



In Touch

with our community

FAREHAM NORTH & NORTH WEST – AUTUMN 2008



Golden Mile of smiles: The Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor Ernest Crouch and Enid Crouch, arrive in a vintage Rolls Royce (left) and are met by Council Leader Seán Woodward. Then they join the Batala Samba Band (centre) and then join ward Councillor Pam Bryant.

Congratulations and celebrations set Fareham's new 'West End' buzzing...

FAREHAM'S West Street was centre stage for two outdoor spectaculars that delighted thousands of shoppers.

First, on August 24 came celebrations to mark London taking over from Beijing to host the 2012 Olympics.

Then, the town centre came alive again a month later with a day of events signifying completion of the £1.3m revamp of the western section of its main thoroughfare.

Sports representatives from across the borough attended, including high-achievers from various Olympic sports.

Celebrations started with local band Spinnaker Brass entertaining spectators in the precinct and there was an acrobatic display from gymnastics club Kartwheels before the official hoisting of the Olympic flag.

Executive Leader Councillor Seán Woodward was delighted so many people turned out and that young Fareham Olympic hopefuls had joined in.

It was an even bigger street party on September 20 when the sparkling new 'West

End' was thronged by people joining in a day of fun and entertainment.

"Let's Celebrate Fareham Past and Present" was aimed at bringing together the two halves of West Street, which had for so

now boasts speciality shopping in a continental atmosphere and most of the independent traders, who have welcomed the new look, helped to host the day.

Fareham's Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor Ernest Crouch and Enid Crouch, set the style by heading a parade of classic cars in a vintage Rolls Royce, with Batala Portsmouth Samba Band getting the entertainment off to a swinging start.

There were performances by Fareham Musical Society, Second 2 None, Mozy Dare, Stomping Mad Band and Miss Hayley Fisher & Guests. Titchfield Players staged performances from The Three Musketeers outside the Tourist Information Centre.

And there were free vintage bus trips along West Street, courtesy of First Hampshire and Dorset.

Councillor Woodward, who thanked traders for their support, said: "We are determined to get the Western end of

West Street as much 'on the map' as a shopping destination as the highly successful eastern end.



Flying high: The Olympic flag is hoisted in the precinct by (right to left) Council Leader Seán Woodward, Mayor Ernest Crouch, Ian Pike (Badminton) and Rebecca Gough (Athletics).

many years been divided by an imbalance of visual appeal.

The refurbished end of the Golden Mile

...then it shares in town's honours at floral display awards ceremony



FAREHAM'S spruced-up West Street won the Best New Commercial Landscape award in the South and South East in Bloom competition.

It capped a day when the borough scooped the overall winners prize for the fifth year running and a gold medal in the Large Town/Small City category at the regional awards ceremony at Crawley.

The sensory garden in Osborn Road won the

Best Small Park category and a gold medal.

And the Fareham in Bloom team won the Community Involvement Award for their outstanding work over the past 13 years.

•Pictured (left to right) volunteers Heather Othen and Jean Kingdom, TV gardener Chris Collins (presented all awards), volunteers Bridget and Geoff Thickett, Matt Wakefield (Horticultural Development Officer) Councillor Connie Hockley and Heather Scott (Volunteer).

We keep *In Touch* throughout the year - not just at election time



WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Outstanding

The Ofsted inspection of foster care in Hampshire has rated the service as "outstanding" and consistently good across the County.

It praises the good working arrangements with school nurses, mental health and other health specialists.

The report stated that the fostering service was good in taking into account the religious and cultural needs of young people and in the training of carers.

If you are interested in becoming a carer call 0845 6011895 or visit www.fostering.hampshire.gov.uk

Less sticky wicket

Fareham Council Leader Seán Woodward has awarded Fareham and Crofton Cricket Club £2,000 towards resurfacing the batting ends within the practice area at Bath Lane Recreation Ground.

It is hoped the improvements will encourage more residents to enjoy the sport.

Music top scores

Music services in Hampshire are among the best in the country.

The County Council's music service, with a network of over 70 bands, orchestras and choirs, won the major trophy for local authority music services from the National Music Council and the Music Education Council.

County Councillor John Bryant said: "This is a remarkable achievement as this is the most prestigious award of its kind."

Councillors briefed on battle to clear litter from our streets

LITTER is a regular cause for concern, time consuming for the team of litter pickers who try to reach every area of the Borough every four weeks, and expensive for council taxpayers.

"It would be helpful to them if more used the litter bins or took their rubbish home rather than dropping it on the ground," say Councillors John and Pam Bryant.

They have received several calls from residents recently regarding the various ways in which the Borough's streets are cleaned.

On a recent visit to view new equipment at the Council's Depot they were able to raise many of these issues with staff and operatives.

They learned that mechanical sweepers visit most roads around the Borough about every 3-4 weeks, cleaning the road channels.

There is a smaller mechanical vehicle with brush gear mounted to the front as opposed to the side, which gives a greater scope for cleansing the harder-to-reach areas and achieves a better clean.



Clean machine: Pam Bryant inspects one of the latest street sweepers at the Council's depot

The Council approved extra cash to appoint 3 manual sweepers to clean the footpaths. Many areas in North and North West Fareham have already seen this team of workers, but it will take some months to cover all the Borough's roads.

A list of litter hotspots is regularly reviewed and updated.

The wet summer proved a difficult time for the street cleaners and grass and weeds grew fast, making it difficult for them to keep pace.

"We have a dedicated team in Fareham who work throughout the year trying to keep the roads clean," said John and Pam.

County Council to fight Government threat to community police funding

FUNDING for police community support officers should be permanent.

In the green paper on policing it was proposed to extend it for three years, but Hampshire County Council has demanded the Government should change this.

County Councillor John Bryant, a member of the Police Authority, said: "In

research with our residents, fear of crime is a real concern for them, and a way to address this is to provide a uniformed, reassuring presence on the streets.

"In Hampshire, the County Council's teams of Accredited Community Safety Officers (ACSOs) work alongside PCSOs and district council wardens to help protect residents

from anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping, graffiti and underage drinking."

It would be a pity if this 'extended police family' had to be reduced in a few years time when Government withdrew its support for PCSOs.

"Locally the resources are not available without adding significantly to the burden of the council taxpayer," he said.

Looking at next generation of waste disposal

ALL COUNCILS in Hampshire collect recycling materials which have a sustainable market, so adding new materials is not easy.

However, the councils are currently looking at the next generation of waste disposal and at new technologies and new sorting systems.

Fareham hopes this will lead to collection of more recyclables soon.

Councillor John Bryant said: "We are

often asked why it is recommended that plastic carrier bags are used to double wrap waste such as food before putting it into the green household waste bin.

"Fareham's household waste is taken to the Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) in Portsmouth, where electricity is produced from the incinerator and fed into the National Grid helping to generate electricity in Hampshire."

Floral display competition winners acclaimed

THE MAYOR and Mayoress of Fareham, Councillor Ernest and Mrs Enid Crouch, presented awards at the local In Bloom ceremony to many residents from North and North West wards for their efforts in keeping the area bright and colourful.

Local winners were: Jan Purnell, Julie Armstrong, Maurice Baird, Teresa Greenwood, Mr & Mrs Bowles, Frankie Lane, Gillian Gittens, Tamara Collins, Eve Munro, Brenda and Colin Parker, Mr Peach, Mrs Limburn, Nan Brooks, Mr & Mrs Stent, Miss Gardner, Ms Hester, Mrs Woolven and Mr Westbrook.

An award for Young Persons Allotment Garden went to Saskia Waugh, with Faregrove Court receiving a silver gilt in the Sheltered Residential Homes category.

Fareham Bowling Club received a much deserved silver award.



David Hawkesworth with his award.

Have your say

THE PUBLIC will be allowed to address meetings of Hampshire Police Authority, but not the sub-committees.

It brings the authority into line with councils who allow deputations to their main meetings.



Council and police act to tackle Derlyn alley crime

DAMAGE and graffiti in the alleyway between Derlyn Road and West Street is worrying residents.

Councillor John Bryant said the police and Council's Community Safety Team were aware and several improvements had been made recently to tackle the issues.

The Council now has the ability to remove graffiti from private residential property, provided owners sign a consent form.

Hampshire Highways says a significantly high level of recorded persistent crime must be identified before closure or gating of an alley will be considered.

The Council can also use a mobile CCTV camera to gather evidence.

However, it is important to report incidents to the police, or report graffiti to the Customer Service Centre on 01329 236100 and the Enforcement Team will contact you.

Charity watchdog called in to sort out nursery school row

A POPULAR nursery school using North West Community Centre is the centre of a row between parents and the management committee.

Little Munchkins was threatened with closure when the centre's management committee decided to reduce its opening hours.

The parents' answer was to join the community association and overturn the committee's decision.

But when 38 parents applied for membership, the committee rejected their applications.

The angry parents have reported the committee to the Charity Commission, whose rules state that community associations must be open to local people to join. An inquiry is likely.

Little Munchkins has used the centre for the past 6 years and built up an excellent reputation. Nearly 100 children attend.

As the centre's main user it spent £12,000 on improvements.

While the Community Centre is owned by Fareham Borough Council, it is run by its own management committee.

Councillor John Bryant said it would have inconvenienced many families who relied on the nursery to care for their children while they were at work.

"It would effectively have forced the nursery out of business," he said.

Council Leader Seán Woodward said the membership refusal could be "potentially very serious".

New church, flats to follow St Columba demolition

THE CHURCH of St Columba is to be demolished and the site redeveloped.

Architects' drawings are on display at St Columba and Holy Trinity Church, West Street.

Flats are proposed for the southern part of the site, including the vicarage, and the work will be done before demolishing the church.

Councillor John Bryant said it would enable Sunday worship to continue.

"Following this part of the redevelopment, work will hopefully proceed to complete Fareham's first new church of this century.

"The building will include community facilities which will become a base for all age groups."

The Council recently carried out a traffic survey and is now engaged in a parking survey.

Planning officers will view the project before it is submitted for planning approval.

Footpath upgrade will remove hazards

THE FOOTPATH from the junction with Kiln Road and Red Barn Lane is to be upgraded following Councillor John Bryant's meeting with Council officers.

A 30m stretch between the two bends where trees have been allowed to grow adjacent to the footpath is the worst section

It is proposed to remove several substandard trees and widen the path.

Councillor Bryant said: "With the relocation of a street lamp near the junction and lit signs, this should improve the situation."

Work should be finished before the end of the year.

Revised winter opening times for recycling centres

DURING the summer most Hampshire recycling centres are open until 7pm.

From October 1, to ensure safety of the public and staff, the

sites reverted to winter opening hours so the gates are now being closed at 4pm.

They will continue to open seven days a week from 8am, clos-

ing on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Summer opening at Segensworth from 8am-7pm restarts on April 1, 2009.

FAREHAM NORTH & NORTH WEST CONSERVATIVES

We are very active with social and political events and membership drives. If you would like further details, to join us, or to help in any way such as distribution of *In Touch* newsletters in your road, please contact your ward councillors.

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Our man in Westminster



By
Mark Hoban
MP for Fareham

As part of the Conservative Treasury team, I spent much time over the summer thinking about how the Government got us in a mess.

During the good times rather than save for a rainy day, Gordon Brown continued to borrow to the point that he has, according to statisticians, breached his own borrowing rules, which were meant to control government finances and are now in tatters. Now we are in more difficult times, he can't help families and businesses to weather the storm.

How do we put our public finances back into good order and ensure governments stick to the rules? We will set up an Office for Budget Responsibility to keep politicians on the straight and narrow when it comes to tax and spending. It will be like the old fashioned bank managers, the ones who would let you know that you were overdrawn and rather than offering more credit, suggested you might like to reduce your overdraft and live within your means. That's what the office will do. When Gordon Brown was overdrawn, like Oliver Twist he asked for more credit.

