

Hampshire County Councillor Update 59

Dear All

I'm relieved, honoured and slight surprised to be sending you this not only as the County Councillor for Romsey Rural but also as the Leader of Hampshire County Council. Thank you to everyone for their kind words and congratulations over the last month.

Repeating here the message I posted on the morning after the election:

I am absolutely delighted — and genuinely humbled — to have been re-elected to Hampshire County Council to represent Romsey Rural once again.

To everyone who supported me, voted for me, delivered leaflets, displayed posters, sent kind messages, or simply stopped for a conversation during the campaign: thank you. Your support means a very great deal to me. I will continue to work as hard as I possibly can for our communities, and I will do everything I can to justify the trust you have placed in me.

I would also like to thank my opponents for putting themselves forward. Standing for election is never easy, and it takes commitment and courage to do so. They fought thoughtful and good-humoured campaigns, and I thank them sincerely for that. I very much hope they will continue to play an active role in local public life.

The county-wide picture is still becoming clear as counting continues across Hampshire. While it appears likely that the Conservatives will lose overall control of the County Council, it also seems probable that we will remain the largest single party.

Whatever the final composition of the Council, Hampshire faces significant challenges in the years ahead — financially, structurally and politically — and I hope all those elected today will approach those challenges seriously, constructively and with the best interests of Hampshire residents at heart.

Romsey Rural - results				
Election Candidate	Party	Votes	%	Outcome
Nick Adams-King	Conservatives	3999	50%	Elected
Victoria Ann Burbidge	Liberal Democrat	1740	22%	Not elected
Gary Michael Cooper	Reform UK	1623	20%	Not elected
Matthew Smith	Green Party	503	6%	Not elected
Adrian John Paul Field	Labour	199	2%	Not elected

Voting Summary	
Details	Number
Seats	1
Total votes	8064
Electorate	15883
Number of ballot papers issued	8072
Number of ballot papers rejected	8
Turnout	51%

Share of the votes (%)		
Nick Adams-King	50%	Elected
Victoria Ann Burbidge	22%	Not elected
Gary Michael Cooper	20%	Not elected
Matthew Smith	6%	Not elected
Adrian John Paul Field	2%	Not elected

Highways Information

Hampshire County Council unveils plan for 17,000 community electric vehicle charging points

Hampshire County Council has announced plans for a major expansion of electric vehicle charging across the county.

Around 17,000 new community EV charging sockets are planned, focused particularly on areas where residents do not have access to off-street parking, such as a driveway or garage.

That matters because, for many people, the biggest barrier to switching to an electric vehicle is not the vehicle itself — it is having somewhere practical and reliable to charge it.

The scheme is being supported by £6.662 million of Government funding, which has helped unlock up to £90 million of private investment from charge point operator Believ. Importantly, this means the programme can be delivered at no cost to Hampshire County Council.

Installations are expected to begin later this year, with around 500 charge points planned in the first year.

Residents are also being asked to suggest locations where charge points would be useful, so the rollout can be targeted where demand and need are greatest.

This is a practical step towards making EV charging more accessible across Hampshire, particularly for those who cannot charge at home.

You can read more and suggest a location here:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20260506EVChargingScheme>

Reporting Highway Problems

Links to report road issues are here:

Potholes: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/potholes>

Tree/hedge problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/treehedge>

Flooding/drainage issues: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/flooding>

Pavement problems: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/paving>

Broken or missing signs: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/brokensigns>

Faulty street lights: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/streetlight>

Faded or missing road markings: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/highways/report-a-problem/road-markings>

Problems with rights of way:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

When reporting an issue, you'll be sent an email confirming a reference number for the report. If you would like me to follow this up for you then do please forward that message to me and I will chase for you.

The Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority has now been formally established.

This is an important milestone for our region and, if we get it right, devolution can bring real benefits for residents across Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

For too long, too many decisions about transport, skills, housing, investment, public safety, health and economic growth have been taken too far away from the communities they affect. Devolution should mean more decisions being made locally, by people who understand the needs, challenges and opportunities of our area.

