

Hampshire County Councillor Update – July 2025

Cllr Malcolm Wallace (malcolm.wallace@hants.gov.uk)



New Chief Exec for Hampshire County Council



Subject to formal approval by Full Council, Gary Westbrook will take on the role as HCC Chief Executive from 19 July, following the retirement of current Chief Executive, Carolyn Williamson.

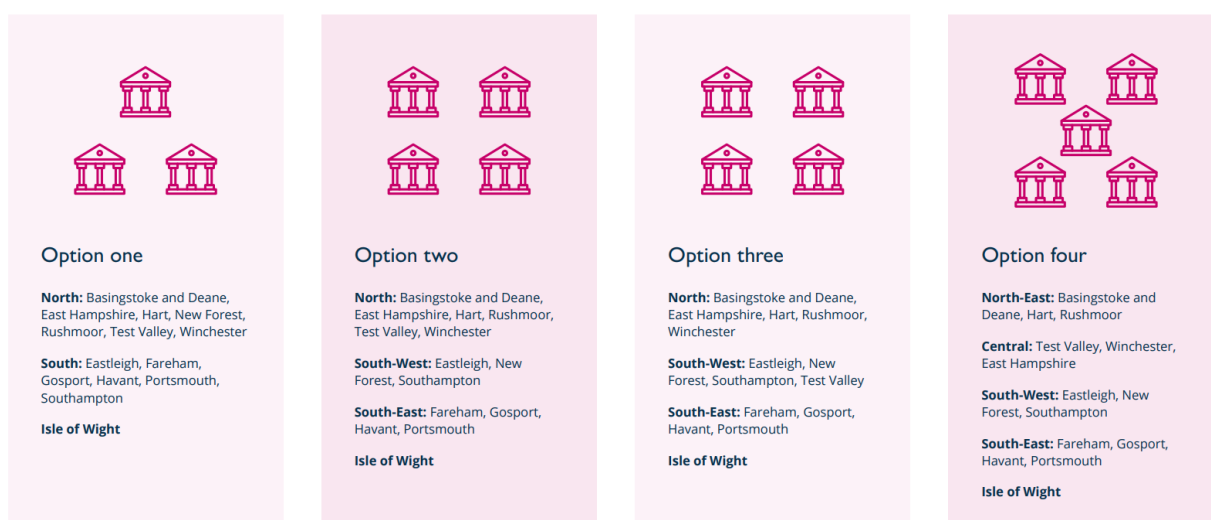
Carolyn announced her retirement from Hampshire County Council on 21 March following four years in the post as the Authority's first female Chief Executive. Mrs Williamson has spent 15 years at Hampshire County Council, as part of a total career in public service of over 40 years.

Hampshire County Council is one of the largest local authorities in the country delivering services to 1.4 million residents across the county. As Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, Gary will be responsible, through the Council Leader, for managing an annual budget of approximately £3.1 billion, and leading a workforce of nearly 10,000 employees directly and many more indirectly, including via hundreds of Hampshire schools. Gary is currently the County Council's Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Hampshire 2050.

Local Government Reorganisation

Under national plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), central Government intends to replace Hampshire County Council, 11 district and borough councils across the county, plus the unitary councils of Southampton, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight, with a number of unitary local authorities, all delivering the same public services as they do now to help make councils more efficient and effective. All 15 local authorities in the region have been tasked to come up with proposals for how councils should be reorganised from 2028 onwards, evidenced against various criteria. They will then be submitted to central Government this autumn for a final decision.

Hampshire County Council is assessing four potential reorganisation options (see graphic below). Separately to this, a group of district councils (including Winchester) are reviewing alternative options, all based around five unitary authorities.



Each Local Authority in Hampshire and the Solent region has until 26-Sep to put forward their proposal on how local government should be reorganised in our region. More details on both devolution and reorganisation can be found at: [Devolution and local government reorganisation | About the Council | Hampshire County Council](#)

Highways Update from Cllr Bowerman, Executive Member for Highways & Passenger Transport

I'm aware that the condition of our roads is always a topic of interest, and I know you all appreciate the continued efforts of our Highways Teams to keep them safe and serviceable, despite significant ongoing funding challenges. Thanks to their hard work, Hampshire remains the highest-performing county authority for highway maintenance in the southeast region, based on annual 'National Highways and Transport' (NHT) survey results.



