



In Touch

with our community

LOCKS HEATH & WARSASH – SPRING 2005

Tories' sweet chariot carries home smallest ever council tax increases

Swing low, low, low

CONSERVATIVES are acclaiming a double first in Fareham and Hampshire by setting the lowest borough and county council tax rises.

Fareham's share of the council tax bill showed just a 2.41% rise. It was the lowest tax and lowest actual increase in cash terms in the county and was below the 2.8% inflation figure for the second year running.

Hampshire's tax rise of 3.5% was its lowest ever, despite receiving the fifth lowest Government grant among all the counties.

Fareham Council Executive Leader Seán Woodward hailed it as 'a major achievement in terms of finance strategy and budgetary control'.

He said: "Despite receiving the lowest Government grant of any district in Hampshire, we continue to set the lowest council tax."

County Council Chairman John Bryant said: "We know our residents do not want steep rises in council tax, but expect excellent services. We have achieved this by efficiency gains and savings."

Presenting his sixth budget since the Conservatives took control of Fareham Borough Council in 1999, Councillor

Woodward said his aims had always been to:

- Establish and maintain a reserve equivalent to 5% of total gross expenditure. Current figure is 4.9%
- Minimise council tax rises by keeping them in line with inflation.

This has been achieved for 2005-06, thus meeting resi-



Seán Woodward: "A major achievement."



Apollo launch: Artist's impression of the state-of-the-art cinema at Market Quay.

THE COUNCIL TAX BILL

BAND D	
Fareham	£126.27 + 2.41%
Hampshire County Council	£869.40 + 3.48%
Hampshire Fire and Rescue	£52.11 + 1.58%
Hampshire Police	£113.76 + 4.98%
TOTAL	£1,161.54 + 3.42%

Most Fareham properties are in Band C, where the council tax for 2 adults will be £112.24, an increase of just 5p a week.

dents' requests in a recent survey.

A Liberal-Democrat move during the meeting to filch nearly £250,000 from the reserve was thrown out by the council.

Councillor Woodward continued: "At the same time, we have been able to absorb all unfunded government initiatives while freezing pay and display parking charges for the past three years."

An upbeat review by the independent Audit Commission showed Fareham to be "a good authority" - good enough to be within two points of excellent and to place the borough in the top 20% of all English district councils.

He outlined the Conservatives' high priority ambitions, which included providing a swimming pool in west Fareham, supporting building of the community hospi-

tal and development of shops, restaurants, cinemas and leisure facilities at Market Quay.

Fareham's capital programme embraced £42m of schemes over the next five years.

These included new skate parks, play areas, bus shelters, CCTV, pay-on-foot car parking, improvements to Fareham Leisure Centre, Ferneham Hall and other community buildings, a customer service centre in the Civic Offices and matched grants to external organisations.

•If you are having difficulty paying your council tax bills, you may be eligible for council tax benefit. Phone the County Council Information Centre on 0800 028 0888 for more details.

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



WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Warsash events

Ideas for this year's fund raising events, including a BBQ, bridge drive, quiz night, wine tasting and another 'Meet Mark Hoban MP' evening, were discussed by the new committee elected at January's annual meeting.

They will also be busy with the forthcoming County Council and General Elections.

Many of you will have received a survey recently, and for those who responded positively, someone will contact you soon.

Moving oop North?

Several councils in the Midlands and North have vacant properties to rent.

If you or anyone you know wants to relocate to another part of the country, there is a touch pad VDU in the waiting area of the Housing Department in the council offices, and you can ask the Housing Options Manager for advice.

Councillor Mike Godrich said: "I understand the housing departments of other authorities are willing to help applicants."

Crime/Vandalism

A Vandalism Task Force has been set up by the Conservative-run council with £40,000 to spend on schemes such as covert CCTV.

There is also a reward scheme for information leading to successful prosecutions.

Traffic, planning top survey issues

INITIAL feedback from the recent survey carried out by the Conservatives put traffic and planning top of the list of people's concerns.

Other issues raised were council tax control and its value for money, more community policing and maintenance of roads and footpaths.

Results are now being analysed in detail and will be fully reported in a later edition of *In Touch*.

Councillor Keith Evans said over 20% of households had responded

and thanked those who had taken time to fill in and return the surveys.

