

# Hayling East Ward Matters

## Promoting Hayling and informing residents about local issues in 2024



Dear Resident,

Christmas 2023 was a welcome break for many of us and, as usual, Hayling hosted dozens of wonderful events from **Eastoke Corner** and the **Hayling Light Railway's** illuminated late-night shopping to the **Businessmen's** superb Christmas Street Party in **Mengham**, outgoing vicar Jenny Gaffin's last ever Hayling Christmas fayres, concerts and services at **St. Mary's** and **St. Peter's Churches**, and of course the **Hayling Lions' Christmas Sleigh**; thank you to everyone who organised and everyone who attended these fabulous events - we were truly spoiled!

Looking forward to 2024 there are a number of positives incoming, but also some issues outstanding. Let's start on our south coast with the seafront.



*Rod Hall from the Rambling Rascals on East Hayling beach, Summer 2023*

As well as HBC's incoming new **outdoor gym** (along with improved borders) at Eastoke, the council are also investing, at last, in a more modern disabled toilet and **improved accessibility** structures for less mobile residents and visitors along the seafront (by the Chichester Avenue car park). Thanks go to Nigel Page, Rod Hall and the Rambling Rascals for their determined campaign to make this happen - the Rascals became a key part of the consultation group for seafront access in mid-December 2023, proving that persistence does pay off! Fingers crossed that the first stage of improvements will be in position in time for the new bathing season at the end of May 2024... watch this space.



*These Boxing Day Dippers seemed to appreciate our local activists' efforts to advertise Surfers Against Sewage warnings for local and visiting bathers through a simple red/green flag system. Unfortunately, an HBC officer discovered the flag relocated at **John's Cafe near Inn on the Beach** and confiscated it, making local and national news (BBC)*

Meanwhile, HBC are still stalling on efforts to **procure signage and provide electronic updates** along the seafront to warn bathers of raw sewage discharges by Southern Water that could affect their health and safety in the water; I can absolutely promise you that all the opposition councillors will be pressing them to fulfil the promise they made to do this in June 2023. If the Office for Environmental Protection is right and the Government themselves are failing to comply with environmental law and allowing raw sewage to be discharged by water companies more frequently (OEP Watchdog spokesman, September 2023), we want to know **when** and **where** in order to keep bathers safe and get people's water confidence back so they can enjoy the benefits of open water swimming and sport. After our discussions, I know that *all* opposition councillors and candidates will continue to work hard with local campaigners to prevent the errors of Government from negatively impacting the health and wellbeing of our coastal community.



*Whilst most flooding comes under the auspices of Hampshire County Council, this flooding at Eastoke Avenue last Autumn was the result of a faulty valve which Southern Water are responsible for*

Although **flooded roads** are an issue for Hampshire County Council, and specifically Hampshire Highways, I was in touch with Southern Water several times regarding broken valves and of course with HBC when there have been potential threats to property that edge towards an emergency procedure. In Northney, NEHRA have been particularly concerned about impassable roads at junctions with Copse Lane, St. Peter's Road and Northney Road and I suspect this will be a key issue in the County Council elections in 2025. For reference, here is the HCC Flow Chart (with links) when reporting flooding:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/flooding/reportingflooding>

However, if there is an imminent threat to property and safety, then please call:

- **Southern Water** (24hr helpline) on 0330 303 0368
- **HBC** (main switchboard) on 023 9244 6019 or 07442 453670 (out of hours)

### **The Hayling Tip**

On another County Council matter, it was sad to see that our Waste Recycling Centre has been designated for closure. I have started a petition (below) for residents to show their support. I am not only concerned about the long trip to Havant and back and the repercussions of excess traffic on the emergency services, pollution and tourism if our tip closes, but also the wonderful workers who make our recycling easier and even fun: what happens to them? Please, show your support by signing here: <https://www.change.org/SaveHaylingTip>

### **Violent Crime and Anti Social Behaviour on Hayling**

Violent crime across the nation has increased by more than 250% since 2012 according to the Government's own data, with Havant now statistically the second most dangerous major town in Hampshire (crimerate.co.uk) and rising. However, for most of us on Hayling it is anti-social behaviour that most frequently affects our daily lives, and that is why, as a local teacher and sports coach, I've been working closely with Hayling police and parents across the island to let our young people know that we are watching at all times and that, in a small community such as

ours, we will quickly identify them thanks to the 'Hayling network'. Of course, we can be guilty of thinking that young people account for all anti-social behaviour, which is not true and worth remembering... in any case, what our local police would like all good citizens to do, perhaps most of all, is to **directly report every crime witnessed**. As I wrote in my Autumn Newsletter, we presently under-report crime, and *that* has led to the false notion that Hayling has practically no crime at all. If you do witness any shoplifting or anti-social behaviour, please take a few minutes to ensure Hampshire Constabulary have more accurate data and can deploy more officers here: <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/ro/report/asb/asb-v3/report-antisocial-behaviour/>

### **Parking at the Hayling Health Centre**

Following a discussion with local NHS staff, I wrote to the Leader at HBC in late November to ask if more parking could be allocated to the Health Centre (Waterside and Elms in Mengham), given the significant increase in the number of medical professionals now operating out of those practices (there are now just 23 parking bays for over 100 full and part-time medical staff). Councillor Rennie has responded, saying he is actively investigating the matter and that he'll meet on site early this year to make a full appraisal of the situation. Fingers crossed he can help as parking is his remit - again, watch this space.

### **Allotments**

Allotments on Hayling are a lifeline to many - an opportunity to get some gentle exercise, enjoy some fresh air and perhaps grow some organic, healthy food! My good friend Netty Shepherd (an expert in all things environment-related), has been speaking to our local allotment owners about accessibility for residents - we are both concerned about the lack of access for less mobile users at Hayling allotments and that HBC seem to be dragging their feet in enabling more efficient and productive resources for them (even cost-free options). Keep an eye out in the Hayling Herald for her article in early Spring... good luck Netty!



*Netty Shepherd outside the Hayling Allotments in Palmerston Road where she is campaigning for better access for disabled and elderly residents - users whose health can benefit the most!*

### Post Box gets Gold Treatment

Finally, activists have also been at work on the Stoke Village Post Box (you really do have to love Hayling residents' proactive passion!), giving it a respray of gold paint in honour of Eilidh McIntyre, the Hayling sailor who won gold at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo and who retired last year. However, it has also brought the post box quite a lot of attention, and might just guarantee its future for local residents after Royal Mail officially closed it at the end of last year... they have a campaign Facebook page and you can support the *Save Stoke Village Post Box* petition here: <https://bit.ly/StokePB>



### Contact Mark

Come along to the next Local Council Surgery at the Hayling Island Community Centre on **Sunday 7th January 2024 at 1200hrs - 1400hrs**, **Saturday 24th February 2024 at 1100hrs - 1300hrs**, or **Sunday 14th April 2024 at 1200hrs - 1400hrs** or contact me via email on: [mark.coates@havant.gov.uk](mailto:mark.coates@havant.gov.uk) or [mark.coates@havantlabour.org.uk](mailto:mark.coates@havantlabour.org.uk)

Or via Facebook/Instagram: search **Mark Coates - Hayling East**

### Join your local Labour Party

Come along to our next social at Bedhampton Community Centre for a *Burns Night Supper* on **Saturday 27th January 2024** - where you can meet our fabulous supporters and find out more. They're always busy evenings and good fun, too! Email/message me for more information or if you'd like a lift to/from Bedhampton.

