

ANNE MILTON MP
Member of Parliament
for Guildford



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HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Robert Knowles
Leader
Waverley Borough Council
Council Offices, The Burys
Godalming GU7 1HR

AM/MV

16 August 2010

Deo Robert

Many thanks for your letter about snow clearance and the local community. I have written to Grant Shapps MP at the Department for Communities and Local Government asking him to look into the points that you have raised. I will contact you again when I receive his response.

If, in the meantime, there is anything else I can do to help, please do get in touch.

Bob Knowles

Anne Milton
Member of Parliament
for Guildford

I will treat as confidential all personal information you give to me or my staff. I may need to pass on this information to others so they can help you. I undertake to handle the information you give me in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. I may wish to email or write to you in the future, to keep you informed on the same or associated issues. Please let me know if you do not wish to be kept up to date in this way.

Jeremy Hunt MP



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WAVERLEY B.C.	
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Cllr Robert Knowles
Leader
Waverley Borough Council
The Buryes
Godalming
Surrey, GU7 1HH

Wednesday 22 September 2010

Dear Robert,

Thank you for your letter on the legalities of snow clearance and personal responsibility. As you are aware I was very involved with the issue of snow clearance earlier this year and actually wrote to the Department of Transport in February to clarify the implications of local residents clearing their own paths and shop doorways. The then Labour Minister John Denham MP replied saying that there were no legal restrictions preventing residents from doing this. He stated that "Provided they are reasonable and careful it is unlikely that a member of the public would face any legal liability and those using the road or footway have a responsibility to be careful themselves".

A recent independent review in to how our transport systems coped with last winter's weather has recommended several measures to the Coalition Government and in respect of responsibility for clearing paths they concluded that: "People and local communities want to be able to take practical steps to clear snow and ice without fear of litigation. The confusion which arose last year was unhelpful. We are recommending a simple code of practice, to be drawn up by government, distributed by local authorities and promoted to householders and businesses. This would set clear advice for self-help, and - if observed - guard the public against negligence claim".



The Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Phillip Hammond MP has said that he has tasked his officials to produce this by the end of October, “not in the spirit of laying down what people should or should not do, but in the spirit of empowering those who wish to act in a neighbourly way”. This is extremely encouraging and will hopefully make dealing with any forthcoming winter weather much easier and clearer.

I hope this is helpful to you.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy'.

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP

Member of Parliament South West Surrey

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport