospport.repairs@kier.co.uk](mailto:gospport.repairs@kier.co.uk)
- Clicking on the Kier repairs app. This can be downloaded via Apple, Android or Blackberry app stores; once you have downloaded the app, register with passcode 1789.

## GOSPORT POLICE STATION

Gosport Police Station is now based at The Town Hall.

### Opening Times

Tuesday – 10am-2pm & 3pm-6pm  
Saturday – 10am-2pm & 3pm-6pm

For non-emergencies call 101.  
In an emergency please call 999.

## GROUND MAINTENANCE ISSUES



You can report any grounds maintenance issues such as grass cutting and street cleansing to Streetscene by:

- Telephoning free phone 08000 198 598
- Emailing [streetscene@gospport.gov.uk](mailto:streetscene@gospport.gov.uk)

If you come across any issues with debris in the road, pedestrian crossings, pot holes, street lamps and traffic lights please contact Hampshire County Council Highways department by:



- Logging onto [www.hants.gov.uk/highways](http://www.hants.gov.uk/highways)

## Neighbourhood Managers

Denise Hudson – 023 9254 5439 – denise.hudson@gosport.gov.uk

Roz Weaver – 023 9254 5356 – roz.weaver@gosport.gov.uk

## Neighbourhood Housing Officers

### Patch 1 – Brockhurst, Elson and Privett

Paul Wilson-Suffield (Temporary) – 023 9254 5294 – paul.wilson-suffield@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 2 – Anglesey, Peel Common and Town (Astra Walk, Nelson House, Nyria Way, Ramillies House, Renown House, Revenge House, Rodney House, Shamrock Close, Slocum House, Willis Road)

Sarah Parsons – 023 9254 5540 – sarah.parsons@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 3 – Leesland and Town (Dolman Road, Dolphin Crescent, Hilton Road, Hornet Close, Mariners Way, Old Road, Tamworth Court)

Carol Leader – 023 9254 5359 – carol.leader@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 4 – Holbrook and Rowner

James Sibley – 023 9254 5522 – james.sibley@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 5 – Bridgemary North and Town (Endeavour Close, Portland House, The Mews, Trinity Close, Watergate, Winchfield House, York House)

Syed Haque – 023 9254 5273 – syed.haque@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 6 – Forton

Rosie Swannack – 023 9254 5293 – rosie.swannack@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 7 – Christchurch, Lee-on-the-Solent, Town (Alec Rose House, Burnhams Walk, Farriers Walk, Seahorse Walk, White Lion Walk)

Peter Gartshore (Temporary) – 023 9254 5637 – peter.gartshore@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 8 – Bridgemary South (Agnew Road, Bridgemary Avenue, Cameron Close, Cunningham Drive Fareham Road, Fisher Road, Gregson Avenue, Harris Road, Horton Road, Keyes Close, Keyes Road, Layton Road, Montgomery Road, Nobes Avenue, Portal Road, St Lukes Road, Tedder Road, The Spinney, Wavell Road)

Rachel Seymour – 023 9254 5203 – rachel.seymour@gosport.gov.uk

### Patch 9 – Bridgemary South (Acorn Close, Beauchamp Avenue, Braemar Road, Brewers Lane, Bridge House, Copse Lane, Gorselands Way, Green Crescent, Nobes Close, Rowner Close, Southway)

Helen Wort – 023 9254 5275 – helen.wort@gosport.gov.uk

## ID NEEDED AT MAY VOTE

You will need to show identification before you can vote at a polling station in the local elections in May 2018.

This is because we have signed up to a national trial of using ID when voting, as a way of making elections more secure.

The trial, being run by the Cabinet Office, also involves councils in Bromley, Watford and Woking. It comes after reports of alleged electoral fraud through voter impersonation more than doubled between 2014 and 2016 nationally.

To vote, you will need to produce ID before being issued with a ballot paper in the polling station.

Graeme Jesty, Gosport Borough Council's Head of Electoral Services said *"There's no evidence of any electoral fraud or impersonation in our borough but we are happy to help make sure that confidence is maintained in the national democratic process."*

Next year's trial is likely to be the first in a series to allow the Electoral Commission and Cabinet Office to evaluate the impact of asking for ID, before a decision is taken to whether or not to roll out nationally. Many countries have already made it a requirement to prove identity at a polling station, including Northern Ireland.

The forms of ID that will be accepted by Gosport Borough Council will be announced soon.

For further information please visit [www.gosport.gov.uk/voteid](http://www.gosport.gov.uk/voteid) email: [electoral.registration@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.registration@gosport.gov.uk) or telephone: 023 9254 5227.



## TENANCY FRAUD

Tenancy fraud occurs when a council or housing association property is occupied by someone who is not entitled to be there. It is estimated that tenancy related fraud nationally costs the tax payer £900 Million every year.

As a housing provider we have to make the best use of the homes we own and ensure that the people living in our properties are legally entitled to be there.

People who are already in need of social housing and on the waiting list will have to wait even longer if homes continue to be occupied by people who have no right to live there.