The winters of 2022/23 and 2023/24 brought significant and widespread impacts across our network. In response, the County Council's *Stronger Roads Today* uplift funding was put to good use. Fortunately, the winter of 2024/25 was relatively mild, and the warmer weather since March has enabled the team to carry out more routine maintenance, with fewer emergency reports and jobs, offering a welcome reduction in disruption to planned activity. Since November 2024, approximately 22,700 potholes and other urgent road defects have been repaired and during the same period almost 40,000m² of structural carriageway patching has been completed.

While financial pressures remain, the confirmation of an additional £14.1 million in funding from the Department for Transport for 2025/26 will allow us to deploy more resources across our 5,500 miles of roads and other highway assets. The Government has indicated that a portion of this funding will be withheld until local highway authorities submit a report by the end of June, which is also to be published online. Given our strong track record for delivery and efficient and value-for-money service, officers are confident that Hampshire will receive its full allocation this year.

Since April, our teams have focused on delivering road-strengthening treatments that generally require warmer weather to be most effective. This includes surface dressing (a cost-effective preventative measure used widely on roads that are in relatively good condition) to seal and restore the surface texture, preventing deterioration and extending the road's lifespan. Progress across all spring treatment programmes has been swift and largely uninterrupted, with virtually no production days lost to weather. Early and thorough planning has ensured all necessary 'road-space' permits were secured in advance, which is increasingly challenging in some areas of the county. To date, 120 sites have been treated, covering more than 60 miles, this includes surface dressing, alongside asphalt preservation and carriageway micro asphalt, both of which are sealant treatments to restrict water ingress. Traditional resurfacing will continue throughout the remainder of the year.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that helpful information is available on the County Council's highways webpages ([Hampshire County Council Highways | Transport and roads | Hampshire County Council](#)). Here, you can find more information on the various highway surface treatments that are used, the latest planned maintenance programme and is the best way to report issues on the network.

Plans for a 'Lane Rental' Scheme to Minimise Roadworks Disruption

Proposals are moving forward on the introduction of a new lane rental scheme aimed at reducing roadworks delays on Hampshire's busiest roads during peak times. The lane rental scheme would charge a daily fee for the duration of roadworks on more than 550 miles – or roughly 10 per cent – of Hampshire's roads.

The County Council agreed in January to progress plans for a lane rental scheme, which would complement the existing road permitting system. Detailed proposals have now been set out which include which roads are considered to be the most strategically important or where roadworks

and/or streetworks are likely to cause significant delays and disruption to traffic flow. The County Council will undertake a consultation with relevant stakeholders, including utility companies, over the summer. Final recommendations will then be developed before formal approval is sought from the Department for Transport. The aim is for the scheme to become operational in Spring 2026.

Charges would vary depending on the type and level of disruption caused by the works. Any surplus revenue generated - beyond the basic operational costs - would be ringfenced to fund innovative projects aimed at reducing the impact of street and roadworks. Subject to new national legislation expected later this year, up to 50% of the income generated could also be reinvested into routine highway maintenance, including day-to-day repairs such as pothole fixes.

Lane rental schemes are already in place in several parts of the UK and they must comply with national legislation. Charges can only be applied to the most congested and strategically important local roads managed by the highway authority and under current legislation, the County Council would be permitted to charge up to £2,500 per day - the maximum allowed.



Botley Bypass

As part of ongoing communications for the Botley Bypass scheme, the team will be publishing a series of quarterly blogs, each focusing on a specific theme. The first, launching this week, highlights **Ecology**.

Given that much of the work on this scheme is taking place offline and out of public view, the aim of these blogs is to offer valuable insight into the progress being made. Where key milestones arise between scheduled updates, additional blogs may be issued to keep stakeholders informed.

