

Hampshire County Councillor Update 24

Hello, I hope you are all well.

It doesn't seem possible that this is my 24th Councillor Update, now half way through my term as your County Councillor. So, here is the report for May 2023:

Highways Information

Road repairs, elections and a general pothole update.

With the elections coming I am seeing lots of posts about road repairs, quite a few saying "Good to see repairs being undertaken in X or Y" and also quite a few saying "They're only fixing the roads because an election is coming."

As you know I am responsible for potholes. All of them. They are all my fault. And whilst it's nice to see credit being given for more repairs being undertaken it is unfair to say this is linked to the elections.

You may have noticed the weather has improved. Less rain. Higher road temperature. This means Hampshire Highways can do more in terms of patching and fixing.



From December to February the number of reports of potholes exceeded the number of repairs each week. Since then the trend has reversed and in the last three weeks considerably thanks to extra resources - both money (from HCC's budget and the £6 million given to us for pothole repairs in the budget) and staff (as we have been able to stand down those on gritter duty for example).

There remains much to do of course, and I suspect the comments to this post will fill with "but you've not fixed the dreadful pothole at X or Y". As you might imagine there needs to be a hierarchy for deciding priority.

We are prioritising repairs where there is a genuine safety concern above everything else (the arbiters of whether a safety concern is 'genuine' are our highway engineers who assess them).

We then look to repair those with the greatest impact on traffic and road safety, so on 'A' roads and main routes, then minor routes and finally residential streets and side roads. It is of course generally much easier to avoid a road problem on a quiet side street or lane than on a busier route.



Finally, do please continue to report any road issues you come across. If they are already reported, not fixed yet, but getting worse then do update your report to say so or report them again.

You can find all the reporting tiles to do so here:

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

Thanks so much for bearing with us. It's been the worst possible winter for road damage and there remains a huge amount still to do.

Utility works on the highway

The current works being undertaken around Romsey by Network Rail (Greatbridge Road), Southern Water (Cupernham Lane) and the developers of the Abbotswood House site on Braishfield Road have resulted in quite a number of questions about why and how [Hampshire County Council](#) allow utility companies, other public bodies and development companies to work on the roads.

So, I hope it's helpful to share this Q&A which helps explain the process for granting permission and what control Highways have over these type of roadworks:

Q: What is the HCC Highway's role?

A: The Highways team is responsible for the coordination of all works and events on the public highway in order to minimise traffic disruption. The Streetworks team also monitors utility Co's activities on the public highway and checks active work sites and reinstatements for compliance with National specifications.

Q: Can utility companies legally work on the public highway?

A: Yes, they have legal duties and rights to install and maintain apparatus on the public highway. However, they have to comply with National Specifications and obtain a permit from the County Council for planned works.

Legislation gives them legal rights to install cabinets and masts (up to 15m high) on the public highway without planning permission.

Q: Can HCC stop a utility company from working on the public highway?

A: No, except under very specific circumstances, for example: where a utility company wants to install new apparatus on a highly important and strategic road that has been specifically designated, by law, as a protected street.

Q: What conditions can be placed on works on the public highway?

A: The County Council can place conditions on any permit application. Conditions are used to try to minimise traffic disruption. The conditions available as part of the permit scheme are not 'free form' and are restricted to controls over works timing, works area, traffic management type and stakeholder engagement. Conditions have to be reasonable and be able to be met by the works promoter.

Q: Who decides what type of traffic management (TM) to use?

A: The works promoter is entirely responsible for selecting the most appropriate type of TM. They are the experts in the works they are undertaking and what the risks are. In selecting

the TM type they must consider the risks to the workforce, passing traffic (including pedestrians) and relevant legislation and Codes of Practice.

Q: Who decides what diversion routes to use when road closures are needed?

A: The works promoter is entirely responsible for selecting an appropriate diversion route. Best practice is to ensure that the diversion route uses similar roads to those closed. Unfortunately, the existing networks don't always permit this. Diversion routes are not enforceable.

Q: Who is responsible for the information provided on the permit?

A: The works promoter is ALWAYS responsible for the information they supply. The County Council must assume that it is correct when assessing the permit and determining what conditions to apply.

Q: Does granting a permit mean that the County Council approves of the works/installation?

A: No, the permit relates ONLY to the works and its impact on traffic. Approval for installing apparatus is given either by a utility company's legal rights or via the local Planning Authority.

Q: I've seen a utility leave a blacktop reinstatement in a flagstone surface. Is this allowed?

