

Hampshire County Councillor Update 20

Happy New Year!

I hope you and your loved ones enjoyed the festive season.

Things are really busy post Christmas and New Year with potholes, as you might imagine. Our teams are doing all they can to carry out temporary fixes in order to reduce disruption and damage. We'll return to undertake more permanent repairs as soon as the weather improves.

Here's January's County Councillor update.

Highways Information

Potholes

It's the time of year when we begin to see many more potholes forming on Hampshire's Roads.

Potholes form for many reasons, hydraulic action, structural weakness, subsoil movement for example. At this time of year though, and particularly after the range of weather we've had in the last fortnight, they are more likely to form.

Water penetrates cracks in the surface of the road during rain, when it freezes it expands, causing the structure to break down, and as vehicles pass over it that weakness gets worse until such time as the surface breaks away creating the pothole.

Hampshire Highways can't fix them unless we know about them, so PLEASE, if you see a pothole in your road or when you are out and about, take a few moments to report it to the [Hampshire County Council](https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../roadma.../roadproblems/potholes) online system. The link to do so is here:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../roadma.../roadproblems/potholes>

Reporting it here is the best way to ensure it is fixed as quickly as possible.

We prioritise the busiest routes first when fixing issues, so if it's a minor road it may take a longer to get to it, but we will fix it.

A full list of where to report various issues to HCC is below as always.

Drain cover thefts

With metal prices high I'm afraid we are once again facing a high number drain cover thefts - leaving deep openings in the road surface which could cause a potential hazard to drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, and also result in significant expense to council taxpayers.

In order to bring those responsible to justice, we need you to be our eyes and ears on the ground. I would ask anyone who sees any suspicious activity involving highway apparatus or has any information about a drain cover theft to please report this to the Police as soon as possible.

I would also be grateful to anyone who spots that a drain cover is missing to let us know quickly so that the Highways team can take appropriate action to keep our roads safe.

To report a missing drain cover please call us on 0300 555 1388 (8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday). In emergency situations outside of usual office hours, call the Police on 101, but if you feel road users could be in imminent danger, dial 999.



Suspicious activity or information about stolen drain covers can also be reported to Hampshire Police via their online reporting system:

<https://www.hampshire.police.uk/.../how-to-report-a-crime/>

While those responsible for the thefts might think this is a victimless crime, they are profoundly mistaken. They are risking residents' safety and stealing from the public purse. In 2021, for example, the cost to replace 68 stolen drain covers was in excess of £100,000. - This is OUR money, yours and mine as taxpayers.

As soon as we become aware that a cover has been taken, our Highways team deploy cones or barriers to reduce the risk of harm to road users and they'll assess the type of replacement drain covers needed so new ones can be ordered and fitted as soon as possible.

Our teams are also exploring the availability of replacement items made from innovative composite alternatives that have no scrap value. However, these are unlikely to be suitable for all sites and they are generally only intended as a temporary fix.

Please therefore take extra care on the roads while we do all we can to make the affected areas safe as quickly as possible.

Localised flooding

You'll have noticed that the flooding has not been as bad by the railway bridge on Old Salisbury Lane this week. That in very large part is due to the action of a local resident who has dug a channel from the road into the adjoining land. Huge thanks to him for such public-spirited work.

Highways have also cleared the gully to the side as well, but as you might have noticed the problem is that it is being overwhelmed by the volume of water coming down Old Salisbury Lane and blocked by the amount of debris that water is carrying.



There was no flooding here until the railway bridge was rebuilt by Network Rail about 8-9 years ago. So that is another challenge in that the road levels have changed in relation to the land alongside.

Hampshire Highways have concluded that two things are needed. An improved drainage system by the bridge but also an investigation as to why so much more water and debris has flown down Old Salisbury Lane in the last couple of years.

The pig fields have now been used as set aside land for nitrate neutrality, (so will effectively be re-wilded over time) so there is no agricultural activity taking place on them, which would in normal circumstances be the cause of increased run off.