The new Combined County Authority gives us the opportunity to work together across council boundaries, attract investment, improve infrastructure, support better skills and employment opportunities, and strengthen long-term economic growth.



But it must also be about fairness.

The benefits of devolution cannot simply flow to the places that are already doing well. The new Authority must have a clear focus on the most deprived communities across Hampshire and the Solent — including those areas where residents face poorer health outcomes, lower skills levels, weaker transport links, fewer opportunities and greater barriers to employment.

Growth matters, but it must be growth that reaches people and places that have too often been left behind.

That means using the new powers and funding to improve opportunity, support regeneration, tackle inequality, strengthen local transport, and help people access the skills and jobs they need to build better futures.

Hampshire has enormous strengths — strong businesses, world-class universities, major ports, rural communities, market towns, cities, coastline and countryside. Devolution gives us the chance to bring those strengths together more effectively.

Now the formal structure is in place, the real work begins: making sure this new Authority delivers practical, visible and lasting benefits for residents, businesses and communities across the whole region.

Romsey Advertiser Column

I'm grateful as usual to the [Romsey Advertiser](#) for publishing my column this month.

It reflects on the election result, and you can read it here:

<https://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/.../26122770.nick.../>

It's also copied below:

One of the challenges of writing a column to deadline is occasionally the date for submitting copy is inconveniently before a significant event.

At the time of writing, it is not yet clear who will lead Hampshire County Council following Thursday's Annual Council meeting. By the time you read this, that question will almost certainly have been settled. But regardless of who ultimately takes on that responsibility, one thing is already abundantly clear: the people of Hampshire have delivered a message that demands a different way of working.

The election results were significant not simply because of who won and lost, but because of what they tell us about public sentiment. Large numbers of residents chose to vote for parties and candidates who, until now, have not featured significantly in the political make-up of Hampshire County Council. That reality deserves recognition and respect.

Too often in politics, it is tempting to dismiss unfamiliar voices or assume that electoral shifts are temporary irritations to be endured. That would be a mistake.

Behind every vote cast is a resident expressing a view about the future of their community, the quality of public services, their frustrations, their hopes, or simply a desire for something different. Whether those votes were cast enthusiastically in support of particular candidates or parties, or tactically to prevent others from winning, they matter equally. The democratic message is no less valid because it is complicated.

Just as importantly, we should welcome the fact that more people chose to participate. Across Hampshire, turnout rose in many areas. In Romsey Rural, turnout reached 51 per cent — up ten points on 2021. In an era where disengagement from politics is often lamented, greater participation should be celebrated. Democracy is stronger when more people take part, even when the results challenge established assumptions or create uncomfortable conversations.

The task now must be collegiate and collaborative governance.

No single political tradition has a monopoly on wisdom, particularly in a council chamber that now reflects a much broader range of political views. Those newly elected members, whatever party they represent, have been sent to Winchester by residents who expect them to be heard. Their perspectives should not simply be tolerated; they should be actively engaged with. Respectful disagreement is part of healthy democracy, but so too is finding common ground.

And Hampshire faces challenges too significant for political trench warfare.

The pressures on adult social care and services for vulnerable children continue to grow, placing enormous demands on council finances. We must grasp the opportunities presented by the emerging combined authority arrangements while ensuring Hampshire's voice is heard strongly in regional decision-making. We face a very difficult financial outlook, with rising demand and limited resources requiring difficult decisions in the years ahead.

Above all, there is the profound, long-term question of Local Government Reorganisation. The structures we put in place now will shape how local services are delivered, communities represented and public money spent for decades to come.

Getting this wrong would have consequences far beyond any one political administration.

The election is over. The work now begins. Hampshire's residents expect maturity, cooperation and seriousness of purpose. They deserve nothing less.

Have your say on walking, wheeling and cycling improvements in northeast Romsey

Hampshire County Council is asking residents for their views on proposed active travel improvements in northeast Romsey.

The scheme is intended to create safer and more attractive routes for people walking, wheeling and cycling, particularly between new and existing neighbourhoods, schools, local shops, the town centre and Romsey railway station.