### What is tenancy fraud?

There are different types of tenancy fraud including:

- Unlawful subletting – where a tenant rents out their home without the knowledge or permission of the landlord.
- Wrongly claimed succession – where the resident dies and someone tries to take over or succeed the tenancy which they are not entitled to.
- False Right to Buy/Right to Acquire – where a tenant resident makes a Right to Buy or Right to Acquire application and gives false information in their application.
- Key selling – where a resident is paid to pass on their keys in return for a one-off payment.
- Unlawful assignment – where a resident stops using their tenancy as their main or principal home, allowing another person to live there without permission.
- Obtaining housing by deception – where a person gets a home by giving false information on their housing application.

### What Gosport Borough Council does to tackle tenancy fraud?

We carry out regular tenancy audits as part of our letting and housing management to make sure that the right people are living in our properties.

We work with other social landlords and statutory agencies to detect fraud where the law requires it or where information sharing protocols are in place.

### Reporting Tenancy Fraud

If you think someone in your area may be subletting their home or living elsewhere, please contact us on 023 9254 5355 or email us at [fraud@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:fraud@gosport.gov.uk).

Since the beginning of April 2017 up to the end of October 2017, we have completed some major planned works and milestones.

We have:

- Installed 60 new kitchens
- Installed 63 new bathrooms
- Rewired 19 properties
- Installed new central heating to 114 properties (consisting of 25 full installations, 67 boiler replacements and 22 radiator replacements)
- Installed 53 composite doors
- Carried out 47 disabled adaptations (consisting of 37 level access showers, 9 over bath showers and 1 major adaptation)



Completed roof at Archer House

## Replacement roofs

Flat roof replacement continues across the borough with the completion of Archer House and the start of the final roof of the year at 60-69 Chester Court. The final phase of roofing at Chester Court, which includes the last three roofs, will start in April 2018.



What a difference the cladding makes to the tile hanging

## External wall insulation

Work have now been carried out at Elmore Avenue and are now nearing completion at Archer House. No further works are planned for the year. The final part of the Archer House refurbishment, (now that the roof and cladding the rear have been completed) is the communal decoration which will take place in early 2018.

## External Improvements

We have started work on the external refurbishment of one of the blocks at The Anchorage. These five storey blocks have been the subject of many years of planning and discussion regarding the specific works required to the walls. We have witnessed a notable deterioration over recent years especially due to their height and exposed location in the borough. This was confirmed when we started receiving a high number of damp related calls especially in the storm-like conditions encountered in 2014.



Freshly re-pointed area of Ramillies House

Work started on Ramillies House a few weeks ago. The work includes fully repointing the walls, removing the fragile plastic cladding and replacing with new, ensuring that insulation is installed beforehand. Part of the work also includes wall tie replacement and crack repairs.

This work will be completed by Christmas with the other three blocks being carried out.

## Sheltered scheme upgrade

Gloucester House is complete! After some delays with structural issues, we have now overcome all the hurdles and have a scheme that we can be really proud of. The residents now benefit from a new and more open arrangement within the communal lounge that includes a galley style kitchen. There are two additional buggy store areas, one located in the former bathroom on the ground floor and an external pod that faces Oak Street. Most of the external doors have been changed to an aluminium alternative. This is to reduce longer term maintenance costs and is more robust and secure when compared to the original wooden doors.



Section of brickwork where joints have been cut and cleaned out.



Ground floor before



and after



First floor, before



and after

Internally around the communal areas, we have changed all the doors to an oak style, improving the overall appearance as well as providing greater fire resistance.

Finally, decoration and furnishings complement the refurbishment with wallpaper features being applied on both floors, art work, carpets and we even managed to find a location for a glazed screen to create a snug.

We wish to thank the team at Novus for all their help in completing the work to such a high standard as well as Kier, JPS and SAC for their support in making this so successful.



Communal lounge, before



and after

# STREETSCENE

## New Garden Waste Club

A new garden waste club will offer Gosport residents greater convenience and environmental benefits.

Currently residents have to travel to buy special green garden waste sacks when they want to dispose of their garden waste. The new scheme will see residents who sign up, given a wheelie bin specifically for garden waste.

The new bins will hold four times as much as the current sacks and will be collected from outside your home every fortnight.

The current collection methods require collection vehicles to drive along every road in the borough. The new scheme will be better for the environment as they will only travel to registered homes. There will also be no plastic waste from the sacks and recycling rates could increase as garden waste collections count towards them.

Residents using garden waste collections for the first time will save time by not needing to travel to the household waste and recycling centre. Also the new club can help save money for residents who currently buy the garden sacks, depending on how regularly they use the scheme. In turn it will save council taxpayers money as the scheme will be more efficient to run.

Gosport Borough Council's Community Board has approved plans for the new garden waste club, operated by Urbaser, to begin in February 2018.

A yearly subscription to the service will cost £60.00, but an early bird offer means that anyone subscribing before January will pay just £55.00 for their first year. Reduced rates are available for people joining partway through the year. A monthly direct debit subscription scheme is being investigated.