The feeling is therefore that a two-pronged approach is needed to deal with the issue, and investigations into how to reduce the amount of water and how to get that which reaches the bridge to drain away more quickly is needed.

Botley Road Footpath/Cycle Way

The footpath/cycleway along Botley Road, close to the pedestrian lights by the Rownhams Lane junction, was severely flooded last weekend and in the early part of the week.

I'm pleased HCC acted on my request to clear the issue quickly, although I'm sorry it was only sorted on Wednesday morning, not on the first day of school for the children who use that route to get to Mountbatten.

The footpath is being swept of the debris left behind and the flooding is being investigated. Apparently, there was a ditch alongside the hedge there at one point, although it was filled in by the landowner some years ago.

Given the hazardous nature of the flooding issue, which causes the schoolchildren to have to walk onto the curb to get around it, HCC have now marked this as a priority and will act promptly if there is any further flooding there.

Investigations are ongoing into a long-term solution as well.

Hampshire Highways figures for November

Here's the Hampshire Highways update for November:

Highways Maintenance Newsletter

December 2022



As we moved into December, the unusually mild weather took a sharp downturn switching Hampshire Highways into high alert winter response mode. Our first salting runs took place intermittently over the first weekend of the month, stepping up as temperatures plummeted and we entered a period of prolonged freezing weather and anticipated the arrival of snow.

Residents were kept informed of our readiness for the winter response and activity; and were

reminded that they can access the salt provided for them to use in their neighbourhoods which is kept in the community salt bins.

Between the 1 and 16 December, 26 salting runs were completed, accounting for 5,250 man hours and 5,665 tonnes of salt being deposited on our Priority One routes. When forecasts signalled the very low, icy weather was set to remain for more than just a few days, we took the decision to extend the coverage to include

routes to community facilities including schools, which are not already covered by the Priority One routes.

More information about Hampshire Highways' winter response can be found on the County Council's website: hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/severeweather

Hampshire Highways would like to wish you a very happy New Year.

Countywide Statistics for November 2022

812

Emergencies attended



4

Operation Resilience schemes completed

12,593

Gullies and other drainage cleared

8,965

Square metres of surface dressing and micro asphalt

202

Arboriculture jobs completed

4,026

Square metres of footway repaired/resurfaced

9,310

Carriageway defects repaired (including potholes)

594

Other Jobs completed (outside of all works shown)



Test Valley Statistics

for November 2022



Please note that the figures quoted accurately reflect the highway maintenance activity carried out in each district area during the previous month. The scale of activity is generally based on a combination of cyclical work (routine), local demand/need (reactive), and the utilisation of asset management principles (planned), rather than a simple distribution across the 11 district areas. This means that the level of activity will vary from district to district each month so the monthly figures should not be compared on a like-for-like basis. Over the course of a typical financial year, maintenance activity will be relatively proportionate across the Hampshire local authority area, recognising that the size of each district area varies.

87



Emergencies attended



2,044



Gullies and other drainage cleared

10



Arboriculture jobs completed

59



Square metres of footway repaired/resurfaced

2,249



Carriageway defects repaired (including potholes)

55



Other Jobs completed (outside of all works shown)



Hampshire Highways ready for a cold snap

We're heading into the coldest part of the year, so Hampshire's Highway teams will be ready, day and night, to keep main roads clear of ice and keep the County moving.

We are fully prepared for the cold weather. Our salt barns are well stocked, with around 20,000 tonnes of salt available, and our gritter fleet is ready to go. Earlier this year, all of our HGV gritter drivers received specialist driver training to equip them with the necessary advanced driving skills to stay safe in icy conditions.

However, we all need to make sure that we take extra care and drive according to the weather conditions at all times - even on the roads that have been salted. I'd ask drivers to please be patient around the salting lorries which need to keep to a maximum speed of 30 mph when spreading salt.

Don't forget all our gritters are named, keep an eye out over the next few days. Below Spread Sheeran is being filled with salt at one of our barns.