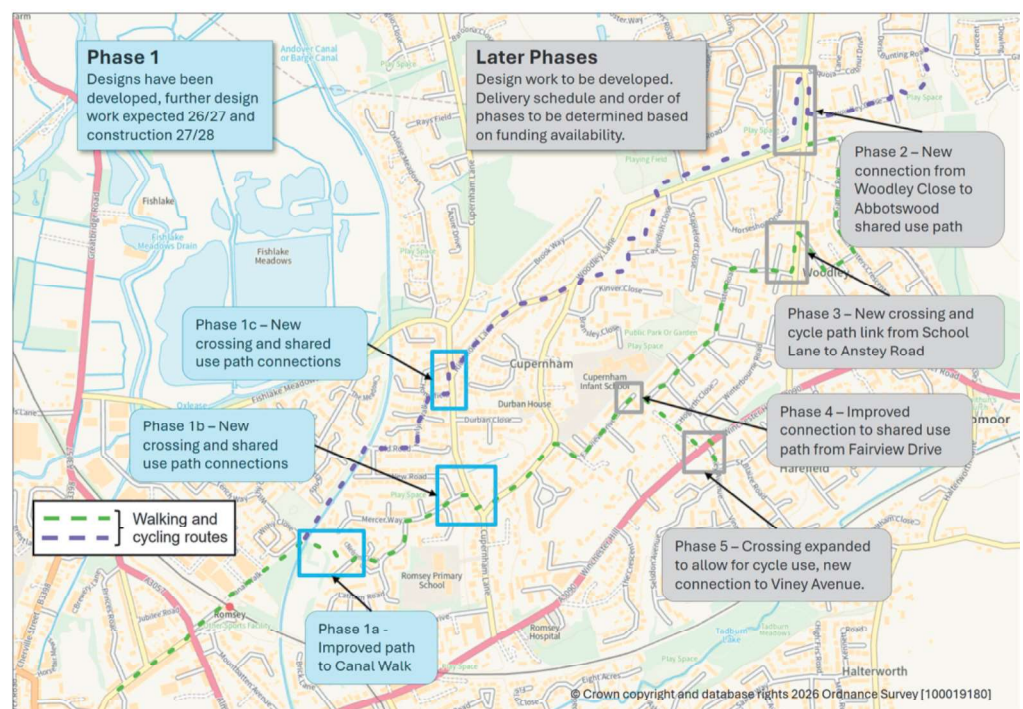
The first phase includes proposed improvements around Nelson Close to Canal Walk, Woodley Lane to Mercer Way, and Richmond Lane to Homefield, including new or improved shared-use paths, crossings and measures on Cupernham Lane.

Whatever your view, it is really important that local residents take part. These schemes work best when they are shaped by the people who know the roads, pavements, junctions and school routes best.

Please take a few minutes to read the proposals and complete the survey here:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/.../northeast-romsey-improvements>

Your feedback will help inform how the scheme is developed before any final decisions are made.



Boost for passengers as Hampshire County Council confirms funding for 100+ bus shelter upgrades

Good news for bus passengers across rural Hampshire.

Hampshire County Council has confirmed more than £554,000 of funding to help parish councils improve local bus shelters, with 41 parish councils awarded grants to refurbish or replace 137 shelters across the county.

This funding comes through Hampshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan, supported by Government bus grant funding. It will help with practical improvements such as replacing ageing shelters, upgrading structures, and adding features such as better seating and lighting.

These may seem like small improvements, but they matter. Clean, safe and welcoming shelters help make buses a more realistic and attractive option for everyday journeys — particularly in rural communities where public transport links are so important.

This sits alongside wider work to improve bus services in Hampshire, including better stops and interchanges, real-time passenger information, bus priority measures, community transport support and fare initiatives.

Bus use in Hampshire is moving in the right direction, with 26.6 million journeys made in 2024/25 — up 1.7 million on the previous year. There is still much more to do, but investment like this is part of making public transport more reliable, accessible and attractive for residents.

Support for Hampshire care leavers praised in latest Ofsted Report

I'm really pleased to share some positive news about Hampshire's support for young people leaving care.

