

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Government is pressing ahead with reorganising local government in Surrey. It plans to abolish Surrey County Council and all the borough councils, including Reigate & Banstead. In future there will just be two or three massive unitary councils providing all local government services.

Tim Oliver, the Conservative Leader of Surrey County Council, has volunteered to be at the front of the queue for this change, without safeguarding the position regarding the huge £2.3 billion debt which Woking Council has run up. The Minister wants to spread this debt over all the residents in Surrey. We in Reigate & Banstead Council have no debt whatsoever. The Conservatives have jeopardised our position.

The Conservatives at the County Council have opted for two rather than three new unitary councils, against the combined opposition of all other councillors, and against the views of 10 of the 11 borough councils. There is logic to a split into three natural geographies – north, east and west. But a split into two will put our residents in with some strange bedfellows – possibly bringing us past Heathrow and in with Staines. Alternatively in with the whole rural sweep of the county round to Farnham.

There will be upfront costs in the change, and there will be efficiencies and savings in merging borough council functions, but there will be offsetting inefficiencies and additional costs in breaking up the county council services. There will also be the cost of “double running” councils for a period. The speed of the process means cost estimates are very broad brush and unreliable at this stage, and there is a high chance of getting them wrong.

Government is driving these changes as part of its growth agenda – it is more than doubling the housing targets in our area, and we are facing loss of green belt and increasingly dense infill developments.

Government also sees the change as a step towards devolution; to us it is more like a huge step towards centralisation, with decisions made remotely at the centre without focus on the local issues and needs.



**NORK & TATTENHAMS
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS**

VOTE RESIDENTS

HARP



SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION 2025

Thursday 1st May 7am - 10 pm

Dear Voter,

I have been proud to represent residents at the Borough Council, doing my best to improve our local environment – in our streets, pavements and verges, and in our parks and open spaces.

I have been diligent in planning matters, working with residents in opposing inappropriate schemes and suggesting changes and planning conditions where improvements were required. I will continue to do this and support the preparation of a Local Plan that protects our area.

I have worked with retiring County Councillor Nick Harrison in promoting resurfacing and actions to improve our highways. I will continue to focus on this as a priority.

The County Council will only have another two years before it is swept away, together with the Borough Council. It is an important time to ensure that the local voice continues to be heard as functions are transferred over, to preserve the best we have locally at the moment, but of course to look for improvements and efficiencies.

If you elect me, I will join the group of Residents' Association Councillors, coming from all over Surrey, and the largest opposition group at the Council. The Conservatives are single mindedly committed to two unitary councils. Residents' Association Councillors are taking a logical approach to seek the best solution, balancing all the factors (*finance, growth, local representation and community*), and favour three unitary councils.

The Reorganisation agenda does nothing to tackle the real challenges which we have in the County Council – particularly social care and special education. More resource needs to be put into preventative services, avoiding more expensive intervention at a later stage. We must tackle the crisis in Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (*SEND*) in our schools, supporting parents and teachers to ensure assessments are completed within statutory deadlines and then putting the right help in place for our children.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Harp

election2025@norkresidents.com
01737 – 354309



Peter Harp

- Resident of Nork for over 50 years and Nork borough councillor for the last 6 years.
- Member of the Planning Committee and Standards Committee. Chaired working groups on planning, environmental sustainability and green-spaces strategy.
- Qualified archaeologist who has advised Historic England, directed excavations and surveys. Lectured at national museums. Member of Surrey County Council Historic Environment Forum. Former Chairman of Surrey Archaeological Research Committee.
- Banstead Commons Conservator. Administrator of Friends of Nork Park. Volunteer for Queen Elizabeth Foundation.
- Worked closely with retiring County Councillor Nick Harrison on local issues such as verges, trees, pavements and roads.



NORK & TATTENHAMS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS

norkresidents.com



Peter Harp

ENVIRONMENT

At Peter's suggestion the Friends of Nork Park group (1,800 members) was set up to protect our park and regularly litter pick across Nork. The Nork Park Conservation Volunteers, organised by Cllr George Hinton, increase biodiversity through woodland management and hedge-laying.