Once we have the public finances back in order, we will be able to do what government is meant to do, which is to be on your side. So when the economy is not going so smoothly, the Government has the money to help businesses and families, rather than doing what has happened this year, raising taxes on families with big hikes on car tax or asking small companies to cough up more.

Government is not about flashy gimmicks and wheezes; it is about doing the dull, sensible things that make real differences to families when it matters. It is about reassuring people that you have got a firm grip on what is happening. Our Office for Budget Responsibility shows that we are serious about putting our economy right.

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Free swims for over 60s

But who pays for 10 Drowning Street's latest brainwave?

THEY ALWAYS look wonderful on paper...free bus travel nationwide for over 60s and now a new Government plan for free swimming for old and young.

But Labour's grandiose freebie schemes have one flaw. Who splashes the cash in the long run?

Concessionary bus passes are already forcing Fareham Council to swim against

a rising financial tide and Conservative councillors fear free swimming sessions for under 16s and over 60s will plunge finances into deep water.

Nationwide bus passes started in April, but the scheme was not funded properly, leaving several councils with huge problems.

"In most authorities, the gap will have to be met by the council taxpayer and the additional costs could be significant," said Councillor David Swanbrow, Executive Member for Planning and Transportation.

And that is the worry following the Government's approach to councils asking them if they are interested in a grant towards the introduction of free swimming sessions.

Funding has been promised for only the first two years for the over 60s; no details have been given for the under 16s group and nothing beyond.

Councillor Connie Hockley, Executive Member for Community, said: "On the surface, this seems a wonderful idea provided it is **fully funded** and applies only to local residents, BUT – and there is always a catch in many schemes proposed by this Government – what happens after the first two years?"

"Is the initial funding sufficient or will the local taxpayers end up by subsidising another Government initiative?"

It's the question that's already been answered in respect of the concessionary fares debacle, for the Government pays only 43% of the cost in Fareham.



At a stroke: Free-style may take on a new meaning for over 60s at Fareham swimming pool.

"The cost over the first four months suggests that by the end of the financial year the Council is likely to spend at least £280,000 on top of the £1.5m it budgeted for concessionary travel, with the possibility it could rise much further.

"This equates to a council tax rise for Fareham of 5%-6% on its own," said Councillor Swanbrow.

Councils have to pay for any pass holder's journey starting within their boundaries. For example, a Gosport resident travelling to Winchester will have to change at Fareham and it's Fareham Council which then pays for the rest of that traveller's journey.

"The Gosport resident gets the benefit of free travel, Winchester shops may well benefit, but all Fareham gets is the biggest slice of the cost – and the Fareham council taxpayer pays," said Councillor Swanbrow, who said the Council was asking the Government to re-assess a wholly unfair situation.

The Council has expressed interest to get funding for free swimming for over 60s, provided it is restricted to local residents..

Councillor Hockley said the Council was also interested in operating a scheme for free swimming sessions for under 16s which could be run during school holidays, but only for Borough residents and provided it was fully funded.

The Council also asked the Government for cash towards the cost of building a new swimming pool in the Western Wards.

She added: "We await the Government's decision with bated breath."

Borough crackdown on untaxed vehicles

THIRTY untaxed vehicles were clamped and impounded in a two-day crackdown across the Borough by Fareham Council, the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency and the police.

A further joint operation was planned for October.

The DVLA used a vehicle equipped with Automatic Number Plate Recognition equipment which identified

any untaxed and uninsured vehicle.

The vehicle was then clamped and a notice attached stating that it had been seized and would not be released until a valid tax disc was obtained.

If a valid tax disc could not be provided, the vehicle was towed away to a storage pound until the owner provided a valid tax disc

If no tax disc was provided,

the vehicle was crushed or, if of value, was sent to a further vehicle pound in the Midlands to be sold

Each day a vehicle is in the pound charges are incurred by the owner.

Vehicles shown by the ANPR camera to be uninsured were also removed.

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