

COURT LEET 2024

Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
1	Junior Conservationists/ Gavin Miller	Sewage Pollution Warning Notices for the Itchen Estuary
	<p>The Itchen Estuary with its sheltered waters, long high tides and proximity to the Solent has been central to the history and development of Southampton.</p> <p>Many of our estuary's wildlife rich saltmarshes and green riverbanks have been lost to development over the centuries but much still remains. This precious blue green space in our city has huge value for biodiversity, ecology, mental and physical well-being and for recreation.</p> <p>During the 19th century, as Southampton became more prosperous and populous, lack of a proper sewage system led to serious pollution of the Itchen and Test estuaries, foul smells and sewage flooding of dwellings.</p> <p>Fortunately, a gifted civil engineer, was appointed by the Southampton Corporation to clean up the town of Southampton. James Lemon brought to Southampton his experience of the sanitation engineering needed by London to bring cholera outbreaks and appalling River Thames sewage pollution under control.</p> <p>On the 18th of December 1871 the corporation passed a resolution enabling acquisition of land at St Denys for sewage treatment. Following completion of the St Denys works, Portswood and St Denys, alongside the estuary with its abundant fish and wildlife, became recognised as one of the most pleasant residential areas of Southampton.</p> <p>However, late 20th century lack of continuing investment resulted in a steady deterioration of Itchen water quality. The 1989 water industry privatisation promised to release the investment needed to clean up England's rivers and seas. This promise has failed to materialise. Our rivers are now frequently treated as open sewers. Southampton's 21st century standard of sewage treatment often resembles Southampton's 19th century completely inadequate sanitation.</p> <p>Friends of the Itchen Estuary and the Junior Conservationists have found very high levels of E coli in the estuary. Our findings are beyond doubt and based on over 150 water quality tests, three quarters of which have been</p>	

COURT LEET 2024

performed by a UKAS accredited laboratory. Over 100 of these tests have found E coli levels which are between 2 and 10 times higher than the level regarded by the Environment Agency as safe for swimming.

We have heard many first-hand accounts of gastrointestinal and skin infections after swimming, rowing and canoeing. Southern Water has a copy of our extensive May Itchen E coli report. It has said there is no likelihood of Portswood having the tertiary sewage treatment processes which have been installed at Woolston and Millbrook sewage plants to sterilise continuously flowing sewage effluent. Going by Southern Water's own figures, 6 Olympic swimming pools' worth of sewage effluent and 140 trillion E coli pour into the Itchen Estuary from Portswood sewage works every day, rain or shine, summer and winter.

The public health risks of high faecal pathogen levels are well known. In March this year, following the discovery of very high River Thames E coli levels, Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race rowers were advised not to enter the water and to cover any wounds. Three members of the Oxford team suffered from gastrointestinal infections. Friends of the Itchen Estuary has reported E coli levels at Cobden Bridge over three times higher than those reported for the River Thames in March.

Friends of the Itchen Estuary and the Junior Conservationists request permission to place warning notices in prominent positions around the estuary. These notices would make people aware of high Itchen E coli levels, the risks of infection from faecal pathogens and would also include risk minimisation advice. For example, covering cuts, showering after water activities, and washing hands before eating.

We hope Southampton City Council will agree there is a moral responsibility to make people aware of the public health risk posed by dangerously high Itchen faecal pathogen levels and will agree to our request.

COURT LEET 2024

	Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero Responsible Officer Lead Debbie Ward	Councillor Savage
RESPONSE		
<p>Southampton City Council is concerned by the high levels of E. Coli recorded in the River Itchen and the Cabinet Member and relevant officers have meet with Mr Millar to discuss the sampling activity undertaken and the proposal to introduce warning signage in more detail.</p> <p>While Southampton City Council is not the regulator of the Portswood Waste Water Treatment Works, which is the role of the Environment Agency, we are engaged in discussions with Southern Water and the Environment Agency on this and related matters, and incorporated the perspectives of the Junior Conservationists and Mr Millar to inform our work in this area.</p> <p>Southampton City Council is concerned that the current regulatory arrangements in place to ensure our waters are not sufficient to hold those polluting our waters to account to act and intend to ask the national government to review this.</p>		
Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
2	ANDY GRAVELL	Impact and Benefits of Tourism
<p>On 21st September there was a Southampton home game, 2 cruise ships in port, and a peak day for boat show visitors. Traffic backed up along the A33 between Queens Park and Millbrook station, with delays of 30 minutes. It was lucky there were only 2 ships in port, as previously three were shown on the timetable. In fact, every day with 3 or more cruises starting from Southampton, the traffic backs up.</p> <p>Next year there are currently 62 such days scheduled. There is an economic cost to these delays, not to mention the pollution.</p>		