Collections will take place between February and October, inclusive, when garden waste collections are most used, and there will also be a special Christmas tree collection during January.

Collection days will stay the same as they currently are, with five different zones in the borough collected on different days.

Residents will still be able to take any garden waste to the household waste and recycling centre free of charge, and anyone with the current garden waste sacks will be able to keep using them until 23rd March 2018.

Councillor Graham Burgess, Chairman of Gosport Borough Councils Community Board said "The new garden waste club will give residents more convenience in getting rid of their garden waste, instead of having to go and buy specific sacks they will always have the wheelie bin ready to use."

Please contact Streetscene on either Freephone 08000 198598 or email [streetscene@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:streetscene@gosport.gov.uk)



# Waste and recycling collection dates 2017/2018

November 2017					December 2017					January 2018					February 2018				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3					1	1	2	3	4	5				1	2
6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30		25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31			26	27	28		
March 2018					April 2018					May 2018					June 2018				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
			1	2	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4					1
5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	30					28	29	30	31		25	26	27	28	29
July 2018					August 2018					September 2018					October 2018				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5
9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12
16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19
23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26
30	31				27	28	29	30	31						29	30	31		



- Waste and recycling to be OUT FOR COLLECTION BY 7.00 AM. Roads may not be collected in the same order every week so collection time cannot be guaranteed. Therefore your bin/sack needs to be out by 7.00 am when the collections start.
- Christmas trees will be collected between Monday 8th January and Friday 12th January 2018 inclusive.

## What can be recycled...



## What cannot be recycled...



**Please ensure recycling is clean, dry and loose.** No carrier bags in the recycling bin please. Glass bottles/jars, clothes, shoes and household textiles must not be included, these can be recycled at your local recycling bank.

For more information or advice, please contact Streetscene:

T: 08000 198598 E: [streetscene@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:streetscene@gosport.gov.uk)

[www.gosport.gov.uk/streetscene](http://www.gosport.gov.uk/streetscene)

## Communal garden at Behrendt House

As part of their corporate social responsibility, Nationwide Services based in Gosport have been working with the tenants at Behrendt House to create a communal garden for their use.

After a few weeks of work the community garden project is now complete.

They removed the existing patio, sanded and painted the existing bench, laid a new patio area, assembled and planted new raised beds and built a new brick BBQ.

New hand-made garden furniture has also been delivered. It looks fantastic and has been very well received by the tenants.

The official opening will be in the spring, when the weather is better, with a BBQ organised for the tenants of Behrendt House, builders and staff from Nationwide Services.



Plan of the new garden



Work in progress



Work in progress



Completed patio area – which looks fantastic!



Work in progress

## Are you ready for Universal Credit?



### What is Universal Credit?

From August 2018 a new government benefit called Universal Credit will be introduced in Gosport. Universal Credit is a new simpler, single monthly payment for people in or out of work, which will eventually join together some of the benefits and tax credits that you might be getting now. It will support working age people with their basic living expenses and housing costs and replaces the following benefits:

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit

### How to Claim

You will be expected to make your Universal Credit application online at [www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit).

You cannot backdate your Universal Credit claim so it is important that you make your claim as soon as possible.

Please give time to complete your application; it may take 40 minutes or more. Once you start an application you cannot save it part way through, so you need to ensure you have all the information required to make a claim before you start filling in the new application form.

To make a claim, you will need:

- Your national insurance number
- Details of the bank, building society or Post Office account that you want the Universal Credit paid into
- Your Tenancy Agreement (if you have one)
- Details of your savings or other capital
- Details on any other benefits you are getting

If you do not have access to a computer at home or do not have family or friends that can assist you, there are computers available at the Gosport Jobcentre Plus and in your local library. A self-serve computer is also available for your use in the Benefits Section at Gosport Borough Council Town Hall, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

If you need help to make your Universal Credit claim online, support is available by telephoning Gosport Borough Council on 023 9254 5635 or by visiting the Town Hall in person, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

### What happens to existing claims?

If you are claiming any of the benefits which are being replaced your claim will continue, unless you have a change in circumstances which triggers a claim for Universal Credit. Eventually you will be moved onto Universal Credit even if you have no change in circumstances.

Universal Credit does not include help to pay your Council Tax. You can still claim Local Council Tax Support from Gosport Borough Council by contacting the Benefits Department on 023 9254 5325 or email [benefits@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@gosport.gov.uk)

Universal Credit is paid in a different way to current benefits:

- It will be paid monthly into an account you choose.
- If you get help with your rent, this will be included in your monthly payment – you'll then pay the landlord yourself.

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit (Housing Costs element) and you are struggling to pay any shortfall in your rent, you can apply to Gosport Borough Council for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). For more details please contact the Benefits Department on 023 9254 5325 or email [benefits@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@gosport.gov.uk).

## If you need independent advice...

If you need independent advice on a range of issues, including rent arrears you can get it from Gosport's Citizen Advice (CA) Bureau.