We've refurbished the park's two playgrounds, the trim trail and the sports pavilion changing rooms. A new pump track has just been built and the tennis and basketball courts are about to be upgraded, all mainly due to funding secured by Residents' Association councillors.



Work in progress on the pump track



The refurbished sports pavilion changing rooms

Peter planted the new Coronation Oaks and joined residents around Rosebushes persuading the County Council to replant trees along Reigate Road. Peter oversees the Nork programme of verge tree planting, part-funded by the borough council and promoting anticipated council repairs to Nork Way verges.

Peter's background is in environmental science. He is a Banstead Commons Conservator, protecting 1,361 acres of local countryside including Banstead Downs and Burgh Heath. He chaired a council group on environmental sustainability and chairs another on open spaces strategy. He co-authored English Heritage's published guidance for professional archaeologists.



A successful litter pick

ROADS & PAVEMENTS

Our recent priorities were resurfacing the worst section of Nork Way, between Beacon Way and Parkwood View, the A240 Reigate Road near Asda and from Yew Tree Bottom to Rosebushes, and pavements in Nork Way. These were achieved after extensive lobbying. Roundwood View and Fir Tree Close are next on our list.



We review our roads and pavements, campaigning continually for our priorities. We're proud that over the last 12 years more than 60 resurfacing and repair projects have been delivered.

Recently this included footpaths from Banstead Station to Eastgate and from the A217 to The Horseshoe, which is a vital link to local schools

and Banstead High Street; also pavements in The Drive, Picquets Way, Bunbury Way and Fir Tree Close.

On the roads, we have had schemes in Banstead Road, Harkness Close and Waterer Gardens. Our next priorities include Montrouge Crescent, Yew Tree Bottom and parts of the A217.

We've begun replacing the wooden bus shelters with new ones in Fir Tree Road. One is done and another has funding agreed.

We continue to look at road safety, including parking around schools, weekend parking near Nork Park and speeding. We support the Community Speedwatch scheme set up locally by our RA Cllr Tim Snuggs.



COUNCIL BUDGETS

With councils in the national news going bankrupt, councils must be more efficient using our money. We scrutinise budgets in detail, exposing wasteful spending and highlighting ways to get better value.

At Reigate & Banstead, Residents' Association councillors voted against the budget last year as we didn't support an extra £4 million on a Redhill building project which was poorly managed. Nor did we support a Green Party proposal to spend an extra £500,000 annually on unnecessary projects. This year, we successfully opposed a premature budget commitment lacking details to allocate £10 million to repair the Redhill Harlequin theatre and up to £2.5 million on a temporary venue.

At Surrey, Residents' Association councillors voted against the budget which reduced spending on early help services for children, which would have helped avoid costly statutory intervention at a later date.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF NORK R A

The Residents' Association believes there is no place for party politics in local government. Our creed is to seek what is best for Nork from our councillors without having to follow a party line.

As we have seats on both the county and borough councils, we are able to represent residents on all local matters and give you a consistent and joined up approach. Our councillors are there to help with the problems which matter to you as local residents.

Peter Harp is an active, dedicated and effective borough councillor. I commend him to you, to also serve as your county councillor.

Bob Ferris Chairman, Nork Residents' Association

PLANNING

The Residents' Association vigorously scrutinises new planning applications, seeking to protect the character of Nork, whether gardens, trees or amenity space.

We've had some notable successes, reducing the number of houses in new developments by some 250 houses. Where we can't halt developments we often manage to add conditions that reduce their impact, such as the 29 conditions on a recent application in Nork Way. Sometimes, despite our best efforts, the Council's refusal is set aside by an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol.

We strive to protect the Green Belt and local countryside, opposing Epsom and Ewell's threat to land near Ruden Way.

Your Nork Borough Councillors



Peter Harp

George Hinton

Gemma Adamson