COURT LEET 2024

	<p>It has been claimed* that each cruise ship brings £2M into the local economy. Around 600 cruises start here each year. The average salary is £30K, so these cruises should support 40,000 local jobs.</p> <p>It is also claimed# that the boat show adds £25M local value. If so, this event should support over 800 local jobs.</p> <p>It seems clear that most of these jobs do not exist, or are not local. One reason might be that many of these visitors drive in and out without buying anything from any Southampton business. A professional economic analysis would, moreover, take into account negative impacts such as traffic delays and consequential loss of earnings for other local businesses.</p> <p>I therefore urge the council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) commission an independent professional report into the local impacts and benefits of tourism 2) use the insights generated to mitigate the impacts and optimise the benefits 3) encourage more visitors to stay in Southampton rather than just driving in and out <p>* https://www.countypress.co.uk/news/24206282.cunards-queen-anne-welcomed-southampton-flotilla/</p> <p># https://planningpublicaccess.southampton.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=neighbourComments&keyVal=S4FF1DOZMJS00</p>	
	<p>Cabinet Member Responsible Leader of The Council Officer Lead Stephen Haynes</p>	<p>Councillor Fielker</p>
<p>RESPONSE</p> <p>Thank you for your helpful presentment as it touches on matters that we are seeking to address through the recently established Destination Partnership (DP). The DP focuses on improving tourism in the city and collecting evidence and data from a variety of sources to build a picture of the benefits and impacts of tourism. This includes addressing issues around, for example, transport, scheduling of festivals and events, marketing and communications and creating a place that local residents can enjoy and visitors wish to stay and experience. Through partnership collaboration the aim is to pool resources to maximise the opportunities to, ensure the City and its residents benefits from tourism. As a result of the DP work we expect to see an increase in employment opportunities related to tourism. The DP comprises stakeholders such as ABP, Carnival, Southampton Airport, South Western Rail, University of Southampton, Southampton Solent University, Blue Star, British Marine, Southampton Airport, Southampton Forward, GO! Southampton, the Hoteliers Association and the Council, who are working together to create a sustainable destination city.</p>		

COURT LEET 2024

Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
3	Mrs Chorley City of Southampton Society	The Future of South Stoneham House
	<p>South Stoneham House, built c1708 is a Grade 2 Queen Anne building of national importance built on the site of an ancient manor. It was probably designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, pupil of Sir Christopher Wren. Later in the 1770's the grounds were landscaped by Capability Brown.</p> <p>It has been owned by the University of Southampton since 1920 to home students, but has been empty since 2005. It is on the save Britain's Heritage register of buildings at risk deteriorating both inside and outside with water damage both inside and outside with clear water damage on the exterior.</p> <p>Repairing and preserving the building is becoming urgent as is finding a new use for it. We urge the Southampton City Council, owner of the landscape surrounding area of the unique grounds to work with the university to ensure that South Stoneham House is repaired and preserves and brought back into use.</p>	
	Cabinet Member Responsible Leader of the Council Officer Lead Stephen Haynes	Councillor Fielker
<p>RESPONSE</p> <p>Following a recent query raised by a member of the public, the Council's Historic Environment Officer has visited the property and noted the poor condition of the brickwork/downpipes, and the level of vegetation ingress around the base of the building to the front and back. The balcony ironwork on the southern elevation is also an area of concern.</p> <p>When comparing to images taken of the building in October 2023 - the property appears to be deteriorating. This is a grade II* listed building, and officers have informed the University Planning Liaison Officer to contact the owner of the property (the University), advising that it is imperative that the building is made safe and secure from water/vegetation ingress at all times and that they must seek to implement measures to address the issues outlined above as a matter of urgency whilst proposals for its future reuse continue to be explored.</p>		

