



In Touch

with our community

TITCHFIELD & TITCHFIELD COMMON – WINTER 2009

Council's vision for top quality community facilities

COMMUNITY centres are in line for top quality improvements under a new Fareham Council initiative.

The Executive approved a broad vision for providing high quality community facilities across the Borough and asked interested parties to give their views via a consultation through the Community Action Team process.

The broad vision and proposal to adopt a phased approach, by reviewing the Council-owned community facilities in each of the CAT areas in turn, was well received at the October round of CAT meetings.

The Executive formally adopted the proposed vision and set aside £500,000 capital budget for pump-priming to assist in delivering the vision.

Work has started on Phase 1 to develop a master plan based on providing new community facilities to replace the ramshackle Portchester Community Centre, where a public consultation was held to establish what local people wanted.

Executive Member for Community Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley thanked those who attended the event.

"The views expressed by residents will be reported to the Executive," she said.

Tory 'magic' beats all the odds for a recession busting budget

A RECESSION-busting budget. That's the rabbit Fareham's Conservative 'magicians' have conjured out of the hat.

Against all the odds – and that includes what Executive Leader Seán Woodward lambasted as "one of the most derisory Government grants in the country" – a below inflation rise of just 2.7% has been achieved.

So the Borough share of council tax will rise by just 1p a day, less than any other Hampshire district council and lower than almost every council in the country.

Delivering his 10th budget speech, Councillor Woodward said: "In a recession it is more important than ever to achieve a below inflation council tax rise of just 2.7%.

"Services remain essentially intact and charges rise only a modest amount in line with the requirements of Fareham's residents.

"Fareham's proportion of the council tax for a band D property will be just £140 per year. Compare this with Gosport at over £200 and you can under-

stand the value for money provided by Fareham Borough Council."

Other improvements to services in response to residents' concerns included removal of the £20 charge for pest control officers to deal with domestic rat infestations.

Sunday and Bank Holiday car parking charges would be changed to allow free parking up to 10.30am in the short-stay car parks with free Sunday and Bank Holiday parking in the long-stay car parks.

Charges on these days in short-stay car parks from 10.30am – 4pm will be just £1.50 for as long as shoppers wish to park.

While other centres outside Fareham are losing shops, June will see a Debenhams department store and new multi-storey car park open in the town centre.

Councillor Woodward added: "With the country in a deep recession and many of our older residents seeing their fixed incomes eroded by decreasing interest rates, it is more important than ever that we continue to set the lowest possible council tax to give the best possible value for money

"I am proud that we have for the 10th year been able to achieve this by constantly looking for more innovative and cost effective ways of both reducing expenditure and increasing income."



'ello, 'ello, 'ello...did you know, Sarge, that Fareham council taxpayers now contribute more towards us than they pay for their own Borough Council services?

Costs soar to keep the blue lamp alight



How it's made up for Band D taxpayers
 Fareham Borough Council £140.22 (+£3.69)
 Hampshire County Council £1,017.99 (+£18.99)
 Hampshire Police Authority £142.11 (+£6.57)
 Hampshire Fire & Rescue £60.30 (+£2.07)
 Total: Band D taxpayers £1,360.62 (+£31.32) = +2...36%

Fareham capital budget improvements include
 Footpath improvements: £50,000
 Holly Hill lakes de-silting: £15,000
 Cliff Road, Hill Head replacing public toilets: £170,000

Fareham revenue budget improvements include
 Replacing green waste sacks: estimated cost £100,000
 Residents' parking Phase 1 in town centre: £100,000
 Capital Programme Fund: £500,000 towards new and improved community buildings

Extra green waste charges down to health and safety

CHANGES to the garden waste service will start in April 2009.

The Health and Safety Executive advised they were necessary to avoid problems of repetitive strain injury and worse.

So extra staff had to be employed, adding to the cost.

Handling one or two sacks is not a problem, but in some months crews are being asked to lift up to 20 tons per crew per day.

When the service was introduced in September 2005 it was on the basis that it would be cost neutral; however, in the current economic climate the Council had no option but to review discretionary services.

It was decided to retain this popular service and that it should be free for most residents.

There will be no charge for the collection of one garden waste

sack. Most councils charge for this service and those which charge for extra sacks charge more than Fareham proposes.

Fewer than 50% of residents use the service at any one time and most put out only one sack.

People can order extra disposable bags similar to the existing sacks at £20 for 25 sacks, which will be collected regardless of how many or when they are put out.

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

WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Volunteers needed

Can you find some time to help others? Do you need advice?

"I had the opportunity recently," says Councillor Keith Evans, "to attend a presentation about Volunteer Support in the Fareham area.

"I was amazed at the support that is available.

"Professional support would mean little without the volunteers, many of whom bring good practical and sometimes professional knowledge.

If you want to help, call Fareham Volunteer Centre on 01329 223140 or by email enquiries@farehamvolunteers.org.uk

Can you deliver?

Titchfield Branch desperately needs help to deliver *In Touch* in the following roads:

Wild Ridings
County Gardens
Thornbury Close
Lynden Close
Catisfield Lane
Gardenia Drive
Titchfield Road
Posbrook Lane
Brownwich Lane
Occupation Lane

CAT meeting

The next CAT meeting in the Western Wards will be held at Sarisbury Social Club on Wednesday, March 25, when Council officers will make a presentation on 'Householders' Planning Permission'.

Ward councillors and local police will attend to answer questions.

Tell us if you have a local project in mind which may be achievable with a modest outlay.

County U-turn saves Stubbington Study Centre

THE County Council has backed down on proposals to drastically reduce funding to Stubbington Study Centre and possibility to close it.

Funds were found at the last moment after strong protests by residents and Fareham county councillors.

Councillor Keith Evans said the centre provided a range of services, information, advice and support as well as integrated childcare, early learning and school visit experience.

"The centre is an important aspect of the learning experience and I am pleased that we

were able to secure the extra funds."

He said the centre management had worked hard to increase income and they had been successful. The County is budgeting to continue support next year and is investigating an extension of opening hours.

Geoff enjoys spending his £10,000 budget on worthwhile local causes

SPENDING money on deserving causes is one of the more satisfying duties that a county councillor has, writes Geoff Hockley.

The County Council devolved budget of £10,000 per annum has been available for two years and he has so far found 20 worthwhile causes.

He said: "I believe that the amounts will, and in many cases already have, made a difference to the community and I am delighted to have been involved in them."

2008-09 grants went to:

- The Friends of St Peter's to assist with remedial work at St Peter's Church.
- Friends of Titchfield Primary School were able to buy a large trailer to move the school's steel band equipment from venue to venue.

•Titchfield Sea Scouts bought more much needed equipment.

•Fareham Hockey Club was helped with ongoing building works.

•Fareham and Gosport Family Aid is now able to promote a fund raising evening at Ferneham Hall where the Hampshire Police Choir and Band will perform.

•Titchfield Village Trust and the Catisfield Village Association have received funds to help with traffic calming and the 20 mph programme.

•Titchfield Community Centre has received an amount which will substantially pay for a new lighting system in one of their larger rooms.

County Councillor Hockley added: "It has been a pleasure being involved in this aspect of county work and I hope that the devolved budget continues in this financial year."

Gardeners call for Western Wards deer cull

DEER are causing havoc in gardens and allotments in the Western Wards and may have to be culled.

Allotment holders in Allotment Road, Sarisbury say they have been plagued for some time with deer eating their crops despite the Council erecting stock fencing.

Councillor David Swanbrow, who opposes a cull, said deer were increasing across the South, perhaps being displaced from their natural habitat by development.

"Gardeners find that deer will eat almost anything – even roses with long thorns – and many have called for a cull."

They can also be a hazard to motorists as they tend to leap out suddenly from scrub or woodland beside the road.

They often do this in pairs so that

a motorist may miss a deer only to run into a second one following.