Following a recent inspection, Ofsted has praised Hampshire County Council for providing "high-quality, responsive support" to care leavers, recognising the strong and trusted relationships built between young people and their Personal Advisers, and the tailored help available as they move into adulthood.

Leaving care can be one of the most challenging periods in a young person's life. Support with housing, education, employment, wellbeing and independence can make an enormous difference, and it is encouraging to see inspectors recognise the dedication of the staff working alongside some of Hampshire's most vulnerable young people. Ofsted particularly highlighted the way young people's voices and aspirations help shape the support they receive.

A huge thank you to everyone across Hampshire Children's Services and our partners who work so hard to support care leavers to build stable, independent and fulfilling lives. This is important work, often carried out quietly and away from the spotlight, but it changes lives.

You can read the full OfSTED report here: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80472>

RomDAG Dementia Information Day

It was great to spend some time at the **Romdag** Dementia Information Day at the Crosfield Hall and to see so many local organisations, volunteers and professionals coming together to offer support, advice and reassurance to people living with dementia and those who care for them. ROMDAG's work makes a real difference in our community.

Dementia touches so many families, often in ways that can feel overwhelming or isolating. Events like this are such an important reminder that help, guidance and friendship are available locally — and that nobody needs to face things alone. It was especially encouraging to see so many people taking the time to find out what support is available.

A huge thank you to everyone involved in organising the day, all those exhibiting, and to the volunteers who give so much of their time and energy to support others. ROMDAG continue to do fantastic work here in Romsey, and it was a pleasure to support them.

Hundreds of illicit vapes and cigarettes seized from premises in Ringwood and Totton

Good work by Hampshire County Council's Trading Standards team and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary, who have seized more than 500 illicit vapes, cigarettes and hand-rolled tobacco products from premises in Ringwood and Totton.

The products had a total street value of more than £3,000 and were found during a covert operation on 27 May — including items hidden in an armchair and an oven.

This follows a similar operation in New Milton last month, where almost £9,000 of illicit vapes, cigarettes and tobacco products were seized.

This work matters. Illegal and counterfeit products can pose serious health risks, undermine legitimate local businesses, and too often are linked to sales to underage people. Trading Standards do an important job in tackling rogue traders and keeping unsafe products off our streets.

Residents can help too. Information about counterfeit vapes or tobacco — or shops selling these products to underage people — can be reported in confidence to the Stop Illegal Tobacco hotline on 0300 999 6 999 or via the Stop Illegal Tobacco website.

Test Valley Together

Chilworth Parish Council and Nursling & Rownhams Parish Council have established a petition opposing the Local Government Reorganisation proposals.

These proposals would remove Chilworth, Nursling and Rownhams from Test Valley and place them into a new south-west Hampshire authority dominated by Southampton.

I have been clear throughout this process that local government reorganisation must not treat long-established communities as pieces on a boundary map. Chilworth, Nursling and Rownhams have deep and practical links with Test Valley — through local identity, representation, planning, services, community networks and the rural-edge character of the area.

Any changes of this scale need to be properly justified, locally grounded and based on the views of the communities affected. At the moment, many residents feel this proposal does not reflect how their communities actually live, work and identify.

That is why I support the parish councils in making sure local voices are heard clearly and firmly.

If you live in Chilworth, Nursling or Rownhams — or if you care about sensible boundaries, local identity and proper community representation — please do consider signing and sharing the petition:

<https://www.change.org/.../keep-chilworth-nursling-and...>

Tawny owl chicks at Mill Lane Meadows

Some lovely news from Test Valley Borough Council's nature reserve at Mill Lane Meadows in Sherfield English, where four tawny owl chicks have recently been discovered nesting in one of the reserve's owl boxes.

The chicks were found during a visit by TVBC Reserve Officer Gemma and Matt from the Hawk Conservancy Trust, who were reviewing potential locations for additional owl and kestrel boxes across the site. Matt, a licensed bird ringer with the British Trust for Ornithology, was able to safely ring the chicks to help monitor their future movements and success.

This is believed to be the first recorded successful nesting of a bird of prey at Mill Lane Meadows, which is a fantastic milestone for the reserve and a real testament to the value of carefully managed habitats and local conservation work.