He added: "The response to the survey gives a clear indication that the public have real concerns and are interested in local matters.

"The data from this survey will be collated and provided to the local borough councillors and to the county councillor so they are well aware of the areas and scale of concern.

"Fareham and Hampshire should listen and incorporate in their strategic plans."

Fortnightly bin emptying penalty for not recycling

HOUSEHOLDERS have not been putting enough into their blue-top recycling bins.

They will now have to pay the penalty as the council introduces alternate weekly collections of household and garden waste to try to meet the Government's 40% target by 2006.

Warsash Councillor Trevor Cartwright said that after an encouraging start to Project 40,



Trevor Cartwright: 'Inadequate progress.'

where fortnightly checks showed increases up to 27%

between November and January, it had now fallen back.

In view of the inadequate progress, the alternate weekly cycle will start on September 5, 2005.

Councillor Cartwright reminded householders they could have more than one blue-top recycling bin.

Contact the council on 01329 236100 or email waste@fareham.gov.uk for more information.

Contamination tests at former Polybond site



ALL THE derelict buildings at the former Polybond site in Warsash Road have now been demolished, but as yet Barratt Homes have not resubmitted their plans to redevelop the site for housing.

They had been expected to submit another scheme to Fareham planners in February after withdrawing an earlier application when the site was found to be contaminated.

Barratt's plans to build 54 homes, plus the eyesore of rubbish and partly demolished buildings, brought a flood of protests from residents.

Councillor Trevor Cartwright said tests were being carried out to establish the extent of the contamination and he expected any fresh application to include measures to make the site safe.

He added: "I will keep you informed."

'Don't take a chance' Ruth's plea to bikers

POWERFUL motor bikes are a great attraction to young people.

Some are powerful with large engines, while others have the sound of large machines and the roar of power.

Either can be dangerous if not used carefully and a sudden burst of speed, is always taking a chance

Road Safety Panel Chairman Councillor Mrs Ruth Godrich, who sees the accident statistics, urges motorcyclists not to take chances.

"Remember, you do not have an outer skin to protect you.

"For your own safety and peace of mind for your families try to think ahead for safety."

Brakes put on centre rat run

TRAFFIC management in Centre Way, Locks Heath has reduced accidents.

The road, linking Lockswood Road and Locks Road, was intended as an access to the shopping centre, two housing closes, surgery and day care centre.

But motorists saw it as a rat run, so the management schemes were introduced to reduce speed and limit pedestrian crossing points.

Councillor Mike Godrich said: "Since its introduction, I have not heard of any accidents; prior to this, I received many complaints.

"If you are a motorist using this route, please recognise the reasons for this traffic management."

Knotty problem of weeding delays new road



WEEDING problems will delay work on the final leg of the western distributor road linking Warsash Road with Dibbles Road.

Contractors will have to clear large areas of knotweed to comply with legal requirements before work can start.

The County Council agreed to buy the Warsash Motors site so the road can be built.

It is expected to be completed by 2006, which will enable Cutter Avenue to be closed as originally planned and it should make it safer and easier for residents on the Boats Estate to access Warsash Road.

Public drinking ban comes into force

FANCY a cool can of the amber nectar or a swig from a bottle of plonk?

Then don't drink it in Fareham town centre or you'll risk being arrested.

It's one of several areas covered by the new order prohibiting consumption of alcohol in public places which came into force on March 1.

The area governed by the order includes the town centre, main open spaces around Fareham Leisure Centre, Bath Lane recreation ground and The Gillies.

Other trouble spots across the borough, including Portchester, are being considered.

Under the Criminal Justice Police Act 2001, it is an arrestable offence to drink alcohol in a designated area if a police officer orders you not to.

The ban was introduced to control public drinking and to tackle alcohol-related crime, disorder, nuisance and under-age drinking.

Council grant for Warsash Sea Scouts

Councillor Trevor Cartwright reports that the council has recently approved the First Warsash Sea Scout Group's application for a grant of £495 to buy tables and benches.

LOCKS HEATH & WARSASH 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.

ANY PROBLEMS? WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Please write the details here and give the exact location

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Your name

Address

..... Postcode.....

Tel Email

Please cut this out and post it or email or phone your councillors who are listed here.