There are thousands of blue or yellow salt bins across Hampshire filled for community use. Salt from these bins is for use on public roads and pavements and can be particularly useful to 'join up' salting from the main road, carried out by our salting vehicles, to smaller access roads and pavements.

We have provided salt bins in communities so that residents can help to reduce the risk of ice on their neighbourhood roads and pavements. Spreading just one tablespoon of salt (about 20 grammes) is sufficient to treat up to one square metre of road or pavement surface. I really appreciate the help residents provide during wintry conditions, and I would ask people to let us know if a salt bin needs refilling.

You can report if a salt bin needs refilling via the County Council's website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../roadproblems/saltbinrefill>

Hampshire Highways' dedicated fleet of winter vehicles are all fitted with the latest technology to ensure salting is deposited on the highway accurately and efficiently, including full satellite navigation guidance, automatic salt delivery and dedicated snow ploughs.

Hampshire's main roads are always treated first. The 44 'Priority one' routes carry the majority of Hampshire's traffic - covering A roads, some B roads, roads to hospitals and other key emergency hubs, large schools and colleges and major bus routes. Each salt run takes approximately three to four hours to complete.

During periods of prolonged severe weather, Priority two' routes, which include remaining B roads and single access roads to villages, may also be treated.

Aside from remembering to be mindful of road conditions when travelling, Hampshire residents are also asked to spare a thought for vulnerable neighbours.

It is particularly important that those at higher risk of suffering from the ill effects of cold weather are aware of the steps they can take to look after themselves. Those particularly at

risk include, babies and very young children (under 5 years), older people and those with pre-existing medical conditions such as heart conditions, circulatory disease, asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), depression, anxiety, diabetes or arthritis. For more information visit: How to stay well in winter - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
Further information on salting routes and community salt bin locations is available on the County Council's web pages:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../roadmaintenance/severeweather>

For advice on clearing snow and ice from pavements yourself visit:
<https://www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway>

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

Stanbridge Ranvilles Quarry extension

I attended, and spoke at, Hampshire County Council's Regulatory Committee (their planning committee) where the application for an extension to the quarry at Stanbridge Ranvilles was under consideration.


I am grateful to those residents who attended as well and spoke so eloquently and passionately about how the application would affect them, in all cases very directly.

For me, the issue is and always has been the cumulative impact of this kind of development on the community Shootash and on Old Salisbury Lane. The National Planning Policy Framework says that mineral and waste development should not "have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, taking into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality." That has been the experience of the residents in these communities for at least the past 12 years.







The committee however concluded that the over-riding need for sand and gravel extraction was more important and consequently voted 8:4 in favour of permission.

A positive outcome was agreement both to put in place more direct conditions encouraging lorries to use the A27 and not enter the surrounding minor roads and for additional monitoring of biodiversity, landscape reinstatement and noise conditions to be put in place.

TVBC Cost of Living Grant Doubled.

I'm pleased to confirm that we've doubled the Test Valley Cost of Living Grant fund from £50k  £100k.

Since we set up the scheme in October 2022, the fund has already benefited 29 organisations paying for:

-  School breakfast clubs.
-  Warm hubs.
-  Debt and money management support.
-  Fresh food provision.
-  Baby essentials.
-  A dedicated CAB caseworker in the Food Bank.

I'm keen to support more organisations get a share of the money though. So, if you know a not-for-profit group who would be interested in the Cost of Living Grant, please encourage them to get in touch.

More information here 
www.testvalley.gov.uk/costoflivinggrantscheme

Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan

Please remember to object to the proposals for quarrying at The Triangle on Pouncefoot Hill and at Dunwood Fruit Farm by January 31st.

The Stop the Romsey and Wellow Quarry group have produced a fantastic website and leaflet which includes help on how to object. The link to the website is here:

www.stoptheromseyquarry.com

The leaflet is here:



The area known as 'The Triangle, Romsey' has been nominated and included in the Hampshire County Council Minerals and Waste Plan as a possible gravel quarry site.