COURT LEET 2024

Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
4	Graham Linecar Southampton Commons and Parks Protection Society	Mayflower Park
<p>SCAPPS is disappointed, after years of correspondence and meetings, so little has been done to make improvements. Funding is a major constraint. My presentment asks for a more pro-active approach in seeking and securing funding from external sources so individual Park improvements can go-ahead more quickly. For example, the City Council recently allowed Carnival UK to use part of the Park for a corporate hospitality event; has the City Council agreed more such events? It shows Carnival’s appreciation of the special qualities of Mayflower Park. They could be asked to help fund Park improvement projects to which they can put their brand-name, such as installation of information boards about the Port and cruise ships to be seen from the Park.</p> <p>Second, my presentment asks ways be found to break what seems to be becoming an annual cycle of newly restored grass being immediately damaged by an event. Over the past 12 months, the main grass area was fenced-off from recreation use for 4 or 5 months for recovery after re-seeding, and then 1 month each for, first, Seawork then the Boat Show – and may well have to be closed-off again this autumn for repair of damage from events.</p>		
<p>Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero</p> <p>Responsible Officer Lead Debbie Ward</p>		<p>Councillor Savage</p> <p>Debbie Ward, Executive Director – Resident Services</p>
<p>RESPONSE</p> <p>Regarding the recent event hosted by Carnival UK at Mayflower Park, this arrangement was approved with the understanding that it would remain open to the public, and the organisers assured us that the activities would primarily take place on the hard standing area to minimise any risk to the grass. This event was not intended to be a private gathering. While there are no current plans for similar events, should such opportunities arise in the future, we will ensure that any event is fully accessible to the public, and that appropriate measures are in place to protect the park.</p>		

COURT LEET 2024

We fully understand the concerns about the repeated wear-and-tear on the grassed areas of Mayflower Park. The City Council is conscious of the need to strike a balance between hosting events that bring significant social and economic benefits to the city, and maintaining our parks as spaces for the public to enjoy throughout the year. Southampton is fortunate to have extensive green spaces, and, in comparison with cities of a similar size, only a small proportion of our parks is used for events over relatively short periods.

The ability to access sufficient funding to maintain and improve parks is a long term problem going back several decades. Significant funds from s106 and CIL have been invested in the parks over a number of years however, the availability of this funding is variable, and a more consistent income stream is required. The need for a more structured approach to funding has been recognised and incorporated into the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy Delivery Plan through its first action which is to:

1.1.1 "Develop a "grant ready" project list and a funding plan, identify and prioritise projects needed to enhance, extend and connect the green and blue infrastructure (GI) across the city to form a network, a green grid."

The Green Grid covers all green and blue infrastructure in the city and its core components are the parks and greenspaces. A range of funding sources will be identified including grants, sponsorship and investment from companies wishing to meet their Environmental, Social and Governance obligations. Officers will involve SCAPPS in the development of this plan.

The council remains committed to investing in our green spaces. This includes the ongoing development of the Mayflower Park Management Plan, which benefits in part from income generated by events held in the park. We acknowledge that the Southampton International Boat Show has encountered difficulties in recent years, particularly due to adverse weather. This year, a new trackway system was introduced, which has helped to reduce the extent of damage, though the heavy rainfall in September has unfortunately delayed some of the repair work. As the weather improves, further repairs will take place, and we are optimistic that we will not need to fence off large sections of the park this autumn. Additionally, we are pleased to confirm that the organisers of the upcoming fireworks display have chosen to remain on the hard standing, which will further safeguard the grass.

The City Council is always looking for opportunities to secure external funding for park improvements, and we appreciate your suggestion regarding potential partnerships with organisations like Carnival UK for example. We will certainly explore this idea further as part of a wider funding plan to enhance green spaces.

COURT LEET 2024

Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
5	Graham Linecar Southampton Commons and Parks Protection Society	Mount Pleasant PSPO, and the Veny
	<p>The Cabinet has confirmed a Public Space Protection Order closing a path from Mount Pleasant Road to Empress Road. The adjoining recreation ground was closed and fenced-off some 7 years ago, and has been left unused and derelict despite being in an area deficient in local access to green space. My presentment asks for early decisions so the footpath too is not left derelict. The Cabinet did not confirm a PSPO closing the Veny green space/play area. My presentment asks for commitment it will remain a green space, with arrangements for maintenance and management.</p> <p>Those arrangements have to recognise problems of criminal and anti-social behaviour. SCAPPS supports earlier proposals to transfer control of both, and responsibility for maintenance and management, to respective adjoining schools, with Community Use Agreements specifying how the local community can access and use the land. It's SCAPPS understanding, following grant of planning permission for change of use, Town and Country Planning Act powers could be used to extinguish respective rights of way. My presentment asks for commitment to commence procedures.</p>	
	<p>Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero</p> <p>Responsible Officer Lead Debbie Ward</p>	<p>Councillor Savage</p> <p>Debbie Ward, Executive Director – Resident Services</p>
<p>RESPONSE</p> <p>Southampton City Council has initiated public dialogue and maintains a commitment to further consultation over the future of the Mount Pleasant Road / Empress Road footpath and adjacent green area; this area will be maintained pending any decisions over its future.</p>		

COURT LEET 2024

Southampton City Council recently closed the Venny to clean the area and undertake repair works; it is now open and Southampton City Council will likewise continue to maintain this asset.

The relevant Cabinet Members and officers are happy to meet with Mr Linecar and the Southampton Commons and Parks Protection Society to discuss their views and better understand their queries regarding Public Space Protection Orders and Town and Country Planning Act powers, to inform our future decisions on these matters.

COURT LEET 2024

Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
6	Graham Linecar Southampton Commons and Parks Protection Society	South Stoneham House and grounds, Woodmill Outdoor Activities Centre
<p>SCAPPS endorses the City of Southampton Society’s presentment asking the City Council uses its powers and influence to require Southampton University to provide a report on the condition of South Stoneham House and to undertake urgent repairs and maintenance to halt deterioration. In the 1770’s, Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown landscaped the grounds. They still show, on a small scale, typical elements of a Brown design – lawns, with cedar and other specimen trees, running down to water with a vista out to a wider landscape. Ownership of the landscaped grounds has been split. Southampton University own the House and garden, the City Council owns the continuation of the grounds across the Monks Brook, now the Outdoor Activities Centre.</p> <p>My presentment asks 1 for the University to be pressed to propose a new use protecting integrity of the House and its landscaped setting 2 for the City Council, as owner of the land between Monks Brook and the Itchen, and of Riverside Park beyond, to work with the University to enhance at least the spirit of the Brown landscape 3 for the combined area to be considered ‘green open space’ for purposes of Core Strategy policy CS21 and draft Local Plan policy EN4.</p>		
<p>Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero</p> <p>Officer Lead Stephen Haynes</p>		Councillor Savage
<p>RESPONSE</p> <p>As a part of the council’s leisure transformation options for the future of the Woodmill Outdoor Activity Centre are being considered. Southampton City Council is working with The University of Southampton on options for the area.</p> <p>With regard to “the combined area to be considered ‘green open space’ for purposes of Core Strategy policy CS21 and draft Local Plan policy EN4.”, the council can confirm that the Woodmill Outdoor Activity Centre and parts of the surrounds to South Stoneham House are a form of open space as per the current National Planning Policy Framework definition which states:</p>		

COURT LEET 2024

“Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity”.

For the purpose of adopted policy CS21 of the Core Strategy and policy EN4 of the emerging Southampton City Vision Local Plan, these areas would indeed be considered as open space against the current definition.


For the emerging Local Plan however, it should be noted that the council intends to undertake a new Open Spaces Study, in which we will ensure that these sites are more thoroughly assessed along with others. The results from this study will be used in deciding which sites are allocated as key open spaces within the plan. However, non-allocation would not diminish the fact that any site which is offering open space as per the NPPF definition at the time will be considered as such for planning purposes.

With regards to the House, this is a grade II* listed building, and officers have informed the University Planning Liaison Officer to contact the owner of the property (the University), advising that it is imperative that the building is made safe and secure from water/vegetation ingress at all times and that they must seek to implement measures to address the issues outlined above as a matter of urgency whilst proposals for its future reuse continue to be explored.

COURT LEET 2024

Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
7	Pamela West	Woolston Link Step
<p>I would like to make a presentiment to the court regarding the state of the steps leading to the bus stop at the Woolston Link stop for buses going across the Itchen bridge to Southampton.</p> <p>Funds have been spent on the adjoining car park and disablement ramp but the steps leading to the bus stops would appear to have been overlooked.</p> <p>The steps are in a sorry state and a serious accident is just waiting to happen. Some of the slabs have been dislodged and are jutting out at an angle causing a serous trip hazard to any pedestrian going up the steps to catch a bus especially if they are in a hurry if there is a bus at the bus stop or they are partially sighted. Coming down the steps is also hazardous due to the angles of the protruding steps and shadows on a bright day.</p> <p>This is in normal daylight hours. In the evening when it is dark it is more difficult to see the slabs which are protruding and the steps are an increased hazard to any person using them. Photographs of the steps are attached.</p> <p>This Morning I see that the steps going up to the bus sto, on the left hand side have been displaced and are even more of a danger to the public.</p> <p>The state of these steps are such that this is just an accident waiting to happen.</p> <p>Can the Council do anything to remove this hazard and repair the steps?</p>		

COURT LEET 2024

			
	<p>Cabinet Member Responsible Environment and Transport</p> <p>Officer Lead</p>	<p>Councillor Keogh</p> <p>Stephen Haynes, Executive Director – Growth & Prosperity</p>	
<p>RESPONSE</p> <p>The hazard posed by these steps was raised by Councillors in September 2024 and in a separate representation made by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to Mr Colin Perris, Service Manager, Highways. Mr Perris has ensured that our contractor (Balfour Beatty Living Places) is aware and will undertake a visit to carry out repairs as soon as possible – at the time of writing a date of attendance has been scheduled for 20th November 2024.</p>			

COURT LEET 2024

Number	PRESENTER	TITLE
8	Peter Wyatt	Usage of Public Land in Redbridge
	<p>I would like to bring to the attention, that access to tidal waters in Redbridge as been lost and the closure of a public footpath from Studland Rd to Gover Rd, that leads to lost of usage of public land.</p> <p>A local place known as Nine Elms one end (the 5 arch pack and pass bridge) is a Public Hard, there used to be gates that cross the railway that gave entrance to the public hard, the stonewall that use to be there but was removed at the start of the war, so the bridges could be protected the wall use to be the separation between public and BarkerMills land which was the 3 paddocks that were separated with a hedgerow from public land, most of the hedgerow was removed at the same time the wall was levelled down to ground level (the wall foundations are still there, you are able to see the foundation when standing on the gravel and a 6-inch embankment as been created by the water) At the Gover rail gates end, this gate originally was a lot lower (5 bar wooden gate) and there was a plate that indicated the fine for leaving the gate open, when you pass though and cross the rail line and into Nine Elms when you got pass the old allotment to the left was a gate that took you to the 3 paddocks, and the start of the hedgerow and the location of the first elm tree, you follow this round, and you come where the 5th elm tree was located, which used to carry a plate that told people rights about able to fish, swim, boating, then you carried on to where the last elm tree was located and the stone beach, it was this tree we use to have a rope swing over the water, go pass this point, and you will see a slope the top of the slope was where the hedgerow use to be, this slope would get lower as you move towards the bridges and ended at the wall, Also, another spot that stopping people from using the water is the landing stage under the Rail Line, this is a public landing spot and was put in because of the rail line block people access below the bridges.</p> <p>When Pat Bear (was a councillor for Redbridge and Mayor of Southampton before her retirement) alive, we were working on this together, but we ran out of time because of old age. I will be taking this fight up again, there is a man that lives in Canada that came back to Redbridge to have a look round and when he saw the anti-fishing bars and the no fishing signs on the bridges he went and see the council concern and with in a week they were removed, I have been trying to find this man or his family for information that he knows</p> <p>I do realise this will take time, to get all this public land and rights back in use, also like to point out the public footpath that is now blocked off for public use, as been there long before any buildings were erected in the area, before there was a canal and rail-road, it does date back a number of hundreds of years</p>	

COURT LEET 2024

	Cabinet Member Responsible Environment and Transport Officer Lead Stephen Haynes	Councillor Keogh Stephen Haynes, Executive Director – Growth & Prosperity
RESPONSE The relevant Cabinet Members and officers are happy to meet with Mr Wyatt at the areas referenced above to understand the issues referred to and discuss possible solutions.		