

Hampshire County Councillor Update 31

Happy New Year! I hope 2024 is a happy, healthy and peaceful one for you and your loved ones.

It's been an eventful Christmas and New Year with the seemingly endless rain and some interesting windy weather. Here as usual is my update covering December 2023.

Highways Information

Weather conditions

Last year ended and this year has started on a stormy and wet note.

This week, Hampshire Highways teams responded to the impacts of Storm Henk, attending 162 emergency jobs clearing roads of collapsed trees and fallen debris. Several minor local roads



remain closed awaiting clear up works, not least the Morestead Road, south east of Winchester, where over 40 fallen trees need to be cleared before the road can re-open.

A reminder of emergency contacts should you need them:

For immediate risk to life, call 999.

Stay updated on flood alerts from @EnvAgency.

There is a list of flood alerts also here: <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/alerts-and...>

Travel with care, avoid coastal and wooded areas.

Reporting Road Problems in Hampshire

To report highway issues, use these links:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/flooding>

Pavement problems:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/paving>

Problems with rights of way:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

For issues on National Highways Roads (Motorways, A31, A34, A303, A36, A3 etc)

Report a problem: <https://report.nationalhighways.co.uk>

Water Updates:

Report problems and view updates here:

Southern Water: <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/.../works-or-issues-in-my...>

Wessex Water: <https://www.wessexwater.co.uk>

Electricity Updates:

Report problems and view updates here:

SSEN: <https://powertrack.ssen.co.uk/powertrack>

Weather updates:

Keep up to date with weather warnings via the Met office here:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/.../warnings.../uk-warnings...>

New cycling and walking scheme for Eastleigh

Last month I had the privilege of officially opening a new 1.2-mile cycle route in Eastleigh Town Centre, connecting seamlessly to Southampton City Centre!

This project is a game-changer, linking existing cycle and pedestrian routes, including Southampton City Council's Cycle Network "SCN" route 7. Our aim is to make cycling and walking more accessible, encouraging everyone to leave their cars at home for shorter local journeys. This not only reduces pollution but promotes a healthier and eco-friendly way to travel.

A massive shoutout to the community for your patience during the short-term disruptions. Your understanding is truly appreciated!

Key Features of the New Cycle Lane:



Improved crossing facilities, signage, and access.



Direct links to Eastleigh and Southampton Airport Parkway railway stations.



Utilizing roads parallel to A335, providing a congestion-free route.

The Finished Scheme Includes:



Replacement of existing cycle lanes.



New cycle lane sections between Leigh Road and Arnold Road.



Road layout changes on Desborough Road prioritizing cyclists.



Traffic speed reduction measures on Chestnut Avenue.

"But why invest in this during financial pressures?" you quite reasonably ask. Well, the majority of the funding, came from a successful bid to the Department for Transport's Transforming Cities Fund which has provided £57million for schemes like this around Southampton. This fund is specifically designated for improving public transport, cycling, and walking links into cities, so can't be used on any other projects.

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When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do please forward that message to me and I will chase for you

What to do with festive waste 🌟

Let's make this festive season merry AND eco-friendly! 🌍

Did you know that household waste levels skyrocket by about 10% in January? That's a whole lot of extra waste! In the UK alone, we use a staggering 300,000 tonnes of cardboard during the festive season. 🌲 If laid side by side, it could cover the distance between London and Lapland a hundred times over! 📦

A little mindfulness goes a long way. 🌱 "Buying only what you need reduces waste and helps the environment. Let's resist the urge to overindulge and be mindful of our purchases.

📦 Every small action counts in reducing our carbon footprint!

♻️ Recycling tips:

Book a slot at Hampshire's Household Waste Recycling Centres.
Real trees can be composted or shredded into ProGrow.
Check the wrapping paper scrunch test for recyclability.
Glass bottles and jars go to bottle banks or kerbside collections.
Recycle broken Christmas lights and electricals at designated drop-off points.

📱 Use the OurHants app to book recycling center visits.

Charges for DIY waste lifted at Hampshire HWRC's

Starting from the New Year, DIY enthusiasts will be delighted to hear that changes at Hampshire's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) are in the works!

The removal of charges at HWRCs will be welcome news for those undertaking DIY projects, reducing the cost burden in these challenging times.

Starting January 1, 2024, Hampshire residents can dispose of up to two 50-litre rubble bags or one bulky item (e.g., sink or toilet pedestal) for FREE, up to four times in four weeks!

Anything beyond this limit will be chargeable at current rates to cover specialist disposal costs.

We should emphasise the importance of preventing misuse by commercial operators, ensuring this taxpayer-funded service benefits the community.



What you need to know:

- DIY waste accepted at all HWRCs except New Alresford.
- Two bags or one bulky item accepted for free, up to four visits in four weeks.
- Charges apply for quantities beyond the specified limit.
- DIY waste can include soil, rubble, asbestos, and gypsum board.
- An appointment is required to visit HWRCs, and starting January 1, 2024, customers must confirm if depositing household DIY during booking.

While this is fantastic for householders, we estimate an additional cost of up to £2 million annually for Hampshire council tax payers. Your recycling and disposal of DIY waste requires specialist processing, and the fees helped cover these expenses.

The Government has said that the removal of fees will help reduce fly tipping. As regular followers will know, the people who we catch fly-tipping in Test Valley are virtually never those who have been doing their own DIY projects.

