

### **Cllr Adams-King communication**

There is currently a real risk that future housing development across Hampshire could occur without the much-needed improvement to roads, schools and health facilities alongside it.

Here's why: as leader of Hampshire County Council, I'm often asked about two things above all else – the condition of our roads and the provision of infrastructure to support new development.

Recently the two topics have collided with the announcement by Angela Rayner of new housing targets for local councils.

In Hampshire housing targets are allocated to the districts and borough councils, but it remains the job of the county council to deliver much of the infrastructure needed for them; new roads, new schools, additional social care places, open spaces in which the new inhabitants can enjoy their leisure time.

Across the county each of the districts and boroughs has seen their target increase considerably.

For example, in Test Valley by 75 per cent, to 921 new homes each year; Winchester by 60 per cent to 1,099 homes per year and in New Forest the target has doubled to 1,465 new homes to be built each year.

I'm all in favour of new housing. As a father of two teenagers, I want them to be given the same opportunities as previous generations to access the housing ladder or have access to affordable homes, but new homes must be built in the right place, preserving local gaps; planned in consultation with local people; and crucially include high levels of local infrastructure; new and better roads, improved and new schools, new leisure services and improved access to healthcare.

This latter point is where the county council becomes involved. It is our job to deliver that local infrastructure, paid for by developers through 'Section 106' legal agreements. That funding is at risk as a result of the increased housing targets.

The councils responsible for delivering the housing are obliged to show a five-year housing land supply. This means they need to show they have a plan to deliver the next five years of housing meeting the Government's target. So if their target is suddenly increased then they are unlikely to be able to meet it immediately.

Where the housing targets are not immediately met through councils identifying sites for new homes, developers can use that lack of supply as a reason to make speculative applications on sites that have not been approved by the district or borough council. When that happens, as the sites are not those already approved for development, it is likely any approval will come through a planning appeal, after local planning committees have rejected them.

In cases where planning permission is granted at appeal it's often the case that less, or no, S106 funding is attached to the approval.

That results in the county council having to meet the impact of those new developments through its own funds. This is where potholes are affected; when we are spending money on having to deliver new infrastructure to support development, we are unable to spend it on repairing our roads.

The situation is worrying and frustrating. That's why I'm backing the calls from Hampshire's district and borough councils for a delay to the implementation of the new housing targets. They need to be given time to develop proposals for new housing in a managed and properly planned way. In doing so we can also properly plan for the new infrastructure which will be needed and the increased traffic thousands of new homes will cause.

The consequences are otherwise dire for us all.