

## **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL report to Boarhunt Parish Council – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024**



### **Help with the Cost of Living**

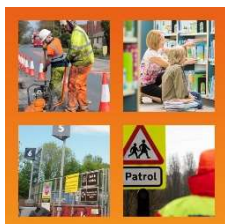
The ongoing struggle with the cost of living poses a significant challenge for many Hampshire residents who are having to make difficult choices regarding their household finances. Help and support is available from a number of services. This includes warm spaces in libraries to hot school meals and expert advice on reducing heating bills. We encourage everyone in Hampshire to take full advantage of these resources. See <https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/costofliving>

### **Check your Flood risk ahead of Winter Rainfall**

Around 400,000 households in Hampshire are at risk of flooding and with the potential for increased rainfall because of climate change, particularly during autumn and winter, Hampshire County Council has created a new online tool to help people check their flood risk to help protect homes, land, and businesses. See <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/flood-water-management/managing-risk/hcc-community-toolkit.pdf>

### **Future Services**

Following extensive public consultation the County Council has opted not to progress with all the savings recommendations which would see changes and reductions in some local services from 2025/26 onwards, and to scale back savings plans in other areas. Options around 13 service areas were put forward to the Cabinet to help towards closing the County Council's revised two-year budget gap of £175 million, which is now predicted for the 2025/26 financial year. In common with many councils nationally, it is now increasingly difficult for the local authority to keep providing all the services it has done previously as costs continue to rise alongside growing demand in key areas like social care for vulnerable children, older people and adults with complex needs and disabilities.



We have decided to retain all household waste recycling centres – a service residents told us they value considerably – plus all school crossing patrols. We have also identified a way to bring together our passenger transport service - retaining vital support to many older residents with disabilities - with the provision of school transport for eligible children, so that existing vehicles are used more efficiently across the day to serve children and adults at different times. In addition, the grant we give to homelessness support, which is not a legal responsibility of the County Council, will be honoured and we will protect funding to March 2026.

The County Council will continue to press our case to Government for crucial additional funding and greater freedom to make our own decisions so local government can find alternative ways to keep serving our local communities in a sustainable and fair way. We are also undertaking an exercise to look at the potential impact of focusing on delivering just those services that form our core purpose as a local authority, and the new savings that could be identified from this, so the County Council can live within its means. For more details visit

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20241410FutureServicesfinaldecisions>

### **Special Educational Needs**

More children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are set to benefit from local specialist school places as Hampshire County Council increases the provision at two schools in Fareham and the New Forest, as well as a nursery in Gosport. Most of the 31 new places at Heathfield Special School, Pennington Church of England Junior School, and Haven Nursery School will be available immediately.

### **Do you Need Help?**

- Looking after yourself?
- Looking after your garden, pet or home?

- Do you know about staying safe in your home?
- Would you like to know more about buying care at home?

then visit <https://www.connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk/managingathome>

## Meals on Wheels

Are you eligible for meals on wheels? If you live in the Hampshire County Council area, you can choose to receive Meals on Wheels through a service organised by the Council if you have certain needs.

You must be aged 55 years or more

**OR** be 18 to 54 years old and have at least one of the following:

- Dementia
- A learning disability
- A physical disability
- A mental health issue
- A history of substance abuse

You must also meet at least one of the following:

- You struggle to cook for yourself
- You have just come out of hospital
- You have a carer or relative who needs a break from cooking
- You are feeling unwell, either physically or mentally
- You have difficulty shopping for food

See the website -

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/meals-on-wheels> or ring 0330 2000 103 (option 4).

## Highways Update

Following the allocation of additional funding dedicated to making Hampshire's roads stronger, i.e. committing an extra £22.5 million over two years to 31st March 2025 to boost road repairs, the County Council has repaired almost 181,000 potholes and road defects, representing a 37% increase compared with the previous 12 months (April 2023 to April 2024). In the period covered by this update, high numbers of road defects continue to be fixed, alongside the completion of larger resurfacing and planned maintenance schemes. Please report road issues to us either online at [hants.gov.uk/transport/highways](https://hants.gov.uk/transport/highways) or by using the OurHants app. *Winchester District Statistics - April – June 2024*

Emergencies attended - 115

Arboriculture jobs completed - 73

Resurfacing, surface dressing & micro-asphalt (square metres) = 17,594

Gullies and other drainage cleared = 3,009

Other jobs completed (outside of other works) – 224

Heavy patching jobs Completed - 1,401

Square metres of footway repaired/resurfaced - 287

Carriageway defects repaired (including potholes) -2,879

## Mentoring proves Key to Success

Hampshire County Council is successfully helping more adults to stay in construction industry jobs across the county – overtaking the national average – and filling the sector's skills shortage as well as boosting employment levels and the local economy.

According to the latest figures, out of 130 adults supported by the County Council's 'Construct Your Futures' programme over the last year, 87% were still working in a building-related job after six months or more – compared with national levels which show 70% of new entrants in the sector drop-out within the first three months of employment.

This encouraging trend was highlighted during a special visit by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to see Hampshire's best practice delivery of the Hampshire's Construct Your Future programme, funded by the CITB, at two of the county's 10 partner training centres – Fareham College and Silver Trowel Construction Skills Training Academy in Gosport.

During their recent visit, CITB leaders responsible for commissioning the programme, toured the partners' training facilities and discovered more about the support provided to those learning various construction trades such as bricklaying, plastering and tiling – much needed skills to help fill a construction industry skills shortage and maintain long-term employment.