If this is approved it means we will all be faced with the prospect of a large quarry on our doorsteps, resulting in the following:

**250 QUARRY TRUCKS
6 DAYS A WEEK**

**18+ YEARS OF QUARRY
WORKS, DUST & NOISE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL &
HABITAT DESTRUCTION**

- Threat to health from silica dust, inc. respiratory problems, cardiovascular disease & cancer.
- Disruption to Road Network; increased congestion & risk of accidents with HGVs.
- Environmental damage & noise pollution.
- Changes to water flows; threatens Priority Habitats, protected species and local river network.



WE ALL NEED TO OBJECT BY **31/01/23**

We need as many people to object to the quarry as possible as numbers matter.

Anyone is eligible to object. Even those outside the local area.

Your objection does not need to be lengthy; it just needs to express your objection.

Please visit www.stoptheromseyquarry.com or take a photo of the QR code opposite on your mobile.

The website contains details of how to object and a downloadable example.



If you have any problems, please email: info@stoptheromseyquarry.com

Donating your Winter Fuel Payment if you don't need it

If you qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment, but don't necessarily need it, you can redistribute the funds locally to support those most in need. We'll be matching donations, initially up to £5000.

We've joined forces with [Test Valley Citizens Advice Bureau](#) and local charity, [Unity](#), to offer those who genuinely don't need their full Winter Fuel Payment an opportunity to donate the money to other pensioners living in Test Valley.

Anyone wishing to donate some of their Winter Fuel Payment can contact Unity on 03304 004 116, or visit <http://ow.ly/STTH50LXUy2>.

If you're in need of additional financial support, please contact Citizens Advice as soon as possible on 0808 178 6882 or go to their website www.testvalleycab.org.uk.

Information on Winter Fuel Payments: <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>

This post is for those who do not need additional support and wish to pass it along to someone who does - we're not asking anyone to donate money that they need. Please do not cause yourself financial difficulty trying to help others.

Changes to disposal of upholstered seating at Hampshire Waste and Recycling Centres

This year sees some changes to the way Hampshire's Waste and Recycling Centres operate as we look to increase recycling rates and stop harmful pollutants like microplastics entering the environment.

From tomorrow there is a national requirement that upholstered seating is treated separately from other waste and incinerated safely to stop pollutants from entering the environment. The only difference you should see is a separate container for upholstery at your local waste and recycling centre.

As items of upholstered seating furniture such as dining chairs, armchairs and sofas are likely to contain pollutants which stay intact and do not break down, we are required by law to ensure these items are diverted from landfill, separated from other waste and disposed of carefully at one of our energy recovery facilities.

This means that they will be incinerated to generate electricity.

We also ask that you avoid breaking up upholstered domestic seating, as this increases the potential for material to escape into the environment, - please ensure any loose material, such as coverings, is bagged for disposal at an HWRC.

The range of upholstered seating items which now need to be segregated for specialist disposal includes sofas; sofa beds; armchairs; kitchen and dining room chairs; stools and

footstools that are upholstered; home office chairs; futons; bean bags; floor and sofa cushions.

Of course, we would encourage you to first consider offering suitable items of upholstered seating furniture for reuse by donating to charity, privately selling on or reusing wherever possible.

There are three HWRC's where there isn't room for new containers, these are: Hayling Island, Hartley Wintney and New Alresford HWRCs.

County Councillor Grants

I've used almost all of my grant pot for this year already. Grants this month went to West Tytherley Community Shop toward a new freezer, Awbridge and Michelmersh & Timsbury Parish Councils toward a new Speed Indicator Device, Romsey Extra Parish Council toward a dropped kerb in Whitenap Lane, and Wellow School toward their forest school initiative.


Getting About

December was a quieter month, understandably, for getting about. A visit to Hill Head to speak to their Residents' Association was about it.

Additionally, I've been along to Parish Council meetings in Wellow, East Dean, Chilworth, Sherfield English, Awbridge 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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Caring for Romsey Rural

