



## How we're stronger

You'll no doubt see news articles about the financial jeopardy faced by other local councils around the country. Some of Hart's neighbours are facing serious difficulties:

**Rushmoor** Borough Council intend to wipe out nearly ALL their reserves by using £5m to cover the cost of excessive borrowing. **Surrey Heath** is close to bankruptcy and **Woking** is effectively bankrupt. **Hampshire** County Council are imposing cuts to services in a bid to meet a £132m budget deficit in the coming year.

Thankfully the Community Campaign's James Radley has been guiding Hart's finances through the same troubled waters for the past five years and, with careful management, **your home district** is in a much stronger financial position than its neighbours.

Through CCH's joint control at Hart, we can continue to **invest** and deliver **service improvements** for Hart residents, based on prudent financial management and above all, listening to what's important to you.

### We're investing in our car parks

In 2024 you will see rapid charge EV points installed in our public car parks, new easy-to-use touchscreen ticket machines and completion of our LED lighting and enhanced maintenance programme.

### So what are Conservative led Hampshire County Council (HCC) doing?

Cutting on-street traffic enforcement officers to negligible levels, so that resident permit parking and school patrols are ignored; cutting school crossing wardens and removing support for all community transport for our most vulnerable residents.

### We're investing in our waste collection service.

In 2024 you will see the introduction of a kerbside collection for small electrical items, and conversion of our collection vehicles to Hydrated Vegetable Oil fuel, thereby cutting their greenhouse emissions by 95%.

We would like to collect all plastics immediately, but cannot do so, as they are regarded as a 'contaminant' by HCC (the waste disposal authority), due to delays in delivering a suitable processing plant.

Conservative-run HCC is also shutting access to local Household Waste Recycling Centres, and refusing to recycle certain plastics, as Hampshire drops to the bottom of the UK league table for recycling targets.

### We're investing in our Community Safety

In 2024 you will see the continued CCTV upgrade programme of existing cameras (a third having already been replaced in the past year).

Our new state-of-the-art CCTV control room system has already provided a dedicated viewing terminal for Hart police, with a second terminal available for Fleet's proposed new police station in Fleet.

Extra cameras and additional Community Safety staff are also budgeted for in this year's budget.

Making our Leisure Centres carbon neutral will greatly reduce emissions under Hart's control



### We're investing in our Leisure and Countryside service

In 2024 we are delivering an extension to Edenbrook's active cycle tracks, and developing a plan to make our Leisure Centres carbon neutral & sustainable (while other councils are closing swimming pools!). We are agreeing a long-term lease with Fleet Town Council, so that they can develop the Harlington into a modernised comfortable community and entertainment centre.

### So what are Conservative led HCC doing?

They are busy cutting funding to the charity and wellbeing groups. Youth services have already been downgraded to zero. Many in the know are concerned that HCC have their sights on certain library services next. ■

# Progress takes persistence

## One of the things I have learnt as a Councillor is how quickly a simple-looking issue can escalate.

When on 2 November 2023, a section of footpath on St Swithins Road, Elvetham Heath was being lifted by what looked like a burst water main, I reported the 'leak' to the authorities, as did residents.

Hampshire Highways came out to inspect it the next day – and concluded that it was not within their remit.

By 4 November, South East Water had also visited and concluded that it was not fresh water, but a sewage leak, so they suggested I call in Thames Water (TW)...

Attending on the 5th, TW were bemused. They told me that it must have been a blockage that had cleared itself, so they decontaminated the area and cordoned off the lifting paving. Job allegedly done.

## Escalating emergency

However, by the 10th the reported that the problem was actually caused by a defective pressure pump, which would be fixed 'by December' without local road closures. This was a bit of a surprise, as I had been told 5 days earlier that the problem was solved.

With no warning, on 14 November St Swithins Road was closed, with traffic lights affecting through traffic and diversion signs suggesting the road would reopen by Christmas. They were not rushing, as it was not until 27 November that some heavy machinery turned up, and then nearby Rykmansford Road was also closed to accommodate a huge by-pass pipe.

**It really kicked-off on 5th January, when a sink hole and two 'blow holes' suddenly appeared hundreds of yards away on Falconers Way. TW turned up with sandbags – and fleets of tankers worked 24/7 to take the leaking sewage away.**

On 9 January, I met with the Project Manager from Cappagh (TW's contractor) and he walked me through the two sites: He explained that the sewage pipe was between 50 and 125 years old! It runs 4km from the pumping station outside Calthorpe Park School, through a large swathe of Elvetham Heath to the treatment works on the other side of the M3. He said that a 200m run of the pipe near St Swithins has perforated, so they had ordered a liner from Germany, to feed inside the damaged pipe.

By 19 January the lining idea was abandoned due to 'supply issues in Germany'. So we are now effectively back to square one and a full survey of the sewage

by Cllr Ange Delaney



Elvetham Heath roadworks.  
Is the end in sight?



A catalyst for progress

main is being made, from the double roundabout railway bridge, over 1km to the open excavation/cut pipe near the St Swithins roundabout, to detect any further potential weak spots (I really hope not!).

**What seemed at first to be a simple leak and pavement repair, has been revealed as a major civil engineering project. Watch this space! ■**

*Ange has dedicated considerable time to this issue over the last few months, both to keep pressing for news and action – and to keep the many affected local residents informed.*



# Pole Arising

## The march of unwanted telegraph poles

The rollout of fibre high speed internet across the area by the telecoms company **toob** [sic] has caused anxiety to hundreds of residents. Their plan to erect new telegraph poles is outdated, threatens to clutter our roads and blight our street scenes.

Unfortunately, the erection of telegraph poles has been deemed to be 'permitted development' by the government. This means that toob don't need planning approval from Hart to erect poles. However they do have to obey the Electronic Communication Code in their rollout – and they need to show why underground delivery is not 'practically achievable'.

