



In Touch

with our community

TITCHFIELD & TITCHFIELD COMMON – SPRING 2008

Tories hit the Government with a 'bunch of fives' over council tax

What you pay

Band D Properties will now pay £136.53 pa to Fareham Borough Council, with the total bill, including the County Council and the emergency services' share, rising to £1,329.30 pa.

Band C (the average property in the Borough), will respectively pay £121.36 and £1,181.60.

What you get

Improvements include:

- Play ranger and events programme (3 year commitment)
- Community safety initiatives
- New mechanical road sweeper
- Two more litter clearing operatives
- Improved free green waste collection service
- Free national bus pass scheme for older residents starting at 9am
- Every street and foot-path will be swept and litter picked at least once every 10 weeks.
- Grant to enable Titchfield Carnival to take place in 2008

The aims

- To maintain a spending reserve equal to 5% of total gross expenditure
- Continue to minimise the increase in the overall revenue budget, aiming for a council tax increase within inflation (currently 4.1%) to meet expectations as expressed in the residents' survey.

FAREHAM'S Conservatives have given the Labour Government a 'bunch of fives' after setting Hampshire's lowest council tax and a below inflation rise for the fifth year running.

Councillors of all parties voted in favour of a 2.98% rise in the Borough Council's share of the bill.

And that was again achieved after getting the usual pittance in the grant from the Labour Government, which allocated most of the spoils 'oop North'.

Delivering his ninth budget speech, Council Executive Leader Councillor Seán Woodward said they had achieved this despite the government's lack of funding for the Borough.

"I have pledged certainty and stability to our taxpayers, and I have demonstrated how next year's settlement from Government was one of the meanest we have seen for some time.

"To be fair, the Government has delivered certainty and stability with the support they will grant Fareham until 2011.

All is not rosy

"John Healey MP has promised a settlement which provides 'sustained real terms increases for local government', one which is equitable and fair. It all sounds very rosy for years to come.

"But Mr Healey's idea of 'fair' for Fareham is a 0.5% increase despite inflation running at 4.1%.

"So his promise of a real terms increase doesn't seem to stretch as far as Fareham.

"It's a real terms cut which effectively doubles the savings and efficiencies this Council must deliver to fulfil its council tax pledge, which residents feel so strongly about."

So where is the extra £3 billion



Simply the best: The Royal Marines Band and Fareham's Tories have plenty to celebrate.



Seán Woodward: His 9th budget speech

earmarked for local government going?

"I can tell you that 93% of shire districts receive more Government support per

head than Fareham and the 20 most favoured district councils will all receive two to three times as much support per head as we do.

"You won't be surprised to hear that those lucky authorities are not on the south coast.

"The money has, of course, gone to those in the North – places like Lancashire (Burnley), Durham (Easington), Cumbria (Barrow-in-Furness and Wear Valley)."

Worst in Hampshire

Fareham receives just £56.09 per person in Government support – the worst settlement in Hampshire – and a long way behind neighbouring Gosport which receives £92.43 per resident.

He added: "For the fifth year in a row, the council tax increase will be below the rate of inflation, so we

can safely say that 2008 is another year when the Conservatives have dealt a bunch of fives to tax hikes."

Councillor Woodward recognised the important role the Council plays in South Hampshire by running the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) which he chairs.

Positive spin-off

This is a joint committee of 11 local authorities who are demanding adequate support to replace infrastructure in South Hampshire and to plan for the housing which the Government wants built over the next 20 years.

A positive spin-off was the £1m funding received by the Council to renovate the western end of West Street in the town centre.

Fareham leads the country with a 45% recycling rate and has also achieved its target to provide over 100 affordable homes per year which are available for low cost home ownership or for rent.

In contrast to most surrounding boroughs, no cuts have been made to Fareham's services, while £800,000 of worthwhile improvements have been introduced.

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

WARD NEWS BRIEFS

New name

Banner Homes are developing at Great Posbrook Farm, Posbrook Lane and the proposed name of the new road is Barn Close.