CA Gosport is manned Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-5pm and 9am-7pm on Wednesday by staff and volunteers. The drop-in service is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am – 3pm.

For those in work or have care needs meaning they are unable to attend during the daytime, CA Gosport offer an evening service on Wednesday 5pm-7pm.

Outside of the drop-in service hours they provide appointments for specialist casework projects, manning the CA Advice-line and National CA web-chat service.

The Hampshire Advice-line is available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-5pm, Wednesday 9am-6.30pm and Saturday 10am-12pm.

For further information please visit [www.gosportcab.org.uk](http://www.gosportcab.org.uk)  
For Advice, please call 03444 111 306 \*



\*calls to this service, cost the same as calling 01 and 02 numbers.

## Are you having money worries?

The Council treats rent arrears very seriously. Your rent pays for the housing services that all tenants receive, if there is a shortfall, everyone stands to lose.

Every consideration is given to people who are having genuine difficulties, but collecting rent must be the priority for the Council to provide the services that you need.

## Christmas

Christmas is looming fast; it is easy to overspend on gifts instead of paying the rent. So before it is spent, pay the rent! For tips on how to save money on Christmas please see the 'Budgeting for Christmas' article.

## Rent Free Weeks

There is a chance to catch up during the two 'rent free weeks' beginning Monday 18th and 25th December. This is an ideal time to pay off/reduce your arrears.

## Help is at hand

If you are having problems paying your rent get in touch with your Neighbourhood Housing Officer on 023 9254 5665.

## There are many ways to pay

You do not have to visit the Town Hall to pay your rent. You can pay by the telephone using your credit/debit card on 023 9254 5665 or 023 9258 4242 if paying rent and council tax together. You can also pay online, direct debit, standing order or by Paypoint/Allpay card. Please contact your Neighbourhood Housing Officer to discuss your chosen method of payment.

Paying your rent on time and keeping a clear rent account entitles you to receive other services, such as renting a garage, the fencing scheme and home swap exchanges.

If the Council is forced to take legal action against you to recover your rent arrears, you may be liable to court costs and, if recovery proceedings result in County Court Judgements (CCJ), it will affect your ability to get credit.

Please remember, if you are having difficulties, it is vital that you contact your Neighbourhood Housing Officer without delay to see how they can help you.



## Whatever you are going through, if something is troubling you, get in touch

The Samaritans are there for you, round the clock 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you need to speak to them immediately, it's best to contact them on 116 123. This number is FREE to call. You don't have to be suicidal to call them.

You can contact them by:

Calling: 116 123  
Emailing: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)  
Visiting: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Just having someone to talk to that isn't friends or family can be a tremendous help!

## Budgeting for Christmas

Christmas is coming and we all know that it can be an expensive time where we all need to make our money go further.

Here are some tips that may help you save.

**Plan ahead:** When making a Christmas shopping list, also include items such as Christmas cards, wrapping paper, gift tags and sticky tape; perhaps buy in bulk and share with family and friends.

**Make the most of toy offers:** Buying everything listed on a child's Christmas list could bring you to the point of bankruptcy, make the most of pre-Christmas toy offers and try searching 'Christmas discount codes' online.

**Give the gift of time:** It is the thought that counts – give your nearest and dearest homemade vouchers instead of presents that they won't use. An IOU for homemade cupcakes, doing the ironing for the week, washing the car etc. will go down well, and who wouldn't rather have a voucher for an evening of babysitting instead of another pair of socks!

**Get Father Christmas to think practically:** Every child loves a bulging stocking, so top up the toys with practical presents like new socks, toothbrush and bubble bath. These are all items that you will need to buy anyway but your child will get the pleasure of unwrapping them.

**Start a family 'Secret Santa':** Try arranging a 'Secret Santa' where everyone buys one decent present within an agreed budget for another family member, it saves money and everyone gets a present.

**Only buy for the kids:** Arrange with your friends or siblings. Buy just for their children, and they buy for yours.

**Buy whole-family presents:** Go for whole-family gifts to make them smile – like a board game or a hamper. They cost less than individual gifts but will bring more enjoyment than a cheap plastic toy that breaks in minutes.

**Recycle your children's artwork:** Use your children's creative talents as wrapping paper and tags, or make handmade paperchains. It's good for the environment too.

**Host a bring-and-share Christmas lunch:** Don't let the cost of Christmas lunch put you off inviting the family round. Why not ask everyone to bring a dish? It'll help spread the load if guests bring roast potatoes, Christmas pudding or a couple of bottles of wine.

**What's on your wish list?:** If financial worries mean that you are struggling with your everyday costs, ask for practical gifts like supermarket vouchers to spend on food and household items so you can free up your money to pay off any bills that are worrying you.

## Warm Home Discount

You could get £140 off your electricity bill for Winter 2017 to 2018 under the 'Warm Home' Discount Scheme. The money isn't paid to you; it is a 'one off' discount on your electricity bill, between September and March.