A: Yes, utility companies are allowed to use a temporary reinstatement in order to re-open a road quickly or to give them time to source specialist materials. Normally temporary reinstatements are allowed for up to 6 months, the utility company has to reinstate the original surface within that time.

Q: How long is a utility company responsible for its reinstatement?

A: Legislation states that a utility company is liable for any 'reasonable' repairs for two years.

Q: How much notice does the County get for works?

A: Legislation requires all works promoters to submit permit applications between 3 working days and 3 months ahead of works starting.
For 'Immediate works' (relating to safety or loss of service) there is no advance warning. Works are started and the County Council is alerted within 2 working hours.

Q: Can penalties be applied for non-compliance?

A: Yes. There are a range of penalties open to the County Council where works promoters do not comply with permit conditions.

Q: How well do utility companies comply with specifications and permit conditions?

A: Very well. In 2022 Over 95% of site signage and 96% of reinstatements complied with the National specifications. 97% of utility sites comply with permit conditions. 99% of utility sites were completed on time, or early.

Q: How can I see what works are planned in the County?

A: The County Council handles all permits via a National IT system. This system automatically publishes all permits on the <https://one.network> website

Q: How many utility works are undertaken on the County's road network?

A: In the 2021/2022 financial year we processed 52,000 permit applications/changes from utility companies which resulted in 36,000 works being undertaken.

Redbridge Causeway Update

Work is proceeding well with the refurbishment work on the Redbridge Causeway. For those of you affected by the work, I thought I might be helpful to give you a further update on the progress of the work and, more importantly, the lane and road closures scheduled over the next couple of months.

Replacement parapet panels' installation is expected to be completed by 28 April. A small number of left-hand lane closures of the westbound A35 (i.e. in the Totton direction) at off-peak times (9am – 3pm) will be needed for the delivery of materials. The south footway of the Causeway will need to remain closed until the parapet panel installation has been completed.

On the eastbound carriageway (in the Southampton direction), concrete repairs to the underside of Redbridge Road bridge, over Test Lane have been completed and all associated traffic management was removed a few weeks ago.

Concrete repair works to the adjacent Redbridge East and Redbridge West bridges, which also carry the eastbound carriageway, are progressing well and we have not needed to implement any traffic management over these bridges.

Next stage

The next phase of works directly affecting traffic on the A35 eastbound carriageway remains unchanged. However, due to the delivery delays mentioned above regarding the parapet panels, the start date has been rescheduled. These works and the traffic management are now targeted to start from 1 May until July – see below.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT FOR NEXT PHASE - A35 EASTBOUND CLOSURES

From 1 May to July :

The north footway of the A35 Redbridge Causeway will be closed 24/7 and a diversion for pedestrians and cyclists will be in place via the south footway.

Lane 1 - the left-hand lane - of the eastbound A35 carriageway will be closed from the Totton on-slip to the start of the off-slip to Redbridge Roundabout.

Mid-June to mid-July:

The right-hand lane of the eastbound A35 carriageway will be closed from the approach to the Totton on-slip until the start of the off-slip to Redbridge Roundabout. (Only once the closure of the left hand lane has ended).

The Totton on-slip and the off-slip to Redbridge Roundabout will remain open. The Redbridge Causeway south footway will remain open throughout the entire works.

Weekends Closures in June and July

A full closure of the A35 eastbound will be required on 'up to' three weekends (from 8pm Friday until 6am Monday) for waterproofing and resurfacing of the carriageway on all three bridges. The work requires the weather to be dry and, therefore, dates may be subject to change at short notice. Precise dates, diversion routes and access arrangements will be confirmed as soon as they are finalised.

During the weekend closures the Totton on-slip and the off-slip to Redbridge Roundabout will be closed.

The situation will be kept under review as arrangements are finalised, and I will keep of course keep you up to date.

Winchester Road/Winchester Hill resurfacing

An update on the resurfacing of Winchester Road and Winchester Hill, Romsey between the Plaza roundabout and Bow Lane will be starting on Tuesday May 9th.

There is now more detail about the phasing of the work and what is going to happen.

The works are expected to last for up to 24 nights, during which time the road will be closed in phases to through traffic between the hours of 20.00hrs to 06.00hrs each night. The road will be open outside of these hours.

No works are expected to take place on the weekends, bank holidays or during the May half term week - 29th May to 2nd June 2023.

The phasing and extents of the works will be as follows: -

Phase 1 – Bow Lane to Cupernham Lane – (Resurfacing) 9th to 12th May 2023.

