



Campaign Update

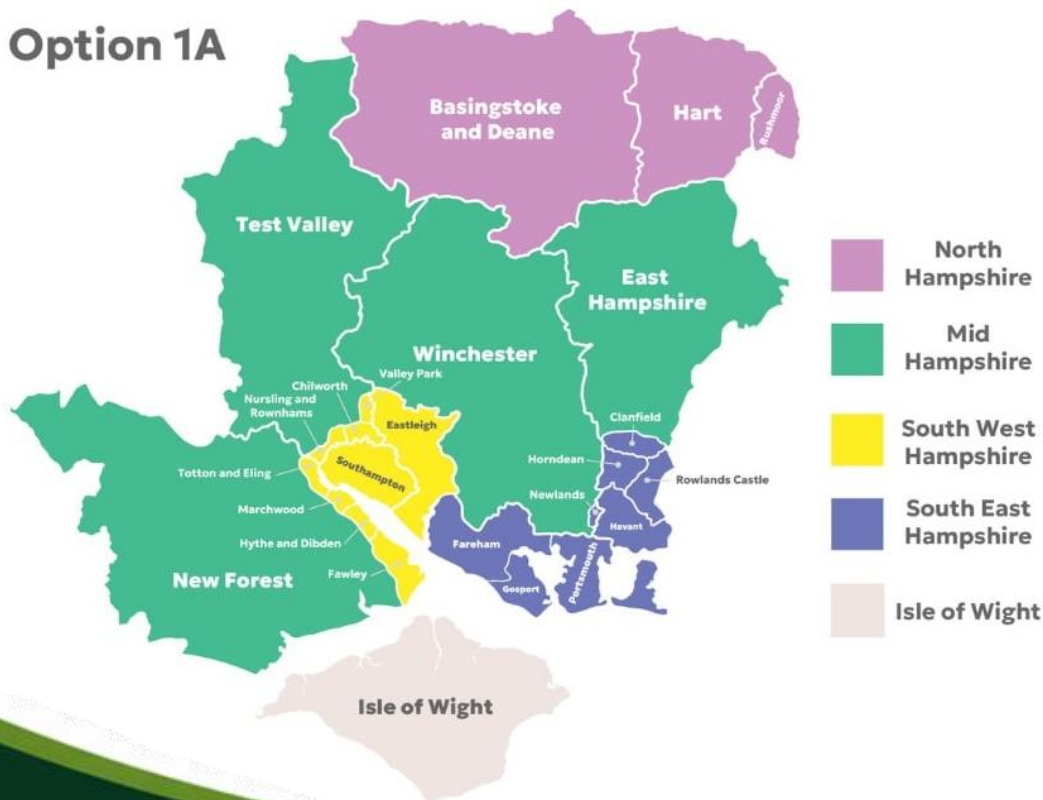
Parish Council Briefing

— May 2026 —



A quick update: where we are and what happens next

Option 1A



Government selected Option 1A



This would split the New Forest district



Strong public opposition continues

97% of the public and **98%** of businesses survey backed Option 1 which kept the New Forest whole.



Campaign now focused on:

- ✓ legal challenge
- ✓ political pressure
- ✓ keeping communities informed



Why New Forest Together was created and is now a Community Interest Company



Community-led • Not for profit • Focused on
protecting the New Forest

Why we set up New Forest Together



To give residents a clear
independent voice



To keep pressure on
decision-makers



To coordinate
community response



To ensure every lawful
avenue is explored



To represent the Forest as
one connected district

New Forest Together is now a CIC



Officially registered
Community Interest Company



A formal organisation for
community benefit



Provides transparency
and accountability



Enables fundraising
and sponsorship



Supports the campaign
professionally and sustainably



Support continues to grow



24,500+ signatures and rising

Petition focused on three key objectives:

1. Encourage local authorities to explore the viability of legal challenge
2. Support all lawful steps to slow or challenge implementation
3. Demonstrate clearly to Government the strength of feeling locally – and make clear that Option 1A does not have community consent



Thousands of leaflets delivered

across the district



Growing backing from parish and town councils

Including Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst, Bransgore, Netley Marsh, Fawley, Marchwood, Hythe & Dibden and Copythorne



Significant local and national media coverage

BBC • ITV • Telegraph • Guardian • local press



Community events continue

First roadshow confirmed:

Monday 15 June 2026 – Lyndhurst Community Centre



Taking the case to Westminster



Petition intended for Parliament

We will secure Westminster Hall debating time



Continuing engagement with MPs



Keeping pressure on Ministers

We have asked our MP to raise with the Minister the potential of a delegation of us to meet with them



Making clear the impact on local communities

Ensuring Government understands the real impact on residents, services and the future of our communities



Legal position – differing views, challenge continues

New Forest District Council

Counsel's view:



No realistic prospect of a judicial review succeeding



New Forest Together

Independent Counsel's view:



Credible grounds remain to challenge aspects of Option 1A

Focus on:



Financial sustainability – does Option 1A genuinely meet Government's own tests?



Public service delivery – is there robust evidence for a strong long-term service model?



Decision-making process – did ministers have a sufficiently complete evidence base?

Hampshire County Council

Current position:



Continuing to pursue legal action

Focus understood to include:



Financial sustainability



Public service delivery



Government process and evidence



Bottom line



Legal challenge remains active



More than one legal view exists



Government still has power to revisit or amend proposals



Possible outcomes over the coming months

1 Timetable slips



Government timetable is exceptionally tight

Key milestones:



May 2027:
shadow authority elections



April 2028:
implementation

Delays now increase
pressure on delivery

2 Legal challenge proceeds



Hampshire County
Council continues
judicial review

Could lead to:

- Government decision scrutinised in the High Court
- pressure on ministers to justify evidence and process
- wider national pressure as other LGR challenges emerge

3 Pressure builds politically



If delays continue and
implementation drifts
closer to the next
General Election

Then questions grow over:

- whether Government wants a contentious restructure running into an election year
- whether ministers pause or rethink
- whether political priorities change

Time itself can become
a major pressure point

4 Government reopens discussions



Secretary of State can
revisit proposals

Could include:

- revisions to Option 1A
- negotiated changes
- extra protections for affected communities

Requires Hampshire to be clear
and united on alternatives



Bottom line



Option 1A is not
yet implemented



Government still
has choices



Legal, political and timing
pressures can create
space for change



Thank you – and please stay engaged



Continue raising awareness locally



Share updates with residents
via your parish channels – including
noticeboards



Encourage petition support
help residents stay informed
and involved



Stay engaged as next steps develop
legal and community
action continues

Get in touch



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