

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS**

2 MARCH 2020

1. Weather impacts Hampshire Highways

February saw the arrival of two storms in quick succession – Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis – which resulted in an extra 2,000 reports for Hampshire Highways to deal with over two consecutive weekends. Intense rainfall and strong winds caused widespread debris (fallen trees, mud, branches) and surface water on the roads, and highways teams worked round the clock to keep Hampshire’s roads clear.

Throughout the year, Highways teams carry out a programme of gully cleansing, cutting and cleaning grips (channels that run between the highway and roadside ditches) and new drainage schemes in preparation for wet weather. Around £2 million is earmarked annually for maintaining Hampshire’s 900km of highway drains and roadside gullies, but there are many watercourses on private land which can become blocked without regular maintenance. All landowners are urged to make sure ditches and drains on their land are kept clear of leaves, vegetation and other debris as blockages can lead to flooding on local roads after heavy rainfall. Surface water or fallen trees and debris on the highway can be reported direct to the County Council at www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems

We also advise residents to keep themselves informed and to be prepared by signing up to the Environment Agency flood alert system:

<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/warnings>

2. Coronavirus preparedness

Hampshire County Council and health partners continue to keep a close watch on the development of the Coronavirus outbreak – with processes in place to respond, if and when required.

Although a small number of cases have been recorded in the UK, there have been no confirmed cases in Hampshire. The Government's Chief Medical Officer continues to advise that the risk to the public is moderate, with risks to individuals remaining low. Hampshire residents can stay up to date with the latest information and guidance at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

One of the best ways to minimise the spread of any virus is to adopt good hand hygiene and to follow the Catch it, Bin it, Kill it advice if you have a cold or cough (see this link: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/09/catch-bin-kill.pdf> which can be printed and placed in washrooms and kitchens).

3. New "Business Hampshire" service launched

Previously known as Invest in Hampshire, the new service has been created to showcase all that is great about Hampshire with the aim to attract new business investment into the county and to support the growth and success of our existing local businesses, large and small.

Hampshire faces strong competition from other areas of the UK. We need to make sure that we make Hampshire stand out, and bring all Hampshire has to offer as a business location to the attention of potential investors.

The new website offers information about the Hampshire economy, key business sectors, business news and how the Business Hampshire team can support businesses. Also featured is a new interactive property and development portfolio, showcasing the key commercial and mixed-use development, investment and occupier opportunities available across the county and Isle of Wight. Here is a link:

<https://businesshampshire.co.uk/>

A Hampshire place-making strategy is also being undertaken to support this initiative. This strategy will involve consultation with stakeholders and the public across Hampshire.

4. Winner announced in annual South Downs photo competition



As ponies gathered around a tree at sunset at Cissbury Ring, near Worthing, budding photographer Joe James snapped away – and the result can be seen above.

This blissful photograph has won the People’s Choice Award in the National Park’s Annual Photography Competition. Joe, a 38-year-old security manager from Horsham, wins a £100 prize.

Joe, who is a well-known local advocate for autism awareness through his own Facebook page, has been taking images for the past two years and has been honing his talent.

“I’m autistic and proud,” said the dad-of-two, who has never entered a photo competition before. “Being autistic allows me to hyperfocus on photography to really hone this skill so I can get the perfect image. Taking pictures is my version of mindfulness – I find it calms me and relaxes me.”

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers