

TIME FOR A BREAK-UP OF CONSERVATIVE DOMINANCE?

The Election Results mean that more than ever HBC has become a ‘one party’ body. This means that the Cabinet, Sub Committees and full Council decisions will closely align with the central Government strategies and recommendations, with just a token political opposition voice. The structure of HBC is now:

36 Conservatives

1 Labour

1 Liberal Democrat

In addition, our MP Alan Mak has now joined the Whip’s Office and his key responsibilities include encouraging everyone to support the Conservative agenda.

HBC will be and are interpreting the Election result as the tacit agreement from us on their actions and plans for our future, including building a minimum of 1300 new homes on the Island. One quote has been: “The Red Wall of Havant crumbles!”

This interpretation is a dangerous assumption. It is primarily the Island demographics that determine voting habits. Hayling is a retirement community of House Owners whose lifestyle is naturally conservative with a small ‘c’, and it is this grouping which probably made up the majority of the extremely poor voting turnout of just over 30% of those eligible on Hayling.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY ISSUES

The residents do not agree with all of the actions and decisions of HBC to date or planned, and there are many unresolved issues which may threaten the wellbeing and future sustainability of our community, all of which have been the subjects of multiple complaints by resident spokespersons, including:

- Natural England have reported that our harbours have unacceptable levels of pollution – the situation is getting worse and requires a major programme and investment to reverse this disastrous situation.
HBC are yet to join A Mak and Chichester Council in support of this essential initiative. The HBC housing plans will exacerbate this situation.
- Following the changes made in the HBC development approval process, there are no longer any Hayling Island Councillors involved in decisions regarding development on the Island. **THIS CAN’T BE RIGHT !!** The Sinah Lane application for 195 houses received a record number of objections (over 500) and no grassroot support, but was approved without objection by the new Planning Committee (recently replacing the Development Management Committee.)
- The Hayling Island Transport Assessment remains incomplete as it does not represent the traffic growth impact over the lifecycle of the housing, and does not identify the funding sources for the road improvements identified.
- The Coastal Partners’ Hayling Island Coastal Strategy is still a year away; only then will it become clear what options are being considered:
 - * The shingle barrier built at Eastoke in March was stated to handle a 1-in-200-year storm event. Two weeks later it had been severely eroded and overtopped by the sea, requiring the construction team to return to shore it up.
 - * The West Beach erosion continues apace – with the remaining beach huts soon being moved to the east of the Inn on the Beach.

The Conservative Party’s election flyer did not speak to any of these issues. It only said the candidates would vote to speed up the Infrastructure programme to support the enormous housing growth. However, this is inconsequential as the developers under the current regulations only have to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy when the development is complete.

Now that the Hayling Island Infrastructure Advisory Group has been arbitrarily discontinued by HBC, and the attention of the Council is now focused on its own internal battles, there is no process to include the community in the planning and infrastructure of the Island.

**An Audit of the of HBC Governance is now an urgent necessity and should be commissioned prior to the Local Plan Inspectorate review.
Save Our Island will continue to search for the truth
and report our findings.**