

## County Councillor Report – October 2025

Since it was introduced in December 2022, **West Sussex County Council's Lane Rental Scheme** has significantly reduced the inconvenience caused to residents by roadworks. The Council is one of the first four local authorities in the country to operate a lane rental scheme. It was introduced because West Sussex experiences more than the average amount of roadworks for a county road network. Across the network on any given day there can be as many as 117 individual sets of road works on its 2,500 miles (4,000km) of roads, with 42,648 permits issued in 2024. Since the scheme has been in place it has reduced time taken for roadworks by more than 3,000 days, equivalent to nearly 8 and a half years, seen the length of time taken for utility roadworks shortened by 32.48% and helped generate £millions for reinvestment in local highways network.

Government-endorsed Lane rental schemes allow a highway authority to charge up to £2,500 a day for works on its busiest roads. The daily rate charged varies according to the type of work and the disruption it will cause. The scheme encourages utility companies and contractors to plan works so that less time is needed to close or restrict access to pavements and roads. Residents living near roads where it is applied also experience less noise, air pollution and inconvenience at peak times. Revenue raised by the scheme is reinvested in the highways network including trials of the use of new technology, such as AI, to detect and repair safety defects and a proportion is reserved for road-related community schemes. Organisations can apply to the Lane Rental Surplus Fund for projects that benefit West Sussex highways.

Across West Sussex 907 roads are included in the scheme, but not every important arterial route in the county is covered. The Council is consulting with the Government to allow it to include important rural roads and link sections of busy routes to ensure there is a connected and cohesive network that benefits the whole county.

**Recycling Centres:** As the days grow shorter and seasonal demand decreases, Recycling Centres across West Sussex will switch to their autumn and winter opening hours from Wednesday 1 October 2025 until Tuesday 31 March 2026. During this period, all centres will be open from 9am to 4pm. To reflect reduced visitor numbers, some centres will close for an additional day each week. The updated opening days locally are  
Billingshurst - Monday to Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday  
Horsham - Monday, Thursday to Sunday  
All centres will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

**Local Government Reform:** West Sussex County Council has stated its preference for a single unitary authority for the whole of the county as its preferred option for local government reorganisation. The council maintains that a single authority is best for providing high-quality and financial sustainable services to residents. A business case for local government reorganisation in West Sussex was developed and agreed by all 8 councils in the county. Each council is taking its own decision on its preferred option. The joint business case and each authority's preference was submitted to Government on 26 September for a final decision in spring 2026.

The business case for West Sussex draws on feedback from the views of 9,000 residents who took part in engagement work over the summer. What came across very strongly in the responses was a desire for local councils to be focused on the differing needs of the places they are responsible for, and for an effective local voice in shaping decisions. This will be a key requirement to build into the new council or councils when they are created. The Government will run its own consultation on the options in the coming months, giving the public a chance to express their view based on the full business case, including the estimated financial impact of each option, which was not available for the earlier engagement exercise.

**Romance fraud** is on the increase - between April and June this year, West Sussex residents lost nearly £443,000 after being tricked into believing they were in a loving relationship. As a response to the rising number of people worldwide losing money and trust through fake online relationships, World Romance Scam Prevention Day was started two years ago in the US.

**New campaign for sexual health:** WSCC launched its new Be SAFE campaign during the recent Sexual Health Week to promote the importance of regular testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and making the right choice when it comes to contraception. SAFE stands for 'Sex Aware, Feel Empowered'. The new webpage provides an overview of reliable sources of information you can trust, so you can quickly and easily find where you can go for services, advice and support such as STI testing, free condoms and more across West Sussex.

**Road safety** is taking centre stage in Sussex secondary schools this autumn with the return of Theatre-in-Education performances. These engaging shows use drama, humour and audience participation to help students learn about road traffic dangers in a memorable way.

- Year 7 students (ages 11–12) will see *Look Up*, a show focused on pedestrian safety and responsibility, which is particularly important for those who may be walking to school without their parents for the first time.
- Year 11 students (ages 15–16) will watch *Take a Second*, which explores the impact of choices made as passengers and future drivers as they reach their final year of secondary school.

The programme is supported by the County Council, and neighbouring authorities in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, reflecting a shared commitment to road safety education.

**Flu Vaccinations** – flu can be very unpleasant for children and can sometimes cause serious problems, such as pneumonia. Children under the age of 5 years have one of the highest rates of hospital admissions due to flu. Getting children vaccinated not only protects them but also helps protect their families. It reduces the risk of flu spreading to relatives who may be more vulnerable, such as grandparents or family members with long-term health conditions. Vaccination can also help prevent the disruption flu causes, meaning less likelihood of needing time off work or other activities to care for a sick child, or becoming unwell oneself. The nasal spray flu vaccine for children is quick, safe and helps keep families and communities protected over winter. It's offered to children aged 2 to 3 years, school-aged children (Reception to Year 11) and children with certain long-term health conditions.

**A24 Worthing to Dorking** - along with Surrey County Council, the County Council is inviting residents to help shape future transport improvements along the A24 between Worthing, Horsham and Dorking. Please give your feedback on the link below  
<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/we-want-your-feedback-on-how-to-improve-the-a24-between-worthing-horsham-and-dorking>

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