Phase 2 – Plaza Roundabout to Botley Road - (Resurfacing) 15th to 22nd May 2023.
(Manhole and gully replacement) 12th to 16th June 2023.

Phase 3 – Botley Road to Cupernham Lane - (Resurfacing) 23rd to 26th May 2023. (Manhole and gully replacement) 5th June to 9th June 2023.

You can find more information visit One.Network – <https://one.network/?tm=GB132871393>

Whilst there is an allowance within the time periods shown above for delays, there may be times when we have to postpone works at very short notice; based on the latest weather forecasts, this can occur just prior to works commencing. We will always look to provide up to date information wherever we can, but sometimes these last-minute decisions can be difficult to relay to the travelling public in a timely manner.

When we can, any significant changes to the scheduled dates will be made clear on the yellow sign boards located at the works limits.

Access to properties will be maintained overnight wherever possible. Residents are receiving a letter telling them how to make arrangements for that if necessary.

The works causing most noise will typically be undertaken at the beginning of each evening, hopefully causing as little disturbance as possible.

Advance warning - Closures of the M27 at Junction 8

A little bit out of our local area, but a heads up that overnight closures of the M27 are planning in a few weeks time.

Maintenance to the bridge at Junction 8, the Windhover Interchange, is being undertaken.

National Highways need to carry out repairs to the joints and put in some waterproofing to protect the bridge from severe weather. These joints allow the bridge to expand and contract in different temperatures and can become damaged if exposed to too much rain.

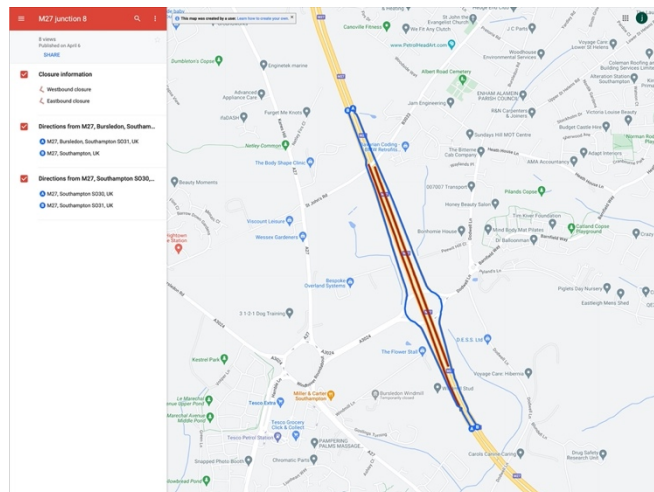
Closure information

The M27 will be closed eastbound between the junction 8 exit and entry slip roads:

Friday 12 May – full closure from 9pm to 6am on Monday 15 May
Monday 15 to Thursday 18 May – weeknight closures between 9pm and 6am

The M27 will be closed westbound between the junction 8 exit and entry slip roads:

Friday 19 May – full closure from 9pm to 6am on Monday 22 May
Monday 22 to Friday 26 May – weeknight closures between 9pm and 6am



Diversion information

Drivers continuing their journey will be diverted off and on again via the exit and entry slip roads. There will be lane closures on the approach to the junction, so please take extra care. Disruption is expected however so you may wish to avoid the area if you possibly can.

Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

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>

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

Oysters reintroduced to the River Hamble

Oysters were reintroduced to the River Hamble last month. Great for biodiversity and the river economy:

This marks the return of oysters to this stretch of water, flowing into the Solent, which was historically a major centre for the oyster fisheries industry. Proud to be part of such an important project.



Development and Infrastructure

On my Facebook page, I promised to provide as best I can an explanation about how development locally has happened and why, so often, there appears to be a disconnect between the construction of new housing and the infrastructure and services needed as a result of the growth in population that development brings.

Apologies for the long post, but equally sorry to those who know about the subject for it being a very high-level view. This was originally about three times the length and it's about creating a balance between boredom and detail.

Why does development happen?

Development can happen through a Local Plan or through speculative applications when the Borough does not have enough housing identified to meet the government target.

In either case, the local infrastructure needs to be considered to ensure that it can cope with the increased population. Developers are required to contribute towards the cost of infrastructure improvements. Either through CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) which is paid to TVBC and the parish council for general use or through Section 106 agreements, which are legally binding agreements between the developer and the local authority. The contributions set out in these agreements are for specific purposes, but there can be challenges if they are not spent within a set period or if they need to be diverted to different projects.