If you do not require a reply, please tick the box

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Your man in Westminster



By
Mark Hoban
MP for Fareham

Under Mr Blair's Government, council tax bills have gone through the roof. Pensioners, on fixed incomes, have been hit the hardest by this stealth tax, with the hike in council tax snatching back over a third of the increase in the basic state pension for a typical pensioner. To make matters worse, if it keeps going up at the current rate, experts predict bills will hit £2,000 for the typical household if Mr Blair wins a third term in power.

I believe that increasing taxes for people who cannot afford to pay is unfair. It is unfair to people who have worked hard, always played by the rules and dutifully paid their taxes on time. Pensioners deserve to live with dignity and security when they retire.

That's why a Conservative Government will introduce an automatic discount on council tax bills for pensioners over 65 - in addition to the existing single person's discount. We will halve council tax bills both for single pensioners over the age of 65 and for pensioner couples where both people are over 65, up to a maximum £500 discount per bill. This will cut typical Band D bills in Fareham by £500.00 for a pensioner couple. We will fund this tax cut by cutting waste and bureaucracy across government, so your frontline local services will still receive the support they deserve.

This commitment is just one part of our Action Plan for pensioners. We are also committed to increasing the state pension in line with earnings, not prices, providing an extra £7 a week for single pensioners and £11 a week for couples over and above inflation by the end of our first term.

Our plans will lift the council tax burden from hard-pressed local people, helping those who have been hit hardest by Labour's tax increases.

•You may contact Mark via his office
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email: mail@markhoban.com

Prescott's message to travellers and gypsies...

Carry on camping

NEVER mind the filth and damage they leave behind, travellers will be able to defy local planners and set up permanent camps in the countryside if the Deputy Prime Minister gets his way.

In yet another move to undermine the powers of local councils, John Prescott proposes a series of modifications to planning laws to give itinerant advantageous approvals for developments.

The idea will outrage council taxpayers, who already have to foot hefty legal bills for eviction orders to get rid of travellers and clear up their mess.

Mr Prescott intends to impose a duty on councils to provide transit facilities.

If they do not, then they will have no legal right to move on those who park illegally.

Councillor Brian Bayford said: "Your councillors acknowledge that there is a great difference between the true 'Romany' gypsy, who has been a feature of our culture for centuries, and the 'drop out travellers' who cause significant damage wherever they stop.

"There are some permanent gypsy sites



Devastation: This is how travellers left the Lysses site.

in Fareham that cause no problems. However, residents will be aware of the council's constant vigilance against incursions by travellers and the cost to council tax payers of clearing the damage.

"Fareham Council has expressed its grave concern to the Deputy Prime Minister that the proposals define a system that discriminates against the majority of citizens who live settled lives in their communities and pay income and council taxes."

He added: "Any proposal that allows different beneficial rules to apply to minority groups at the expense of the majority is unacceptable."

Good on yer, Connie! Litter campaign from Oz should be tried in Britain

DON'T be a chucker!

"Australian, and probably one of the best captions promoting a responsible attitude to litter disposal that I have seen," says Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley.

Anybody visiting Australia will see these signs at road junctions and along the highways.

"The marvellous thing about them is that they have actually worked.

"While there are still idiots who throw anything out of the car window, the signs have reduced the overall incidence of litter loutish behaviour substantially.

"Why can't it work here?" asks Mrs Hockley.

There were 543 incidents of illegally dumped waste

recorded in Fareham between April 2004 and January 2005.

Disposing of fly-tipped rubbish could cost council tax payers over £19,000.

She said:

"Who hasn't despaired at the amount of discarded rubbish that accrues at motorway slip roads leading into our towns?

"Who among us are socially irresponsible and continue to be a chucker? Take it home and dispose of it properly!"

Britain should follow the Aussies' example and place signs on highways and shop-



Connie Hockley:
'Don't be a chucker.'

ping areas reminding people to dispose of rubbish in a responsible way.

She added: "It's largely an education problem and one that must be made to work before we flounder under a

mountain of bottles, cartons, cigarette packets and other rubbish that blights our communities."

•If you see anyone fly-tipping, call the council's enforcement team on 01329 236100 or email waste@fareham.gov.uk

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