

Report from Hampshire County Councillor Jan Warwick

January 2024

1. Household DIY waste charges ended.

From 1 January 2024, residents using Hampshire County Council Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) will no longer be charged for disposing of their DIY waste - in line with the Government policy changes.

Up to two 50-litre rubble bags, or one bulky item such as a sink or toilet pedestal, will be accepted for free, at a maximum frequency of four visits over four weeks. Anything more than this amount will be chargeable at current rates, as permitted by national legislation, to cover specialist disposal costs. DIY waste can be accepted at all HWRCs in Hampshire except New Alresford due to its restricted size. Customers must also be able to lift, carry and empty out their DIY waste.

The Council estimates that the removal of the charges could impose an additional cost to Hampshire council taxpayers of up to £2 million every year. This is because recycling or disposal of DIY waste, such as soil, rubble, asbestos and gypsum board, requires specialist processing and the fees we currently charge help to cover these expenses.

2. Flooding, Storms and Drainage

Groundwater levels continue to rise following the wet autumn and winter with cellar and sewerage system flooding expected in Hursley and other areas across Hampshire. The Environment Agency will meet with the County Council during the first week of January, working with affected District and Parish Council

You can report **flooding and drainage** issues here:

www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/flooding/reportingflooding

You can report **fallen trees** here:

www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems/treehedge

It wouldn't be an email from me about highways if I didn't take the opportunity to remind you to signpost your residents to our online reporting system to tell us about issues on the road network, including potholes at www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblemsall

All reported problems are logged, assessed and prioritised and this remains the most efficient way of engaging with the Highways service. The online tools have recently been improved to be more user/customer friendly so please take a look.

Salt Bins are filled by the County Council so please check your bins and ready in case we experience a cold snap. There is useful guidance on spreading salt and refilling bins here:

www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/severeweather/salting/saltingpolicy

3. Schools

Parents with children due to start school or move to a junior school in September 2024 are reminded that they have until **Monday 15 January 2024** to submit their primary school

applications. Parents will have the best chance of being offered a place at one of their preferred schools by applying on time and naming three preferences on their applications.

4. Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan consultation

The consultation on the updated plan is expected to start during the week beginning **8 January 2024** and to last for eight weeks. Details can be found at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/minerals-waste-update>

5. Climate change and nature recovery

The Council has published its [Climate Change Annual Progress Report](#) which highlights the progress of council backed community initiatives and its own efforts to tackle climate change. One example is the Solar Together scheme - over the past two years, 2,100 households have purchased competitively priced solar panels, resulting in the installation of 7,400kw of rooftop solar power, which has the capacity to save an estimated 46,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

HCC is also launching a survey asking residents where they would like to see improvements for nature recovery, their views on nature priorities and what action they may be taking locally to help nature in their area. Gathering this information is an important first step in the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy which aims to ensure Hampshire's natural environment is protected for future generations

Here is a link to the [online survey](#) or visit <https://lnrs-hampshireonline.hub.arcgis.com>

6. Roads

The County Council's [Highways Service Annual Review](#) or visit <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/highways/HampshireHighwaysAnnualReview-2022-2023.pdf> for 2022/23 summarises the Highways team's activity over an exceptionally busy and challenging period. There is a continuing intensive focus on fixing potholes and other road defects following confirmation of the 3-year Stronger Roads Today campaign. This has enabled the deployment of significantly more repair teams and specialist equipment with the primary aim of making our roads better, fixing defects more quickly, and addressing the widespread deterioration from last winter's wet and freezing weather.

7. Happy New Year My best wishes to everyone for 2024, I look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

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vision**

 Hampshire
County Council

Serving the people of
Hampshire with **purpose
and pride to improve lives**
today and for tomorrow.