

Mike Sole's END OF YEAR REPORT

Kent County Councillor -Canterbury South

Canterbury City Councillor – Nailbourne



As we reach the end of 2023 I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on 2023, thank everyone from their support during the year, and wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

It has been quite a year for me politically. I was delighted, indeed humbled by Nailbourne voters who re-elected me in May. I was also very pleased to see colleagues Lee Castle elected in Little Stour & Adisham and Roben Franklin elected in Wincheap, both for the first time and both within my KCC Canterbury South division. With no party having a majority of seats on Canterbury City Council, I am very pleased to have joined the coalition and to have been appointed as the cabinet member for finance. In this role I have, with colleagues, put out a budget for consultation that seeks to implement a number of our key manifesto pledges including, re-opening the Sturry park & ride, bringing back the market, cheaper car parking for residents in many car parks and the re-introduction of three hours free parking for blue badge holders.

Work has been continuing at a pace on a new draft local plan and this will be published early next year. The previous draft was very unpopular and whilst we still have to adhere to national rules on housing numbers, I anticipate that the new draft will be more popular, (or at least less unpopular), than the last. Please watch out for this and make your views known.

At KCC I was very pleased to help get the 30mph limit in Woolage Village, and I am working on a similar scheme for Woolage Green next year. There was also the 40mph limit at Stone Street Petham, and numerous smaller highway and drainage schemes.

There is never a day when I am not trying to help residents with issues. The financial position at KCC continues to deteriorate and we will be seeing more cuts to services next year. The lack of adequate government funding to local authorities, and increased demands and costs, particularly in social care are extremely worrying. Only safety critical road repairs are being carried out and budgets for highways improvements slashed.

I will continue to do what I can though for our area and I always enjoy hearing from you.



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