



In Touch

with our community

PARK GATE & PRIORY PARK – 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 footpath 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

Refused

Residents are happy that two planning applications for Botley Road have been refused.

Councillors Brian Bayford and Marian Ellerton gave evidence at the planning inquiry to replace 2 houses and a bungalow opposite the Q8 garage in Botley Road with a block of 39 retirement homes with only 13 car parking spaces.

More refusals

The Planning Committee met on-site to view and discuss a planning application for 37 Botley Road.

After an inspection, including from Beacon Close, the committee agreed unanimously to refuse the application.

Commercial failure

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

Opened just 9 years ago 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.

Protests at plans to cram even more flats into Park Gate.....



Enough: Residents are angry at Park Gate being swamped with flats.

PLANS for 155 flats – over 50% of the units – at Peters Road, Park Gate have sparked protests.

“Park Gate already has too many

flats that cause significant road and parking problems,” said Councillor Marian Ellerton.

Mrs Ellerton said she would support residents in opposing the

scheme at the next Planning Committee.

Meanwhile, approval has been given for another development at Peters Road, with main access from Lockwood Road and a secondary access for about 60 properties from Peters Road.

Discussions with planning officers and developers resulted in the reduction of two 3-storey properties to 2 storeys in Peters Road, the limiting of access into Peters Road and location of the bus stop.

Building is in two phases, with new properties fronting Peters Road and others at the bottom end of the site. The main part, which includes the controversial scheme, will be developed later.

.... and Whitehall delaying tactics could be excuse for major SE building hike

THE LABOUR government may be delaying amendments to the South East Plan in a bid to force much more development on to areas such as Fareham.

Councils in the SE Region produced a plan to set parameters up to 2026; it was examined by a panel of inspectors who published a favourable report complimenting the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and suggesting no significant changes.

The Government was due to consider the inspectors' report and come back with any changes before Christmas.

Councillor Marian Ellerton said: “This date has now been delayed until July. As any changes the Government decides are mandatory, this delay does not bode well and suggests the Government is re-doing thousands of hours' work done by the SE councils to force much more development into the region.

“Hopefully, the PUSH sub region will not suffer too much but be warned – the thousands of hours of diligent work that led to a sensible and generally accepted submission may well be overturned by bureaucrats who live nowhere near you.”

On a local level, Government interference in planning issues can often be blamed for the Council allow-

ing unpopular applications, but the Planning Committee is often up against rules that they are not allowed to ignore.

For example, loss of a view is not a material consideration and must be ignored.

More upsetting is potential loss of value that may occur to your property, which is also immaterial. And there are many more.

If the Committee refuses an application for reasons an appeal inspector decides are not material, the appeal will succeed and the Council not only loses the chance to impose conditions, but may have to pay applicants' costs.

“There are examples of planning applications being refused by FBC but being overturned at appeal in the form of blocks of flats at Park Gate,” she said.

Density of dwellings is another issue controlled by the Government in planning directives.

Councillors do the best they can to protect Park Gate Ward and generally succeed, but as Councillor Ellerton, who regularly makes deputations to the planning committee on behalf of residents, stresses:

“The odds are stacked against them and it is remarkable that they achieve the degree of success that they do.”

A message to litter louts: If Brian can bin it, so can you

SINCE the policy of speedy cleaning of graffiti there has been a marked improvement in many areas of the Borough.

However, too many residents find it easier to drop litter than to take home or place in a litter bin.

New and extra litter bins are being sited at strategic points and the Council is employing extra staff and buying the latest mechanical devices to help reduce the problem.

Councillor Brian Bayford said: “Please encourage everyone you know, especially children, not to drop litter and to be proud of their Fareham.”

Photo: Brian Bayford (right) and Council Director of Community Services Martyn George taking part in a sponsored clean in West Street which raised over £500 for Children in Need.





Fareham remains top of recycling league

FAREHAM remains at the top of the Hampshire league for recycling with the most recent percentage at 46.2%.

Contamination of recycling has reduced from 19.9% last year to the current 7.4%. This is because of a major education and advisory campaign funded partly by a Government grant.

Project Integra, the consortium of all Hampshire Councils for waste management operates a policy of sustainable recycling and Fareham only collects material for which there is an acceptable recycling market in the UK within a reasonable distance.

All other waste goes to the Portsmouth Incinerator that produces enough energy a

year to heat and light 30,000 houses. The electricity is transferred into the National Grid.

No waste goes to landfill except for the bottom ash from the incinerator.

Recycling saves energy! Recycling paper, tin, glass, aluminium and plastics saves between 60% and 70% energy.

Recycle - if in doubt ring the Council 01329 236100.

Fareham remains the only Council in Hampshire to provide free sacks and a non-chargeable service.

Special arrangements have been made to hold monthly recycling 'Clinics' where recycling advice can be sought and residents can collect replacement sacks.

Residents requiring delivery of replacement

Councillors pressing for access to Coldeast Hospital to be resolved

ACCESS to the Coldeast site still has not been resolved.

In 2003 Inventures, who were then the Government's agent for the site, Sarisbury Councillors Seán Woodward and David Swanbrow and Park Gate Councillors Marian Ellerton and Brian Bayford agreed to re-position the Brook Lane access to the roundabout at the junction with Lockwood Road.

They agreed that the existing entrance on to Brook Lane could be potentially dangerous.

Another Government agent, English Partnerships, took over knowing nothing of the agreement, but later agreed to move the access.

Part of the site, including the existing



Determined: David Swanbrow and Marian Ellerton continue lobbying for relocation.

access and the road leading to it, was sold to Miller Homes to start building.

The entrance on Bridge Road (A27) is being upgraded and when this work is completed, it will again become the main entrance to the site and councillors will continue to push for relocation

sacks to their home address will be charged £5.00 for delivery

Requests for extra/replacement sacks should be made

to the Civic Offices 01329 236100 and collected as described below. Proof of identity is required for collection. Recycling Clinics will

be held at the Lockwood Community Centre on April 10th 3.0 - 6.0pm and at the Civic Offices on April 16th 3.30 - 6.30pm

PARK GATE & PRIORY PARK 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.

WARD COUNCILLORS

Park Gate

Brian Bayford
 1 Camargue Close
 Whiteley PO15 7DT
 Tel: 01489 880740
 email:
 bbayford@fareham.gov.uk



Marian Ellerton

230 Botley Road
 Burr ridge SO31 1BL
 Tel: 01489 570774
 email:
 mellerton@fareham.gov.uk



COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Fareham Sarisbury

Seán Woodward
 8 Persian Drive
 Whiteley PO15 7BJ
 Tel: 01489 881030
 email: sean.woodward@hants.gov.uk





Our 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 shortfall 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.

•You may contact Mark via his office
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 weekends 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.