A deer hit even at low speed can do a lot of damage to a car and it is also very distressing for the driver to realise that they have killed such a lovely creature.

Councillor Swanbrow reported three dead



Deer grazing happily in a Western Wards field. The one on the right was killed by a car.

deer in three weeks on Barnes Lane in January.

"The Council removed each within an hour, but it is still a distressing sight for children walking to school," he said.

Deer have no natural predators in this country which may mean that in the long term there will have to be culls.

Village wrath at 'remote' inspectors' plan decision

TITCHFIELD councillors are furious that yet another planning decision has been overturned by inspectors who have no connection with the area.

A controversial plan to build houses at 29 Catisfield Road was given the go-ahead, despite fierce local opposition.

Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley said: "As one of your ward councillors you cannot imagine how frustrating it is to have what I believed to be sensible decisions, which are backed by local residents' views, overturned by inspectors who do not live in the area."

She said the outcome of this planning application was very important to people living in the neighbourhood.

The original plan to build flats was withdrawn, but was followed by an application for 6 houses, which Fareham's development control committee rejected.

Finally, developers submitted an application for 5 houses, which met the same fate at the committee. Both the rejected applications then went to appeal.

"Much to the dismay of residents, ward and county councillors, Fareham Council's decisions were overturned and permission to build either 5 or 6 houses was given.

"I wish to say a huge 'thank you' to all who worked so hard to try to ensure that the outcome was in the best interests of those who live in the immediate vicinity and for the future sustainability of the area," added Connie Hockley.

Coldeast on cards for pool site alternative

A POSSIBLE alternative site for the Western Wards swimming pool is being investigated by Fareham Council.

It could be built on land which may come into Council ownership at Coldeast.

Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley said: "Planning consent for the pool has now expired because the ownership of Locks Heath Shopping Centre recently changed hands, just as the Council was reaching agreement with the previous owners."

The scheme was stalled when new owners refused to lift a covenant to allow the scheme to progress.

It's sod's law as blizzards delay hospital turf cutting

IT'S BEEN 25 years on the waiting list – longer than Casualty or Holby City have been running.

But Fareham's long overdue Community Hospital has suffered yet another delay.

This time, it was down to the weather.

Blizzards caused the traditional 'first sod digging' ceremony, scheduled for February 4 at the Coldeast site, to be postponed.

"Many feel this ceremony should have taken place when winter snow was the norm," remarked Councillor David Swanbrow.

Instead of attending the ceremony to lend a hand with the turf cutting, he took his camera to record the conditions (above) which led to its postponement to a new date.



The spadework was to have been performed by Fareham Mayor Councillor Ernest Crouch, with Council Leader Seán Woodward and Councillor Swanbrow in attendance.

Councillor Woodward said: "I've been campaigning for this hospital for 24 years, but will now have to wait just a little longer until a new date can be arranged."

Residents thanked for play area comments

RESIDENTS who took time to comment on upgrading the Bellfield play area have been thanked by Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley.

The upgrade for 6 to 12-year-olds, for which £60,000 has been earmarked, includes equipment, surfacing, bins and benches and will be done between April 2009 and March 2010.

A multi-use games area for older youngsters, for which the Borough Council has asked for a grant of £50,000 from the Hampshire Play Builder Fund, depends on finding a suitable location.

Information obtained from the consultation is being collated and will be reported to the Council.

How to get hold of the new countryside access plan

THE countryside access plan is available at www.hants.gov.uk/hampshirecountryside or by

phone 0845 6035636.

Over 500 people contributed to the document, and gave their views on

the 2,800 miles of footpaths, bridleways and byways maintained by the County Council.

TITCHFIELD 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

.....

Your name

Address

..... Postcode.....

Tel Email

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

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Your man in Westminster



By **Mark Hoban**
MP for Fareham

The recession brings its own pressures on different aspects of life. Whilst we often think about its effect on employment in the private sector, we don't take into account the effect on Government finances.

The money the Government receives from taxes falls as fewer people work and company profits are slashed. At the same time, there are additional pressures to increase spending.

We see this affecting the police. The deteriorating economic position will have an impact on crime levels. There has already been an increase in burglaries, which is borne out by figures in Fareham. It's a Hampshire wide issue and the police are cracking down on it with Operation Nemesis.

But the police are faced with squaring the circle of increasing pressures on costs, a lower increase in their income from Government and a limit on how much they can increase council tax, while meeting the expectations of the public that there will be no cuts in the number of front line officers.

We need to lift some of the burdens which get in the way of putting police on the beat.

When I've been out on the beat, the police have complained about form filling and paperwork. When an arrest is made it is not just the alleged criminal who is detained at the station. Cut the form filling and we can put more police on the beat.

In these difficult times when there will be more demands on public services, we need to look at the changes we can make in our schools, hospitals, councils and police service to get the best value for money.

More bang for the buck.

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

Fareham's 'Get well soon' message to 'sick' councils

FAREHAM Council staff are happy to be firmly at the foot of one league table.

They are currently bottom of the sick list, so they are the healthiest of all town hall workers among Hampshire's 12 councils.

With an average of 7.2 working days lost per employee, they have just recorded their lowest sickness absence figures.

The 'sick man' of the county is Rushmoor Council with nearly twice as many absences

as Fareham, with Hart and Portsmouth close behind and also needing to 'get well soon'.

Executive Leader Seán Woodward said: "Low levels of sickness absence mean our staff are at work, providing residents with the high quality services they deserve.

"We work hard to ensure we manage the levels of sickness. Employee well-being and health is an important part of keeping a fit and healthy workforce."



WASTE NOT, WANT NOT...

IT WAS one of the World War 2 slogans which inspired people to save even their potato peelings.

Rationing ended over 50 years ago, but did you know that today on average 30% of all food bought in the UK is wasted?

Of all the rubbish dumped 20% is food leftovers.

In an effort to publicise this waste a campaign organised

by the Council was held in October in Fareham. It included stands in the Shopping Centre, Lockwood Centre and Stubbington

The highlight was a visit by the catering team from 3rd Field Ambulance, recently returned from Afghanistan, to Sainsbury's at Wallington to demonstrate and produce a selection of meals from food that would usually be binned.

The team, based at Haslar Hospital, served up an excellent pumpkin soup, a vegetarian quiche



Delicious: Sgt Mark Holbrook (right) and Cpl Martin Pollard serve the scraps to Brian Bayford and waste advisors Wendy, Jane and Karima.

and a Thai curry for visitors to the store.

The menus were produced by students and staff at Fareham College.

These were available to visitors to the exhibitions, who were advised that the reason for food wastage included

several factors, among them 'Buy One, Get One Free', misunderstanding of 'sell-by date' and 'best before'.

"Too much choice and wastage," said Councillor Brian Bayford, Executive Member for Streetscene.

Positive response to future planning strategy

FAREHAM Council has passed another milestone towards the production of a Local Development Framework (LDF) to replace the existing Local Plan Review, by publishing its preferred options for the core strategy.

The current Local Plan Review dates from June 2000, and the core strategy sets the framework for the LDF which will replace it.

It must largely conform with the South East Plan which is expected to get final Government approval imminently.

The process has been held up by the Government continually changing its rules.

If a council does not follow these rules the plan is likely to be found unsound at the inspection stage, so wasting a lot of council taxpayers' money.

Currently, the Council does not have to publish its preferred options for consultation before submitting its core strategy for inspection, but by doing so it gave all interested parties a chance to comment in time to make changes before finalising the plan.

Responses have been gen-

erally positive with many useful comments and suggestions, including input from a well-attended seminar held for members of Networkfareham, Fareham's Local Strategic Partnership.

County Councillor Ray Ellis commented:

"It was good to see a lot of response to the draft strategy, which is aimed at ensuring Fareham continues to be an attractive, safe and pleasant place to live, work and visit."

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