You may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead if your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity. Contact your supplier to find out.

The discount won't affect your 'Cold Weather' Payment or 'Winter Fuel' Payment.

### Eligibility

There are two ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- You get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit – you qualify for the discount if on 9th July 2017 all of the following applied:
  - Your energy supplier was part of the scheme.
  - Your name (or your partner's name) was on the bill.
  - You were getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit.
- You're on a low income and meet your energy suppliers criteria for the scheme:
  - Your energy supplier is part of the scheme
  - You're on a low income
  - You get certain means-tested benefits

### Pre-pay or pay-as-you-go meters

You can still qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter.

Your electricity supplier can tell you how you'll get the discount if you are eligible.

## How to pay your Housing Charges

Rent is due in advance either weekly or monthly. Your rent, charges or arrears can be paid in the following ways:

- **Direct Debit** – paid monthly via your own bank or building society on 1st, 8th, 15th or 22nd of each month. This can now be set up over the telephone by contacting 023 9254 5665, when setting up please ensure that the bank account holder is present. Direct Debit mandates are available on request.
- **Over the telephone** – Call 023 9254 5665 to pay using your debit or credit card, between 9am and 5pm. If you want to make multiple payments for rent, council tax and any other payments please call 023 9258 4242.
- **Standing Order** – Weekly, fortnightly, four weekly or monthly through your bank. GBC Bank sort code is 57-81-43 and account number is 00000000 – Borough of Gosport. Please quote your rent reference number when setting up this payment.
- **Faster/Online Payment** – set this up online or with your bank using the account details, GBC Bank sort code is 57-81-43 and account number is 00000000 – Borough of Gosport. Please quote your rent reference number when setting up this payment.
- **In person** – pay at the Town Hall cash desk by cash, cheque, debit or credit card between 9am and 4.45pm.
- **Internet** – [www.gosport.gov.uk/online-payments](http://www.gosport.gov.uk/online-payments)
- **All Pay card** – Pay at the Town Hall or your local pay point/shop/post office. Please call 023 9254 5665 to request an All Pay card.
- **Outside office hours** – Via the post or through the secure letterbox at the front of the Town Hall (it is not advisable to send cash as the Council cannot accept any responsibility for any payments lost.) Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to 'Gosport Borough Council'. Your account number, name and address should be written on the back of the cheque/postal order and the envelope should be securely sealed.

Stay in touch! You can contact The Tenancy Management Team on 023 9254 5665 or by email on [housingofficers@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:housingofficers@gosport.gov.uk)

## Save on energy bills with Gosport Borough Councils' Energy Switching Service

Energy prices this winter are set to rise, with some suppliers raising prices to cope with winter demand which means that switching savings are currently at a record high. Ofgem reported that 70% of customers are still on a standard variable tariff; this means that you could be paying around £300 extra on your energy bills each year.

Switching your energy is simpler than you think, simply take a look at [www.gosport.ukpower.co.uk](http://www.gosport.ukpower.co.uk), have an energy bill to hand and see how much less you could be paying for your electricity and gas. If you can't go online, ring 0800 860 6838, to speak to one of the switching advisors for **FREE**.

So far Gosport residents have saved an average £260 per household. The service offers independent tariff advice and cuts out the need for you to ring energy suppliers or change direct debits.

If you need help with the switching service, please ring 0800 860 6838 where one of the advisors will be happy to help you.

## Cold Weather Payment

You may get a 'Cold Weather' Payment if you are getting the benefits listed below:

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit

You will get a payment if the average temperature in your area is recorded as, or forecast to be, zero degrees Celsius or below for seven consecutive days.

You will get a payment of £25 for each seven day period of very cold weather between 1st November and 31st March.



## Winter Fuel Payment

If you were born on or before 5th August 1953 you could get between £100 and £300 to help you pay your heating bills. This is known as a 'Winter Fuel Payment'.

You usually get a Winter Fuel Payment automatically if:

- you were born on or before 5th August 1953
- you were living in the UK for at least one day during the week of 18th to 24th September 2017

As well as the State Pension or another Social Security Benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax, Child Benefit or Universal Credit).

Most payments are made automatically between November and December. You should get your money by 15th January.

Any money you get won't affect your benefits.

## Pension Credit

Pension Credit age is the 'cut off' point at which someone is no longer classed as 'working age' for means-tested benefit purposes. To check when you will reach Pension Credit age use the online checker at [www.gov.uk/state-pension-age](http://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age).

## Make an advance claim

Anyone due to reach Pension Credit age within the next four months can make an advance claim for Pension Credit where the claim can be processed and payments can start as soon as possible after you have reached Pension Credit age.

## Currently getting Universal Credit

It is even more important for those who get Universal Credit and who are approaching Pension Credit age to make an advance claim for Pension Credit as you may miss out on money if you don't claim in advance.

**Free for Local Residents**

# LEAP

The Energy and Money Saving Service



**Gosport Borough Council** is offering local residents a completely **FREE OF CHARGE** service called **LEAP** (Local Energy Advice Programme). **LEAP** can help you to save money and keep your home warm and cosy.