The improvements agreed upon at the point of planning permission may also not be needed or wanted by the time the development is built.

One of the challenges with developer contributions to infrastructure is that they are limited to the impact of each individual development, so there is little or no chance to take into account the cumulative impact of many smaller developments.

Part of the challenge as well is the need to justify the need and amount of contribution from developers required to mitigate population growth.

- Community and Sports/Leisure facilities.

This falls under TVBC and they have actually been very successful at gathering funding for new facilities. The new sports centre at Ganger Farm is a good example, as are the football pitches and community centre and sports pavilion at Abbotswood.

- Highways

Hampshire Highways have a much harder job in obtaining funding. The hurdle for justifying additional highway improvements is much higher and because the works needed are generally some of the most expensive individual elements it's much more of a fight to obtain developer contribution.

That said, money is taken and pooled for schemes, so the pedestrian crossing on Duttons Road, the traffic lights at the junction of Winchester Road and Braishfield Road and the upcoming improvements to the junction of Halterworth Lane and Winchester Road are just some of the examples.

When the Whitenap development is built there will be new roundabouts constructed on Luzborough Lane to allow access to the new housing for example. That improves infrastructure to access the development, thereby increasing road capacity from a technical point of view, but doesn't take into account the increased wear and tear on the roads, the need for improvements elsewhere and the greater need for, and impact upon existing, public transport.

One final point is that too often in my opinion there is an expectation that people will walk and cycle to and from developments, which we should of course encourage. However, this is limited to accessibility for the development itself, no thought, or funding, is given to improving or creating safe routes to nearby town centres or other facilities.

- Health

In my experience, health is the most difficult of the areas with which to engage to justify additional funds from development. For a long time, there has been no over-arching body which can advocate for funding for health, that should change with the merger of Clinical Commissioning Groups, but even so, there are so many things upon which they focus my experience has been that this doesn't seem a priority for them.

The default has been to offer accommodation for outreach medical services in community centres on or near new development (Abbotswood for example). That though has tended to happen without any reference to the medics who would be expected to provide it. The challenge is more often staffing rather than accommodation.

Better engagement from health services with the process, articulating the impact of increased population and what funding is needed to provide services to meet it is what's desperately needed.

- Education

County Education are again quite good at obtaining funding for new facilities from large developments, the challenge once again comes from how to accommodate population growth from many small sites.

Over the last few years there have been contributions to our local schools from the new developments as they have been built around Romsey. This has helped to pay for additional accommodation and facilities. The new community created at Whitenap over the next 10 years or so will also have a new primary school built as part of the development.

TVBC joins No Mow May

Test Valley Borough Council is inviting residents to help create a pollinator-friendly borough for the month of May and beyond, as part of No Mow May. This national campaign support pollinators by leaving stretches of land to grow wild.

As part of our commitment to create a sustainable, environmentally-friendly borough, we have mapped out a number of green spaces and banks of urban meadows that will be allowed to grow wild as 'pollinator rest stops' throughout May and beyond. This year



throughout the borough we will be setting aside the mower on over 30 hectares of open space.

Signs (see image below) will be popping up across the borough to show where these green spaces are located. Key areas for residents to look out for are roundabouts, parks and nature reserves.

No Mow May is a simple but effective way to help pollinators thrive. By allowing wildflowers and other native plants to grow, we can create essential habitats for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, which are vital to our ecosystem. In addition to supporting pollinators, No Mow May also helps to reduce carbon emissions, save water, and create beautiful, natural landscapes.

Closure of Wellow footpath 22 - Foxes Lane to Scallows Lane

Hampshire County Council are closing the footpath which links Scallows Lane with Foxes Lane, known as Wellow footpath 22. The closure runs from today until 24th September. Although is unlikely to be that long in practice.

The good news is that the closure is to enable the repair and replacement of the boardwalk along part of the route, making it a much more pleasant walk once completed.

The path will be opened as soon as the work is done, hence the likelihood it should be open once again long before September.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE PART OF WELLOW FOOTPATH 22

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Hampshire County Council has made an Order under Section 14(1)a of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, to allow for works in connection with boardwalk repairs/replacement works as follows:

ROAD TO BE CLOSED: PART OF WELLOW FOOTPATH 22

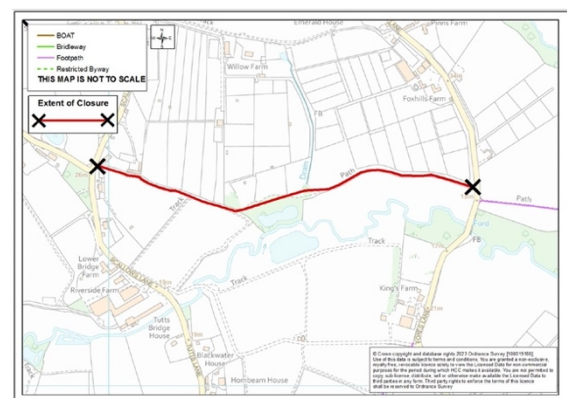
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE: NO ALTERNATIVE ROUTE AVAILABLE

PERIOD OF CLOSURE: From 14.04.2023 until 24.09.2023 or until completion of the works, whichever is sooner.

Reasonable facilities will be provided to allow access to adjacent premises while the work is being carried out.

For information visit www.hants.gov.uk/publicnotices, contact the Countryside Access Team on 0300 555 1391 or email countryside@hants.gov.uk

JONATHAN WOODS, Countryside Strategic Manager, Castle Avenue, Winchester, SO23 8UL



Romsey Festival

The [Romsey Festival](http://www.romseyfestival.org) is an incredible undertaking. Held every three years it has a packed programme of diverse and brilliant events.

It's a massive undertaking for the brilliant volunteers who bring it all together. Now only a couple of months away you can see the full programme on their website, www.romseyfestival.org

Do please take a look, there's something for everyone. They absolutely deserve your support.

The poster is a vertical rectangle with a dark red background. At the top left is a white logo consisting of a stylized grid of lines. To its right, the text 'ROMSEY FESTIVAL 2023' is written in white, with '2023' in a larger font. Further right, the dates '1st to 16th July' and the location 'at venues in and around Romsey' are listed in white. Below this, the phrase 'Art, music, drama and more!' is written in white. A central banner features a collage of four photographs: a church interior, a woman playing a harp, a group of people in a hall, and a group of people in a field. The banner is divided by a diagonal line with the text 'By the community...' on the top left and '...for the community' on the bottom right. Below the banner, a list of activities is provided in white text: 'Music' ranging from choral concerts to solo performers, 'Exhibitions' including calligraphy, quilts, photography and painting, 'Theatre' - comedy and drama, 'Gardens' buildings and the environment, 'History, local culture and religious celebrations', and 'Talks, walks, demonstrations and interactive events'. The phrase 'Pure unadulterated fun!' is written in white. At the bottom, a line of text directs to the website for full details, followed by the website URL 'www.romseyfestival.org' in a large white font. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner.

Another successful fly-tipping prosecution for TVBC

I'm delighted to tell you about another successful prosecution in a fly-tipping case for TVBC.

A man from Maybush, Southampton has been ordered to pay nearly £2,000 after failing to assist with an investigation into a large fly-tip found in Lords Wood.

The fly-tip, reported in June 2022, contained a variety of waste including plastic bags, a mattress, household furniture, wood, and carpet. Upon investigation, officers found evidence linking the waste to Mark Dane, who was subsequently invited for an interview under caution but failed to attend. Despite a notice requiring assistance with the investigation being served to Dane, he still did not respond.

Dane was sentenced for failing to assist with the investigation, and on 31 March 2023, he was ordered to pay a fine of £1,100, a victim surcharge of £440, and costs of £451 at Southampton Magistrates Court.

This result highlights the serious consequences of not cooperating with fly-tipping investigations. I would emphasize that people must take notice of the punishment and cooperate with authorities to avoid such consequences.

The council will continue to take action against those who refuse to assist with investigations.



Rural Prosperity Fund grants

TVBC has secured £514,097 of capital funding from the Government's Rural Prosperity Fund. The money will be used to:

- > To fund small-scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas, look to help support innovation and develop new business, and promote the visitor economy.
- > To fund local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities, improvements to local rural green spaces as well as supporting volunteering and social action projects.

This will be in the form of grants and work is underway to finalise the application process and launch the Programme which will run until March 2025.

County Councillor Grants

County Councillor grants open up again for application at the beginning of June. Do please let me know if you are aware of a deserving cause.


TVBC Councillor grants should also open up again in mid May for application, although this could be dependent upon the outcome of the elections on Thursday.

Getting About

It's Parish Assembly season. It was good to present to the Wellow Parish Assembly and also to East Tytherley's. I've been along to Parish Council meetings in Wellow, Chilworth, Sherfield English, Nursling and Rownhams and Michelmersh & Timsbury

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