Help us deliver

Titchfield Conservative Branch is looking for distributors in and around Wild Ridings, Bellflower, Mimosa and Gardenia Drive areas. Any help would be appreciated.

Litter clearance

Funding has been allocated from the Cleaner Neighbourhood Fund to clean and tidy the following areas in Titchfield Ward:

- Fishers Hill/Catisfield Lane - to clear The Limes, Catisfield Hinton shrub bed.
- Clear litter and undergrowth from path to the side of the Community Centre and car park.
- Clear litter and undergrowth from land between allotments and the eastern perimeter of Titchfield Primary School.
- Clear brush from between path and ditch.

Oasis for youth

The Oasis Youth Centre, which is located at the outhouse behind Titchfield Community Centre, was re-launched on Thursday, February 28.

With the help of many volunteers and generous donations, the centre has been re-furnished with lots of new equipment.

The Centre will be open every Thursday from 7-8.30pm and caters for young people from the age of 10.

Outrage over massive gravel grab plan for Chilling

Cliff-hanger



Photo by David Brims

Environmental disaster: Sand and gravel would be gouged out of the fields (top right) up to the edge of the cliffs at Solent shore (above).

Blighted for 20 years



Photo by David Brims

Mineral Extraction and Landfill).

"The response to this has been magnificent with hundreds of formal letters of objection being sent to Hampshire and a public meeting

and the M 27.

"Inevitably lorry drivers on tight schedules will seek out any shortcut or bypass they can find - Hunts Pond Road, Abshot Road, Warsash Road, Titchfield Road etc.

"And at the end of all this disruption we will most likely be left with a dramatically different area - probably a wetland habitat with much reduced public amenity access."

Local Councillors Geoff and Connie Hockley and Francis Devonshire have all opposed using these sites and Councillor Evans has had separate meetings with Hampshire officers to ensure they understand just what will be destroyed and how much the area is used by public both local and further afield.

Councillor Evans added: "We hope that Hampshire listens to the public and resists Government pressures and recognises this area an unofficial country park that must be retained for the benefit of the Hampshire public.

"Our message is - Don't destroy our countryside."

You can email CAMEL at camelso-lent@aol.com or log on to their web site www.camelso-lent@aol.com

PROPOSALS to extract 8 million tons of sand and gravel from a 740-acre (300 hectares) site bordering the Solent at Chilling have outraged residents and councillors.

Chilling and Brownwich Farms south of Warsash Road were identified by Hampshire County Council while updating the strategic plan for the extraction of land based minerals and for the provision of landfill sites to meet Government requirements.

But the suggestion, which would see land gouged out right to the cliffs looking across the Solent to the Isle of Wight, resulted in massive opposition from the community who say it will destroy countryside and wildlife.

Councillor Keith Evans said: "Residents were alarmed at the proposals and quickly formed a local action group that they called CAMEL (Campaign Against

attended by more than 800.

"The farms were acquired by the County Council several years ago specifically to protect this area of coastline and to retain and develop it for the benefit of the public.

"In fact, at entrances to the area there are colourful Hampshire signs proudly proclaiming the good job the County has done - and they have with footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths and wildlife and a long stretch of the Solent Way along the cliff edge giving magnificent views over the Solent.

"If Hampshire sells this land for extraction it will be blighted for up to 20 years with an estimated one million large lorry movements over that time finding ways to get to the A 27



Opposed: Connie Hockley, In Touch editor Tiffany Harper, Keith Evans and Geoff Hockley with baby Oliver.

Parking permits are on the cards

RESIDENTS' parking schemes could be introduced in Titchfield, but may be controversial.

Councillor Mrs Connie Hockley said she had often been asked when these might be introduced, but realised there would be residents who opposed it.

Fareham's Traffic Management and Design Manager told her that introduction of permits for residents required a residents' parking scheme.

Police did not support these schemes as they could not guarantee their enforcement, but the Council is now responsible for enforcing traffic regulation orders so it is possible to consider their introduction.

The Council is working on a priority strategy to deal with all-day parking issues in the town centre. Once this has been completed, other areas that suffer from all-day parking will be considered for remedial action.

£60m failure to face bulldozers

STRUGGLING Whiteley Village shopping centre is to be bulldozed to make way for a new £100m development.

Opened just 9 years ago amid a fanfare of publicity at a cost of £60m, Whiteley Village has failed commercially, so it will be demolished to make way for a town centre for Whiteley.

The existing 24,500 square metre outlet centre will be replaced by a new 27,000 square metre district centre including shops, restaurants, a crèche, community rooms, meeting rooms, an 80 bed hotel, offices and 250 houses.

Landowner the Whiteley Co-Ownership submitted a report to Winchester City Council to flag up potential problems for its plans at an early stage, ahead of submitting a full planning application.

'£10,000 from councillor's kitty well spent on local good causes' says Geoff

A £10,000 CASH allocation to every county councillor for local community projects has been well spent in Titchfield.

County Councillor Geoff Hockley has revealed how he spent the money, starting with £700 to the Friends of Radio Therapy (FORT), which Chris Braid supports extensively through her bring and buy sales often held at Meon Bye Farm.

"The money bought outdoor furniture, barbecue equipment, garden umbrella and 10 large bags of charcoal for people whose lives have been touched by cancer and who use the large mobile home sited in Chris's garden for respite holidays," he said

Catisfield Village Association received £826 to buy two substantial seats, one sited on The Avenue and the other near the junction with Highlands Road.

Other good causes were:

Titchfield Primary School: £1,110 to send children on a educational visit to Nethercott Farm in Devon.

The Rotary Club of Fareham: £700 to buy a wishing well which will be used to collect money for various projects the club supports in Fareham.

Titchfield Bonfire Boys: £2,500 to ensure Titchfield Carnival takes place in 2008. The Borough Council later matched this figure.

St Peter's Day Nursery: £1,000 towards ongoing projects and equipment.

Titchfield Community Association: £1,900 towards better equipping the Oasis youth club.

1st Titchfield Sea Scouts: £1,264 for urgently needed equipment at the scout hut in Titchfield.

Councillor Hockley added: "I have already committed an amount to provide another seat in Southampton Hill near the bus stop.

"However, this will be delayed until the new financial year.

"In my view, the money was spent on super projects and I look forward very much to hearing of others for 2008."

CAT meetings flag up six worthy local projects

COMMUNITY Action Team (CAT) meetings offer an opportunity for the Police, Borough and County Councils to listen to people's views.

Services delivered by these organisations can be more effectively targeted towards the issues of most concern.

The Council set aside £100,000 for capital projects that are identified at the CATs events.

The first two meetings in Titchfield and Locks Heath were well attended and flagged up several concerns, with transport, traffic and lack of activities for youngsters topping the list.

Six projects were identified as potential recipients for funding and are being assessed.

Titchfield & Titchfield Common 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.

WARD COUNCILLORS

Titchfield

Connie Hockley
27 Heath Lawns
Catisfield PO15 5QB
Tel: 01329 287365
email:
chockley@fareham.gov.uk



Francis Devonshire

Posbrooke House
Titchfield PO14 4EZ
Tel: 01329 847676
email: fdevonshire@fareham.gov.uk



Titchfield Common

Keith Evans
94 Abshot Road
Fareham PO14 4NH
Tel: 01489 582450
email: kevans@fareham.gov.uk



COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Fareham Titchfield

Geoff Hockley
27 Heath Lawns
Catisfield
Fareham PO15 5QB
Tel: 01329 287365



Your man in Westminster



By **Mark Hoban**
MP for Fareham

IF YOU LISTEN to the forecasters, it would appear we are entering uncertain economic times. The credit crunch, which kicked off in the US, is having its impact here with many homeowners facing higher interest rates.

This compounded with higher energy prices and increasing taxes means that many people face a reduction in living standards.

Sadly, this means for many people real challenges in paying bills and meeting mortgage repayments. We started to see evidence of this last year with repossessions increasing by 21% compared to 2006. Nationally, the Citizens' Advice Bureau is receiving more and more queries about debt and seeing 6,600 new debt problems a day.

The Government is compounding the problem through higher taxes. Because of a short-fall in Government funding and despite the best efforts of councils like Fareham, we will see council tax bills rise faster than inflation. More tax changes in April such as the doubling of the 10 pence rate to 20 pence will hit young people and those in their early 60s hard. The Government can do little to help those finding it hard to make ends meet because it borrowed so much in the good times that it has to keep a tight grip on spending and taxes in the more uncertain times we are in now. Prudent management of the nation's finances would have given us much more room for manoeuvre. The Government has let hardworking families down.

If you need help to manage finances, you should contact the CAB or the Consumer Credit Counselling Service or approach your bank and building society.

Mismanagement of the economy by Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling has a knock-on effect on our own finances. Their failure to prepare for a rainy day means that the heavens could open on us.

14 East Street, Fareham PO16 0BN.
Telephone: 01329 233573
email: mail@markhoban.com

Higher police profile leads to 13% Fareham crime fall



CRIME figures for Fareham have fallen dramatically, thanks to higher profile policing and a crack-down on blackspots.

"We have invested heavily in more bike and foot patrols and hope you have seen a difference," said Borough Commander Chief Inspector Steve Wallace.

Figures show a 13% decrease for 2007-08 and surveys showed 89% of residents perceive low crime as making Fareham a good place to live.

"It is safe after dark in Fareham - most violent offences occur between parties who are known to each other.

"Criminal damage and graffiti are down 23% and are a top priority. There are very few drug related problems in Fareham and a zero tolerance approach," said Chief Inspector Wallace.

"The Borough alcohol ban is very effective and we can show it has reduced rowdy and drunken behaviour. Supply to juveniles is also a top priority. Unfortunately, parents often provide the alcohol and some licensed premises sell to juveniles.

"We also carry out regular truancy patrols calling on regular absentees at home.

"We want to know what your neighbourhood priorities are. Parking, speeding and littering are the main issues raised. We target speed-



ing hotspots you raise and 27 tickets were issued on one day alone.

"Accidents are down and any speeding enforcement is based on accidents and speeding data," he said.

He appealed for more community intelligence and asked people to use the Crimestoppers 0800 555111 number.

Fareham Police and the Community Safety Partnership are committed to make Fareham even safer, with the Safer Neighbourhood Teams offering a local presence.

"One final plea... too many crimes read 'Bike left unlocked', 'Satnav stolen from unlocked car', 'Entry via unlocked rear door'...

"We need your help to prevent offences as most crime in Fareham is opportunist.

"We do catch and charge a lot of criminals, but it is no secret that imprisonment is often a last resort for the courts and many are released early. My advice is to avoid becoming a victim if at all possible."

Council wins extended bus pass times

OVER 60s and those with qualifying disabilities will benefit from an extension to the hours of the new national bus concession.

Free travel will apply from 9am until 12.59am Monday to Friday for journeys which start within the borough of Fareham.

This is an extra two and a half hours' free travel each day as well as the statutory minimum (which is from 9.30am until 11pm Monday to Friday and all times at week-ends and bank holidays).

Executive Leader of Fareham Borough Council, Councillor Seán Woodward, said:

"We have successfully negotiated this extension with bus operators to allow bus pass holders to travel free from 9am, which is important

for those who have doctors' and hospital appointments."

From April 1, people who qualify will be able to enjoy free off-peak local bus travel on buses anywhere in England.

Existing pass holders do not need to reapply; their new pass will be sent to them by March 31.

The new national passes will be valid for five years. There will be two types:

Passes with a blue stripe down the right-hand side are for the over 60s.

Those with the orange strip are for disabled residents.

In addition to the national standard scheme, Fareham will continue to provide £35 worth of tokens for an administration fee of £5.

This concession is available to eligible disabled residents

and those currently in receipt of travel tokens.

It is offered as an alternative to the bus pass and is renewable annually.

Companion passes are available for disabled persons who cannot travel alone. They allow holders and one companion to travel free within and directly to and from the borough of Fareham.

As this concession is provided solely by Fareham Council, it cannot be used in other areas of England. Those eligible will receive two passes – a national standard pass and a Fareham Council pass.

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