**How it works:**  
**If you're eligible, you will get a FREE home visit from a friendly, qualified Home Energy Advisor. LEAP can:**

- Install **FREE**, simple energy saving measures which can save the average household £30 on their energy bills a year.
- Give you **day-to-day energy efficiency hints and tips** and ensure your heating system is set up to keep you warm and save money.
- Help check if you are on the **cheapest energy tariffs** - could save you over £280 a year.
- Arrange a **FREE telephone advice service** to help with benefits, debt and other money problems.
- Refer you for **further energy efficiency improvements**, such as loft insulation or a new boiler.



**GOSPORT**  
Borough Council

**Are you eligible?**  
 You may be eligible for the LEAP service if you:

- have a low income
- receive tax credits
- receive Housing Benefit
- receive an income or disability related benefit
- have a long term illness or disability



**LEAP**  
Local Energy Advice Programme

Call us now on **0800 060 7567\***  
 (Freephone) to book your free home visit, or apply online.  
[www.applyforleap.org.uk](http://www.applyforleap.org.uk)  
\*from 8.45am till 5.30pm, Monday to Friday

## Free help with energy bills

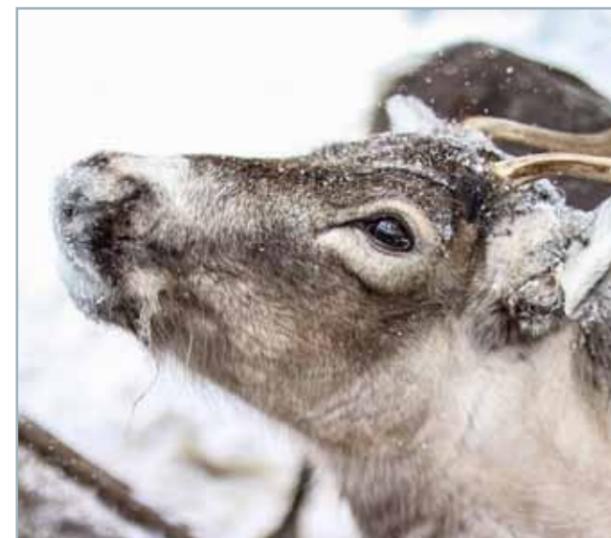
If you struggle to pay your energy bills, or live in a cold home, then you could qualify for **FREE** support.

LEAP (Local Energy Advice Programme) is a **FREE** home visit service available to all Gosport residents; it offers energy saving advice, help with finding a cheaper energy deal, and they could fit energy-saving kit such as LED lightbulbs, radiator panels and draught-proofing.

The service is **FREE** and they have already helped more than 60 residents.

You can qualify in lots of ways. To see if you are eligible, they will look at things like your income, your health, your family situation and whether you are on benefits.

To book a free home visit, call Freephone 0800 060 7567 or via [www.applyforleap.org.uk](http://www.applyforleap.org.uk)



## Living Nativity in Lawrence Square

On Saturday 16th December there will be a living Nativity in Lawrence Square, Gosport High Street - come along and meet the animals.

## Stay Well This Winter

Winter can be a bad time for our health but there are a number of things that you can do to keep you and your family well. This includes things such as:

- Visiting your pharmacy at the first sign of winter illness, such as a cough or cold
- Getting a flu vaccination
- Picking up prescription medication before the Christmas holiday period
- Keeping warm indoors and outdoors

Visit [www.nhs.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.uk/staywell) for more helpful tips and advice to help you prepare for Winter.

## Character Show

Come along on Saturday 23rd December and watch Reilly Enterprises Character Show in Lawrence Square, Gosport High Street.

## Employment, Training & Volunteering Programme

For people who live in Portsmouth, Gosport, Havant and Isle of Wight

- Are you deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or partially sighted?
- Do you want to start looking for a job?
- Do you want to try volunteering?
- Do you want to learn new skills to aid your job-searching?

We have a new programme that can help you.

### CONTACT US AT DEAFPLUS:

Email: [rhiannon.hattmore@deafplus.org](mailto:rhiannon.hattmore@deafplus.org)  
 Call 07484 929719 or 01252 316005  
 Visit [www.deafplus.org](http://www.deafplus.org)

**deaf+PLUS**  
breaking through barriers




## Employment, Training & Volunteering Programme

For people who live in Portsmouth, Gosport, Havant and Isle of Wight



Rhiannon Hattmore  
ETV SIOW Co-ordinator

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CONTACT US AT DEAFPLUS:  
 EMAIL: [rhiannon.hattmore@deafplus.org](mailto:rhiannon.hattmore@deafplus.org) (email or facetime)  
 Mobile: 07484 929719 (text, voice, glide, facetime or skype)  
 TEL: 01252 316005 (voice mail) WEBSITE: [www.deafplus.org](http://www.deafplus.org)



## Successful South Coast Training event

In 1998, a group of housing organisations created a group which could provide low-cost and good quality training for their residents. This group is called 'South Coast Training'.

Two training events are organised each year that offers a variety of housing based and personal development workshops.

Saturday 28th October saw the 37th event take place and included workshops on:

**An end to welfare reform?** – This workshop looked at how people are coping with the role out of Universal Credit and other welfare changes.

**Mind your head (mental health)** – This workshop looked at the myths and facts around mental health and well-being; identified major mental health problems and at ways to increase resilience and bounce back from feeling unwell.

**Effectively challenging performance** – This workshop explored how the changing operating environment impacts on resident involvement today and provided an opportunity to get to grips with performance information.

**Confident me, confident you** – This workshop looked at how to build confidence in group members, explored communication styles in effective groups and practical business of planning and organising.

The South Coast Training group are very proud of these training events which are always well received by participants of all ages.

Some comments regarding the event include:

*'Very informative, learnt a lot, wouldn't have missed it'*

*'Well organised and very useful day'*

*'My course (Confident Me, Confident You) was well organised and very informative, giving me some good ideas for future events.'*

If you would like to find out more about the South Coast Training events please contact Sam on either Freephone 0800 328 6958 or 023 9254 5686.

## Help finding a job

Gosport Employment and Skills Fair will be on Thursday 25th January 2018 at Gosport Leisure Centre. It's for anyone looking for a job or apprenticeship, keen to get a new skill or qualification, or needing careers information.

The Gosport Employment and Skills Fair (GE&SF) attracts on average 50 exhibitors and 700 visitors. It regularly has at least 30 employers promoting hundreds of job and apprenticeship vacancies, plus career opportunities.

As well as employment support, training organisations and education establishments will be on hand.

The employment fair has been run annually (since 2012) by Gosport Borough Council to promote locally available jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities to residents – both employed and unemployed.



It aims to help:

- Residents find jobs and apprenticeships, get new skills or start a business in Gosport;
- Local employers to recruit new staff and promote career opportunities.

It brings together employers, employment support organisations, training providers and education establishments all under one roof.

Although primarily aimed at job seeking adults and young people, it is also aimed at pupils and students to help them get a better understanding of the future career opportunities and skills needed.

Employer exhibitors promote job and apprenticeship vacancies, plus career opportunities, within the following sectors:

- Business and professional services
- Construction
- Health and care
- Engineering and manufacturing, including aerospace, marine and defence
- Public sector
- Research and development
- Tourism, leisure and retail

Feedback from previous events include:

*"talking face to face with exhibitors and getting feedback"*

*"the variety and number of employers actually recruiting"*

*"finding out about jobs, support and advice available locally"*

*"having jobs and help to get into work all under one roof"*

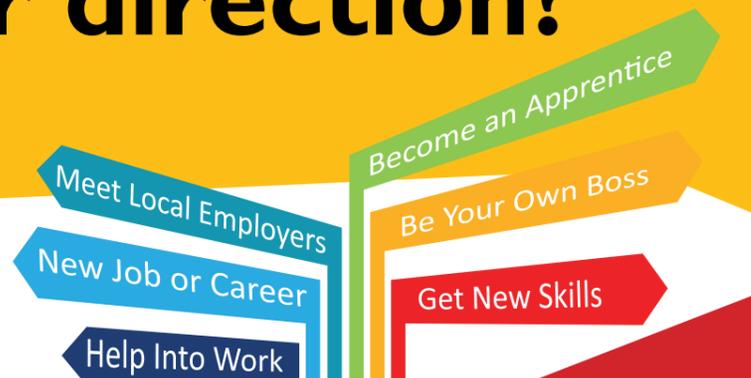
January 2017 event was the biggest yet in terms of exhibitors and employers, outcomes include:

- 57 exhibitors, 36 of which were employers plus 13 support organisations which also had jobs and apprenticeship vacancies
- 610 job and apprenticeship vacancies promoted on the day
- 701 visitors
- 467 CVs/job applications were submitted on the day
- 167 people registered as new clients with support organisations to help them into employment or get new skills

Why not come along to Gosport Leisure Centre on Thursday 25th January between 1-7pm, entry is **FREE!**



# Looking for direction?



## 2018

FREE to attend  
FREE car parking  
Easily accessible  
by bus 11 & E2



## Gosport Employment & Skills Fair

Gosport Leisure Centre - Forest Way PO13 0ZX

Thursday 25th January - 1:00pm to 7:00pm

Event organised by Gosport Borough Council with support from the Gosport Employment and Skills Partnership

## Friends of Fortune House Annual Christmas Celebration

We invite you to celebrate Christmas with us at the Gosport Masonic hall

The "TIMELESS" Singers will be leading the Sing-along & musical entertainment.

Tickets £10 (includes meal and entertainment)

Call Gary Elshaw 02392 545453 to book tickets

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 12.30**

**Gosport Masonic Hall**

All monies raised will go to the Hampshire Air Ambulance Service



## GOSPORT DISCOVERY CENTRE



## HATE CRIME COMES IN MANY FORMS.

**Whether you or someone you know have been targeted verbally or physically: It's not OK, and it's against the law. You don't have to put up with it, we can help you report it.**

Please speak to a member of staff.