Anyone aged 19 years and over, living in the Hampshire area and looking to work in construction – **or those considering a change of career** – can find out more about funded courses at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/skillsbootcamp/construction-coursesn> See also the County Council's Skills Boot Camp webpages – <https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/skillsbootcamp/allskillsbootcamps>. All Skills Boot Camp learners are offered support upon completion of their course to progress within their chosen field. Support offered includes CV review, pastoral support, coaching, and mentoring.

### **Health of our Children**

In the 2023-2024 annual report of the HCC Director of Public Health it was disclosed that in Hampshire 21% of Year R pupils and 32% of Year 6 pupils were overweight or very overweight in 2022/23. Just over one in five Hampshire children are overweight and obese when they start primary school, and this rises to over one in three by the time they leave primary school. Several studies show that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in childhood overweight and obesity.

Children who are overweight or obese are more likely to experience other associated physical health conditions, for example breathing difficulties, bone and joint problems, insulin resistance, high blood pressure and dental decay. Alongside the physical health impact, emotional health issues can also influence a child's life now and in the future. These are not only felt by the individual but also by those connected with children at home, school and in the wider community. The impact of this is noticeable across the life course. Studies show that obese children and young people are five times more likely to be obese in adulthood than those who were not obese as children. This brings with it significant increased risks for heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers, reducing the number of years people live in good health.

The cost to public services is significant, particularly the health service. The annual cost of obesity in Hampshire could be as much as £540 million annually with a wider cost to society, through loss of work productivity and social care needs. For full report see - <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/public-health/director-public-health-annual-report-HCC-2023-24.pdf>

### **Make it Easier to Walk and cycle in Hampshire**

Residents are being asked to help Hampshire County Council identify locations where physical barriers make it awkward and challenging to walk, cycle, wheel or scoot. The survey, which **is open until Sunday 22nd December 2024**, seeks feedback to help pinpoint locations where there are obstacles, such as bollards, that make getting around difficult for people who have restricted mobility and need to use a mobility scooter, or for those pushing prams or riding cargo bikes for example.

Feedback can be provided via [the https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportchemes/barriers-walking-cycling](https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportchemes/barriers-walking-cycling). We want people to tell us where there are:

- Crossing points that are difficult to use because they don't have dropped kerbs and tactile paving
- Dropped kerbs which are not level with the road
- Staggered or chicane barriers
- Bollards placed too closely together
- Pavements made narrow by items such as guard railings, lampposts and signposts
- Misleading or unnecessary cycle signs and where new or additional cycle parking may be needed

Responses to the survey will help the County Council to secure the funding to make improvements to roads and pavements by providing evidence to support applications for Government funding, or in negotiating contributions from developers building new housing developments.

Information gathered through this survey will be key towards the delivery of the County Council's recently adopted Local Transport Plan 4 - which aims to influence and shape the way people travel over the next ten or more years - boosting economic prosperity, reducing carbon pollution, promoting healthy lifestyles and building stronger communities.

#### About the Local Transport Plan

Central to the Local Transport Plan - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan> - 4 are the following two principles, which are intended to guide what the County Council does to improve travel and transport infrastructure for the future:

- To widen the choice of travel options that people can use.
- To provide a transport system that puts people first and creates high quality and prosperous places.

The Plan finds a balance between the movement of vehicles with the needs of people. It sets out frameworks to guide future transport planning and the policies that would be applied to create thriving and attractive places where residents can travel around easily.

Proposed schemes for further development are also included in the plan such as the roll out of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, higher quality bus services in urban areas, better quality cycle facilities, changes to our roads to reduce congestion and improvements to high streets and town centres so they are more accessible and safer for shared use by pedestrians, cyclists as well as those pushing prams and those in wheelchairs.

#### **M27 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme**

Hampshire County Council has announced that the M27 Junction 10 improvement scheme is full steam ahead following the completion of formal funding agreements with Buckland Group, the developer of Welborne Garden Village, and Homes England. The construction of the £100m+ upgrade will support the development of Welborne to the north of Fareham, underpinning the delivery of 6,000 new homes, new community amenities, and providing job opportunities for the region. It will deliver a new motorway underpass and three new slip roads to the west of the existing M27 Junction 10. A new dual carriageway will also be built to link the new slip roads to the existing road network.

The County Council is delivering the scheme, working closely with National Highways, and has appointed VolkerFitzpatrick as the contractor. The estimated completion date is late 2026. Most of the construction work for the scheme will be on land away from the existing public highway to minimise disruption. However, to ensure that key elements of the work can be carried out safely, there will be some temporary impacts for road users. There is currently reduced capacity on the A32 north of the M27 and south of the Knowle roundabout, with one lane open in each direction. This arrangement is expected to stay in place until early 2026

Over the Christmas period in **2025**, a new underpass will be installed under the M27 just west of the existing A32 overbridge. The underpass will be pre-constructed as a concrete box on land next to the M27 and then slid into position using an innovative 'boxslide' engineering approach, significantly shortening the construction time and reducing disruption to motorway users. This will require a full closure of the M27 between Junction 9 and 11 over the **2025** Christmas week next year when traffic levels are lower. Closure dates and travel advice will be provided in advance of this important phase of the scheme once the work plans are finalised.

Regular updates about the scheme including travel impacts will be available from Hampshire County Council's website [www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportchemes/m27junction10](http://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportchemes/m27junction10) – and through Hampshire County Council's social media accounts. People can sign up for email updates via these webpages.

Patricia Stallard, Hampshire County Councillor, Winchester Southern Parishes {Newlands, Denmead, Southwick, Boarhunt, Wickham, Knowle, Soberton, Newtown}. [Patricia.stallard@hants.gov.uk](mailto:Patricia.stallard@hants.gov.uk)