

## Update from Hampshire County Council – August 2024

**During Plastic Free July 2024, Hampshire County Council is encouraging residents to make the new Smart Living Pledge, changing everyday habits to reduce single-use plastics**



Smart Living Pledges include:

- Always taking a reusable water bottle with you to refill.
- Always taking a reusable bag when shopping.
- Replacing plastic bottles of soap, bodywash and shampoo with solid bars or refilling them.

Hampshire County Council's Executive Member for Climate Change, Councillor Zoe Huggins said, "If we all do our bit by planning for what we need when out and about and finding novel ways to reuse or repurpose what we already own, the impact on climate change could be huge in terms of reducing carbon emissions, both now and for the future generations in Hampshire."

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/15072024PlasticFree>

### **Outstanding rating continues for Hampshire County Council's Children's Services**

Children in Hampshire continue to benefit from strong and effective services that make a positive difference to their lives. This is one of the key headline findings from Hampshire County Council's latest full Ofsted inspection, which has rated its Children's Services outstanding for the second consecutive time since 2019

In a consistently positive report, Ofsted has described the timely and robust practice of social workers and other practitioners who ensure that children are kept safe and that they and their families receive appropriate and effective support to meet their individual needs. The news comes following a recent outstanding Ofsted rating for Swanwick Lodge, the County Council's secure children's home which provides safe and specialist support for the most vulnerable children and young people.

Ofsted's report follows a rigorous inspection of the County Council's Children's Services, including all aspects of children's social care, which took place between 4 and 14 June 2024. Key findings include the 'significant and continuing strength' of the County Council's inclusive and creative approach to protecting children, which sees staff work closely with parents, wider family members and friends to 'strengthen family resilience' and achieve 'positive and sustainable change'. Parents are supported to 'develop skills and strategies to better meet their children's needs' and this, together with support from wider networks, enables more children to stay safely at home.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20240723outstandingofstedresult>

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### **Hampshire's Country Parks win prestigious Green Flag Awards once again**

Visitors to Hampshire County Council's five country parks are guaranteed a top-quality day out thanks to the parks being once again awarded Green Flag awards for 2024

Lepe, River Hamble, Royal Victoria, Queen Elizabeth, and Staunton Country Parks have all once again regained Green Flag status for their excellent facilities and amazing outdoor spaces. Staunton Country Park and Royal Victoria Country Park have also once again won Green Heritage Accreditation for the management of the sites' unique historic features - Lepe Country Park has also secured the heritage accolade this year for the first time.

The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of green spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20241607GreenFlagAwards>

### **Hampshire County Council's latest figures show 37 per cent increase in annual road repairs**

An unprecedented number of potholes and road defects have been fixed across a 12-month period, according to the latest figures from Hampshire County Council

From April 2023 to April 2024, 180,909 repairs were delivered, marking a 37 per cent increase.

We understand that potholes remain a significant concern for Hampshire's residents, impacting daily journeys and overall satisfaction whether travelling to work, school, running a business or enjoying all our county has to offer.

One year ago, HCC allocated an additional £22.5 million to tackle this issue and make our roads stronger. This two-year investment is enabling us to deploy more resources dedicated to promptly fixing potholes, addressing the damage caused by cycles of wet and freezing winter weather. Our latest figures show that repairs have increased by 37 per cent, compared to the previous 12 months, demonstrating that this investment is paying dividends.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20241107AnnualRoadRepairFigure>

### **Next step for Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan**

Plans to ensure Hampshire can provide its share of materials, such as sand and gravel, for building homes, schools and roads in the future have taken another step forward. Hampshire County Council's Cabinet has recommended (8 July 2024) that the full County Council (at its meeting on 18 July) approves the submission of Hampshire's Minerals and Waste Plan's Partial Update to the Government Planning Inspectorate for scrutiny

It has been a huge undertaking, including extensive consultation with residents and other interested parties. If County Councillors agree the Plan and supporting documents can be submitted, it will be for the independent Planning Inspectorate to determine whether Hampshire's Plan is sound - that is whether it complies with national policy and legal requirements.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20240708MineralsandWastePlan>

David Drew  
Test Valley Central Division, HCC