We are here to give advice, help you report it and support you along the way. You can remain anonymous if you wish and you don't have to contact the police if you don't want to. #NoPlaceForHate

## DO SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF AND FEEL BETTER FOR IT



Are you aged 40-65, looking to get more active and not sure where to begin?

As part of a new initiative, Gosport Leisure Centre will help you to take the first steps to a more active lifestyle.

The new 12 week programme involves meeting with a Community Wellness practitioner who will create a tailored plan to reintroduce you to a physical activity.

Activities may include use of the leisure centre (free of charge), community activities (cycling, walking) or activities that can be done at home.

For more information please contact the Leisure Centre on 023 9253 4950 or email [enquiries@gosportleisurecentre.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@gosportleisurecentre.co.uk)



## Employability Courses

Gosport Discovery Centre  
January – March 2018

### Computing, Internet and Email for Beginners

**Tuesday 16th January – 13th February - 10.00-12.30**

This course will introduce beginners to the basic use of a computer, using the Internet and setting up and using an email account.

### How to Make Self Employment Work for You

**Tuesday 27th February - 10.00-16.00**

A short course to learn the methods and procedures necessary to make a success of Self-Employment.

### Computing, Internet and Email for Beginners

**Friday 23rd February – 23rd March - 10.00-12.30**

This course will introduce beginners to the basic use of a computer, using the Internet and setting up and using an email account.

We also offer a range of short courses for those seeking employment/volunteering. Please ask staff for further details (course information not ready at time of print)

These courses are aimed at those in receipt of JSA OR ESA (proof is required)

To book a course, call the Discovery Centre on 02392 523463 or pop in to reserve your place

For further information, please contact Jo Bourne [joanne.bourne@hants.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.bourne@hants.gov.uk)  
[www.hants.gov.uk/library](http://www.hants.gov.uk/library)



## Regular free Children's events at Gosport Discovery Centre

### Child Health Advice Clinic and Infant Feeding Support

**Every Wednesday 12.30 to 2.30pm**

Drop in and get your child weighed and advice on Infant Feeding Support with Southern Health NHS

### Construction Club Fortnightly on Saturdays

If you enjoy making things with Lego® and Duplo® bricks come and enjoy our construction club.

### Story Time for Under Fives Every Saturday 11.15 to 11.45am and Every Wednesday 11.15 to 11.45am

A chance to hear wonderful stories and meet new friends.

### Rhymetime Every Tuesday 10.15 to 10.45am and Every Thursday 2.15 to 2.45pm

Hand-clapping, toe-tapping fun for babies and toddlers aged 0-2 years.

A great way for you and your child to discover rhymes and make new friends. It's fun, free and friendly!

### NCT Tiny Explorers Every Thursday 11am to 12 noon

Come and meet other parents and babies and spend some time focusing on you and your tiny explorer. This informal and friendly group is led by NCT Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent in partnership with the Discovery Centre and is open to all.

### Discovery Club Third Tuesday of the Month 4.00 to 5.00pm

New books, quizzes and activities for children ages 8-11 years. Refreshments provided.



### Phonics Club Wednesday 4.15 to 4.45pm

A fun, interactive session for children and their parent/carer. A chance to gain confidence with and practice phonics. For children aged 4-7 years old.

### Code Club Mondays 4 to 5pm

Would you like to learn how to make your own computer games? Then come to Code Club! You will learn how to make cool games, animations and websites too. For children aged 9-11 years old.

Gosport Discovery Centre  
High Street, Gosport, PO12 1BT  
[www.hants.gov.uk/gdc](http://www.hants.gov.uk/gdc)



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[www.hants.gov.uk/library](http://www.hants.gov.uk/library)  
Hampshire County Council Gosport Discovery Centre High Street, Gosport, PO12 1BT [www.hants.gov.uk/gdc](http://www.hants.gov.uk/gdc) [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)



## Regular Clubs and Groups for Adults

**Needlework Group**  
Every Tuesday 1pm to 3pm  
Café Community Tables

**Scrabble Club**  
Every Friday 2pm to 4pm  
Café Community Tables

**Knit and Knatter**  
Second Thursday of each month 1pm to 3pm  
Café Community Tables

**Crochet Club**  
Fourth Thursday of each month 2pm to 4pm  
Community Tables

**Art Club**  
Fridays, fortnightly 10am to 1pm  
Mezzanine Floor

**Craft Club**  
Fridays, fortnightly 10am to 1pm  
Mezzanine Floor

**Travel Club**  
Wednesdays, fortnightly 4:15pm to 5:15pm  
Community Tables

All our groups are self led drop-ins. They are fun, FREE and open to all.

For more information and dates please ask a member of staff or visit our website [www.hants.gov.uk/library](http://www.hants.gov.uk/library)