Following this success, more nest boxes are due to be installed at Mill Lane Meadows and at a second site near Romsey later this year to help support even more birds of prey across the borough.

County Councillor Grants

The new year of the County Councillor grant scheme will open later this month. As always, do please let me know if you or an organisation in your community could benefit from support. £5,000 is available in grants of up to £1,000 per organisation.

Last year grants were made to Sherfield English Netball club, Wellow Lunch Club, Nursling and Rownhams May Fayre, Nursling Village Hall, Lockerley School PTA, West Tytherley Village Shop and Community Hub and Lockerley Scouts.

Getting About

I've been to Wellow, Awbridge, Lockerley, Michelmersh & Timsbury and Sherfield English Parish Councils. I've also attended the Parish Assemblies at Lockerley, Michelmersh & Timsbury, Sherfield English, Awbridge and Melchet Park and Plaitford.

Contact

Do please get in touch if I can ever be of any help. For those of you using social media, I post very regular updates on many local issues including roadworks and planning applications on my Facebook page here: facebook.com/nickadamsking

Contact me:
t: 07771 727402
e: Nick.Adams-King@hants.gov.uk
 facebook.com/nickadamsking

CLLR NICK ADAMS-KING
Caring for Romsey Rural



General Updates from HCC:

Applications closing soon for school and post-16 transport

Hampshire parents and carers are being advised to apply now for school and post-16 transport for September 2026, as application deadlines are approaching quickly

[Applications closing soon for school and post-16 transport | Hampshire County Council](#)

County Council website unavailable from 22 to 25 May

To allow for essential maintenance to IT systems, some County Council services will be unavailable online, or by telephone, from 5pm on Friday 22 May until 11pm on Monday 25 May – the late May bank holiday weekend

[County Council website unavailable from 22 to 25 May | Hampshire County Council](#)

Hampshire Fostering LIVE! comes to Eastleigh – meet foster carers and find out more

People across Hampshire are being invited to a free event in Eastleigh to learn more about fostering and meet those already doing it

[Hampshire Fostering LIVE! comes to Eastleigh – meet foster carers and find out more | Hampshire County Council](#)

County Council Election Results Declared

Votes cast in the County Council election held on Thursday 7 May have now been counted, with no single party achieving overall control

[County Council Election Results Declared | Hampshire County Council](#)

Supported internships: a step towards work for young people with SEND in Hampshire

Hampshire County Council is highlighting supported internships as a practical way to help young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) move from education into paid employment – with the right support in place

[Supported internships: a step towards work for young people with SEND in Hampshire | Hampshire County Council](#)

Media notification: Traffic management during Wickham Horse Fair – Wednesday 20 May

Temporary traffic management arrangements will be in place during the Wickham Horse Fair which will be held on Wednesday 20 May 2025 to ensure the event runs smoothly and safely

[Media notification: Traffic management during Wickham Horse Fair – Wednesday 20 May | Hampshire County Council](#)

Support for Hampshire care leavers praised in latest Ofsted report

Care leavers in Hampshire receive ‘consistent and responsive support from practitioners who know them well’ and are ‘supported effectively towards independence’. Those are the key findings in an Ofsted report published today, following a recent inspection focusing on Hampshire County Council’s specific support for care leavers

[Support for Hampshire care leavers praised in latest Ofsted report | Hampshire County Council](#)

Botley Bypass - drivers reminded to allow more time for journeys ahead of road closures over May half-term

Road users are being reminded to allow more time for journeys ahead of planned road closures needed to build a new roundabout at the junction of the A3051 and A334 - an integral part of the wider Botley Bypass improvements

[Botley Bypass - drivers reminded to allow more time for journeys ahead of road closures over May half-term | Hampshire County Council](#)

Hampshire County Council Announces Leader and Cabinet Team

Hampshire County Council has confirmed its new Administration, re-elected Leader and new-look Cabinet, following the 7 May local elections which resulted in no political party gaining overall control. Since the election result was declared, political parties have been in discussion on how the Authority will be governed

[Hampshire County Council Announces Leader and Cabinet Team | Hampshire County Council](#)