Fly-tipping in our experience is carried out by those who do not have the correct license to transfer waste - people who offer much cheaper prices as a result and dump the waste for which they are paid for disposal. Which is why you should always check whoever is taking away your rubbish has the correct licence.**

Please note that cement-bonded asbestos is accepted only at specific sites (Andover, Basingstoke, Efford, Netley, and Portsmouth) due to its hazardous nature.

**You can check if someone has a waste transfer licence here:

<https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/.../household-waste-duty-care>

Millbrook HWRC - reintroduction of booking system

If you live in the south of our area you may well visit Millbrook Household Waste Recycling Centre rather than visiting any of the local Hampshire sites at Casbrook, Marchwood or Eastleigh.

So, important to note, Southampton City Council has announced that it is introducing a booking system from January 2nd.

The reason being give is that the removal of charges for disposing of DIY waste means that visits to the HWRC need to be better monitored.

The council said: "To help us manage that process and for the site at City Depot to have a smooth and effortless running experience for residents, it is necessary for us to re-introduce the booking system.

"We also have a responsibility to control costs surrounding these changes, as well as manage traffic and eliminate traffic queues.

"The changes also fall into line with all other HWRCs in Hampshire, where booking systems have been successful.

"We have found no link between booking systems being in place at HWRCs and increases in fly-tipping/illegal dumping of waste."

The booking system will be similar to that used in Hampshire and can be accessed here:
<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/bins-recycling/recycling/centre>

Another fly-tipping prosecution for Test Valley Borough Council

Castle Lane between North Baddesley and Valley Park is a regular location for fly tips and I'm very pleased to tell you that TVBC have obtained another fly-tipping related prosecution, linked to one of those frequent fly tips.



A man who failed to help with a fly-tipping investigation near North Baddesley has been ordered to pay more than £4,000.

Carter Smith, from Waterlooville, was invited to attend an interview under caution after a large fly-tip on land at Castle Lane was found on 11 November 2022. This included insulation boards, wooden pallets, plastic sheeting, carpet, metal strips, and other household items.

A covert camera at the location caught his vehicle being used and the registration plate was clearly visible.

Smith failed to attend the interview on 19 December 2022, but a person claiming to be a friend of his did tell officers that he wasn't in the country at that time.

The friend was asked to request Smith to contact the council, but no contact was received, and a notice requiring assistance with the investigation was issued on 6 March 2023. There was no response to the notice.

At Southampton Magistrates Court, Smith was given a fine of £2,640 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £1,056 and costs of £525.

This is a strong result and I hope people take notice of it. Failing to help us when we are investigating these matters will lead to a harsh sentence and one that is so easily avoidable. Ignoring these notices does not mean the incident will just go away, and I hope these substantial fines act as a deterrent for people.

Help for businesses to reduce their carbon emissions from TVBC

Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) is partnering with Hampshire-based business IncuHive, to support rural businesses in reducing their carbon emissions.

With individual business at different stages of their 'net zero journey', the Test Valley Rural Net Zero Business Service will provide tailored advice to help each play their part in tackling the climate emergency.

Thanks to funding allocated to TVBC earlier this year, from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), small grants will also be available to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint. An additional support programme will focus on land management and regenerative farming.

For more information, and to sign up to the programme, please visit:

www.testvalley.gov.uk/RuralNetZero.

Hampshire Trading Standards prosecutions for sales of vapes to minors

Hampshire County Council Trading Standards has taken action against illegal vape sales to underage buyers!

Two shops in Aldershot and Havant caught in the act during test purchases on Dec 18 and 20, 2023.

Vaping among young people is a growing concern. HCC are therefore emphasizing the need to crack down on illegal sales to under 18s. Most retailers are following the law, but investigations are underway where sales occurred.

Trading Standards has already prevented over £200,000 of illegal vape sales since September 2023. Regular visits to businesses ensure compliance, and any violations may lead to criminal prosecution.

Recent surveys reveal a significant increase in vape experimentation among young people in Hampshire schools and colleges.

If you have info on underage vape sales, report it to Hampshire Trading Standards.

Contact details and more info: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/tradingstandards>

County Councillor Grants

The grant for this year is now fully used up. Grants were made to:

Sherfield English District Community Association – toward the community magazine

St Deny's Church Chilworth – toward creation of a community space

The Romsey Show – show costs

St Margaret's Church, Wellow – for roof repairs

St Leonard's Church, Sherfield English – toward their car park lease renewal

Romsey Town Council – Romsey Christmas lights

Wellow Lunch Club – toward the Christmas Cream Tea for members

Wellow Mens Shed – toward new equipment for the men's shed

West Tytherley Village Shop – toward repairs to the freezer at the village shop

Youth in Romsey – for youth outreach work

Wellow Youth Club – toward replacement equipment

Getting About

As usual, much of December was taken up with the round of festive events in Romsey, thanks to everyone who made the Christmas and New Year season so enjoyable.

I attended parish council meetings in Chilworth, Wellow, Awbridge and West Tytherley.

Contact

Do please get in touch if I can ever be of any help. For those of you using social media, I post very regular updates on many local issues including roadworks and planning applications on my Facebook page here: facebook.com/nickadamsking

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CLLR NICK ADAMS-KING
Caring for Romsey Rural