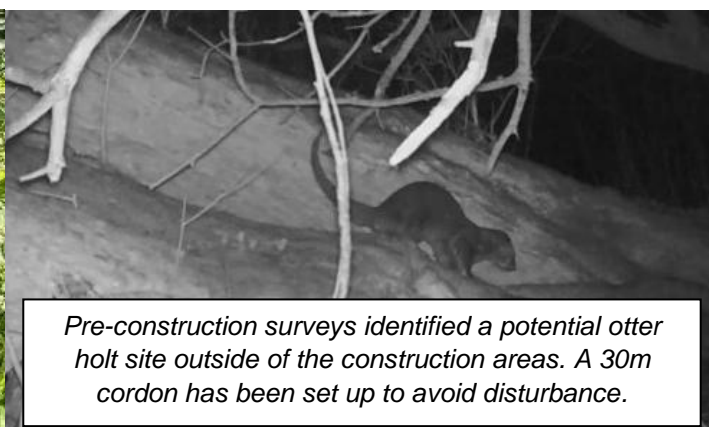
The blogs will be published on the scheme webpage: [Botley Bypass | Transport and roads | Hampshire County Council](#)

This first edition has been developed in collaboration with M Group and HCC ecology and environmental teams. It aims to shed light on the extensive preparation involved in readying the site for construction, as well as the ongoing efforts to monitor and protect Botley's local wildlife.

Hope you find it a positive and informative read.



A fish pass was built in 2015 to help sea trout and European eels swim past the Botley Mill weir.



Pre-construction surveys identified a potential otter holt site outside of the construction areas. A 30m cordon has been set up to avoid disturbance.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service's Annual Performance Report



HIWFRA's annual performance report for 2024/25 has now been published and is available to view on the Service website. You can access the report via the following link:

[HIWFRS Annual-Performance-Report 2025.pdf](#).

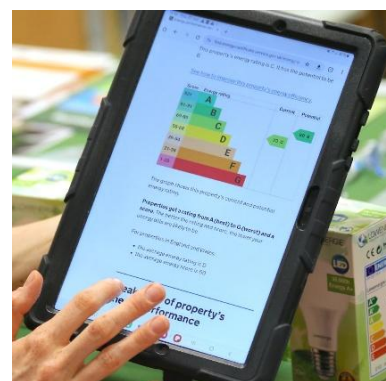
The report highlights the Service's key achievements and performance over the past year. I hope you find the report a valuable insight into the work and progress of the Service.

Free Advice to Reduce Your Home Energy Bills

The Environment Centre has launched a ground-breaking service to make our homes warmer, greener and cheaper to run.

It's called **My Home Made Better**, and it offers free and impartial advice on everything from insulation and heating upgrades, to switching to new energy-efficient technologies.

Experienced energy advisers will simplify complex information and dispel myths to guide you through your options and help you find the best ways to keep the heat in, lower your energy bills, and make your home more comfortable.



This is how it works:

1. You call 0800 804 8601 (or email) to chat with one of the friendly advisers. Lines are open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.
2. You'll be asked about your property and circumstances, following which you will receive tailor-made recommendations and your own personalised plan. This will comprise a summary of everything discussed, including recommendations and things to consider before taking your next step.
3. When you're ready, search the independent directory to find local suppliers and installers.

This should be a fantastic new service, and I encourage everyone to make use of it! For more information go to myhomemadebetter.org

Energy Efficiency Grants

The following offer advice and support. But please carefully check eligibility for grants as they will depend on the type of home and your circumstances.

- [Energy Saving Trust](#) – Guidance for the type of insulation for properties
- [Great British Insulation Scheme](#) – Eligible if the property has an energy performance certificate (EPC) of D to G and is in Council Tax bands A-D
- [Warmer Homes](#) – Warmer Homes provides fully funded insulation, solar panels and other energy efficiency measures for owner-occupiers and private renters living in low-income households in properties that have EPC energy efficiency ratings from D to G. The previous iteration of this program has now closed, but the Government has just announced a further £26 million of funding has been awarded to our local consortium. Whilst the previous iteration of this scheme only funded measures in off-gas households, the new scheme will be open to all fuel types, including on gas households and off gas households.