

CLlr Andrew Gibson was unable to attend the NWPC meeting on 9 April 2018 and sent the following update.

County Council Report Nether Wallop - 9th April 2018

Road Project

The implementation plans for the closure of Salisbury Lane, the traffic calming in Station Road and the re-direction of roads at Grateley are taking form and the Implementation Manager Andrew Kettlewell will address the Grateley, Over Wallop and Nether Wallop communities on 16th April.

While there are differing views over the plans in Nether and Over Wallop I would like to thank John Taylor-Firth and Edward Souter for their support and all their hard work on the project despite the many obstacles.

Lengthman

The Lengthman project has been expanded and will be funded for another 2 years at least. I was also pleased to support Richard Waterman's, Clerk of Over Wallop, mammoth efforts to create a new cluster of 12 villages.

Highways

We have had a very bad winter with snow, ice and salt creating a toxic combination. We are redirecting Maintenance teams to repair potholes and we have additional 'Pothole busting' gangs but funding has been an issue and the following Press Release puts the situation in perspective :

Councillor Rob Humby, Executive Member for Environment and Transport at Hampshire County Council, said: "We've got a massive challenge on our hands. The damage inflicted by snow and ice countywide on Hampshire's roads, is severe. With a multi million pound repair bill on our hands, we've mobilised extra Pothole Busters gangs to go out immediately to make interim repairs and, with our budgets already under pressure, have had to re-programme planned maintenance work. Unless we receive significant extra national funding, it is likely to take around 12 months to get the road network back to the state it was before the winter.

"Reports of the RAC's 'fears' that the cold snap will result in more potholes are absolutely correct. Highways maintenance has been underfunded by the Government for years, leaving the local road network in a state of decline, even before the snow.

"In Hampshire, we have invested an extra £10million each year in our planned maintenance Operation Resilience programme which is proving effective in reducing the rate of decline in our roads, but without additional Government funding, it is simply not possible to deliver overall improvements in the roads from year to year.

"The stark fact is that local councils are woefully under resourced for this vital part of infrastructure. The Government provides 52 times more funding for motorways and major trunk roads maintained by Highways England than they do for local roads. This is clearly a massive gap which must be addressed urgently, and we fully support the Local Government's Association calls on the Government to reinvest some of the tax raised from motorists back into the roads used by millions of people every day."

Hampshire residents are urged to report potholes and road defects direct to the County Council at: www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems.

Reporting defects via a third party means it takes longer for reports to reach Hampshire Highways teams.

The Pothole Busting teams will be using the vehicle below, which is state of the art.



Libraries

We have **not** closed any Libraries with Romsey Library being refurbished and Andover Library being refurbished in the Spring. Andover Library will not close and the refurbishment will be done in stages. The new mobile book shelves will allow the Library to increase community activities. The Libraries have become Community hubs and we have introduced baby weighing, organise the very popular Chatterbooks, Rhymetime, Toddlers Storytime and many other activities for young children and toddlers.

The Library is a safe environment for members of the public and offers internet and high tech facilities.

Devolved Budget and other grants

Working with residents and Parish Councils I have managed to find grants for :

- Helping to fund Village Hall new builds and extension projects and grants for village shops
- Funding grants for Community Groups eg Pre-schools, Good Neighbours, Parish Councils, ditch work & others.
- Small grant awards for worthy local community projects.

Best wishes

Cllr Andrew Gibson

Hampshire County Council