### It's good to talk

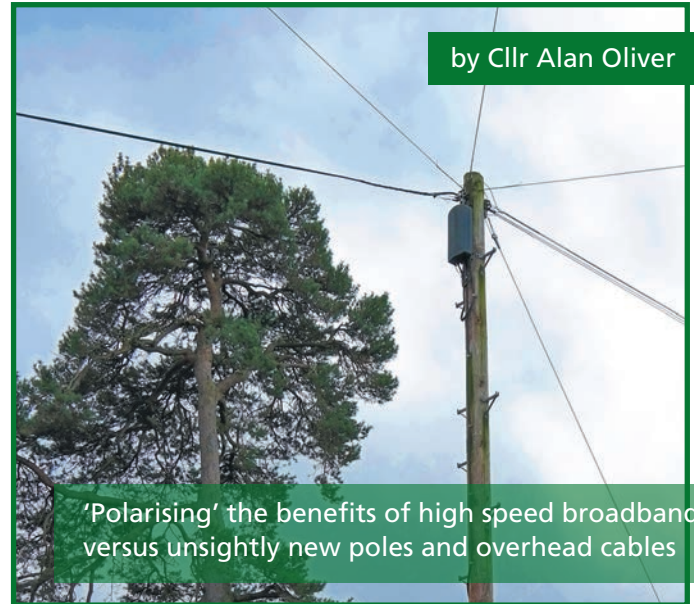
The Community Campaign's Cllr Alan Oliver, Hart's Cabinet Member for Development Management and Community Safety, met with toob's CEO Nick Parbutt along with their COO and CTO. Alan wanted to challenge them directly on their preferred approach of erecting telegraph poles, rather than using service ducts underground.

Toob accepted that communication with residents, re where they feel new poles are needed, had not been well handled and fell short of their own standards.

They explained that a significant proportion of the Fleet and Church Crookham area would either NOT need extensive new pole infrastructure as they are fully ducted (e.g. Edenbrook, Netherhouse Moor, Crookham Park, Elvetham Heath), or they already have BT pole infrastructure.

The major issues have occurred where BT have historically simply buried cables and not ducted cables to provide residential links (such as through **Dinorben** and **Tavistock** areas).

**Sadly, Virgin Media have refused toob the use of their underground ducts in residential areas.**



by Cllr Alan Oliver

'Polarising' the benefits of high speed broadband versus unsightly new poles and overhead cables

### What toob agreed to:

- They will stop all pole installations immediately, including all applications that have already passed through the 28 day planning consultation phase with HDC (e.g. Glen Road, Fleet).
- They will undertake a new door-to-door consultation with all residents impacted by proposed new telegraph poles, as to whether they support their installation.
- If a significant number of residents object, toob will NOT submit pole planning applications in those areas. However, this also means toob will not provide an underground ducted solution, until ducts are available through the BT Openreach roll out programme – and the opportunity for residents to get a full fibre service in 2024 will be lost.
- Hart DC will extend its complaint to Ofcom to include Virgin Media, for not allowing toob access to their residential infrastructure as required by the Code of Practice.

This was decided at an initial meeting with toob and further meetings with HDC Planning Officers are to be scheduled, to ensure that the items agreed above are being adhered to. ■

## While others self promote, CCH Councillors get things done

The Community Campaign (Hart) is an established local residents' association with 10 elected District Councillors covering the Fleet, Crookham & Ewshot area, including your own neighbourhood. We are currently jointly running the administration at Hart.

We are locals with professional backgrounds but no political or personal ambitions, other than to do our best to help Hart residents and get things done.

We are approachable and put our best energies into maintaining your quality of life, with no time or inclination for playing party politics on social media.

We produce and deliver these newsletters ourselves. To join us, if you have any good ideas for your area, or if you need help with a district council related problem, just get in touch. If we can help, we will, or we'll direct you to the right people to help you. ■

# Hampshire Cuts Consultation

by Cllr James Radley

While Hart's own finances are secure for the time being (see front page article), we as Hampshire residents are facing the impact of the County Council (HCC) needing £132m worth of savings.

HCC are currently running a consultation on potential service cuts totalling £17.5m

Proposed cuts include: removing **school crossing patrols**, closing Hart's only **Household Waste** and Recycling Centre at **Hartley Wintney**, reducing winter **Highways Maintenance**, removing funding for **community buses** such as **Park & Ride** and removing the subsidies which keep the remaining **buses** running through Fleet & Church Crookham. Other cuts to **Adult Social Care**, **Homelessness** and **Library** services are also likely.

## Have your say

If as a resident you have an interest in any of the above services (that should be the vast majority), then we in your Community Campaign urge you to **make your views known** through Hampshire's consultation. You can scan the adjacent QR code to reach the consultation on the HCC website.

## Feeling the effects

We are already seeing the impact of Hampshire's cost cutting initiatives. For instance, since they took back responsibility for on-street parking (which Hart used to provide successfully), local residents are lucky if they see a traffic warden in Fleet & Church Crookham for more than one hour a week.

Why does this matter, you may ask? Well, it matters if you are affected by parking chaos around schools, or if you have an on-street parking permit but can't find a parking space because they are all taken by non-authorized vehicles.



SCAN ME

[hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/future-services-consultation](https://hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/future-services-consultation)

You can input to this Hampshire County Council's consultation until 31st March

## Will responding make a difference?

Possibly not, as there is some concern that, true to form, Hampshire won't listen anyway. However, they will seek justification for their actions if residents don't care enough to speak up to protect key services.

With enough push-back from residents, maybe HCC can be persuaded to think again. ■

## Contact your local ward Councillor

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