



# In Touch

with our community

PARK GATE & PRIORY PARK – WINTER 2011

A situation that will only get worse, which is why your Conservative Council is acting NOW

- Fareham's current social housing waiting list is over 2,100 and rising daily
- The Borough needs 495 affordable homes per year to meet housing needs
- Even with the SDA it's unlikely this figure can be reached

- If 30% to 40% of housing in the SDA is affordable it will help
- In the last decade the national birthrate has increased by 19% and continues to rise
- Fareham's birthrate is higher than the national figure and significantly higher than Portsmouth's and Southampton's

## Order or chaos - Tories forced to make stark choice to meet housing demands

TAKE A HARD look at these photographs.

Now picture the trees uprooted, hedges grubbed out and fields sprouting rows of houses and flats.

This is just one of the strategic countryside gaps guarded as green buffers between settlements across Fareham.

But they are **ALL** at high risk.

Developers are itching to get into those fields to harvest a fat crop of profits.

The 287 acres of farmland (pictured) provide the breathing space between Fareham town and Stubbington.

The owner has expressed an interest in developing it, but the Council could not stop him or others without the protection of a core strategy.

The result would be 3,480 houses and a maze of estate roads with the extra traffic causing chaos on Longfield Avenue, Rowans Way, Mays Lane and Peak Lane.

There would be no schools, no surgery, no community facilities, no local industry, no shops, no overall system – another Cherque Farm disaster waiting to happen.

### Reluctant decision

It would be repeated across the Borough until every settlement loses its identity and merges into an incoherent conglomerate.

This is why the Conservative-led Council, faced with hard choices inflicted by the last Labour government, reluctantly had to



**At high risk:** Farmland (left) bordering Longfield Avenue stretches towards HMS Collingwood and (right) the other side of Mays Lane towards Rowans Way and Titchfield.

choose the lesser of two sacrificial evils and adopt the Core Strategy, which includes a Strategic Development Area (SDA) in the shape of an eco-town for around 6,500 homes north of Fareham.

### 'Not a brick' pledge

Councillor David Swanbrow, Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Environment, told critics:

"Let's be clear. We need the additional housing to cater for Fareham's needs for the next 20 years and beyond and the choice is between large scale urban extensions or the Strategic Development area."

Council Leader Seán Woodward pledged: "Not a brick will be laid until plans are in place to ensure all the required infrastructure is committed to and properly funded."

### Biggest ever consultation

Contrary to recent ill-informed opposition publications, preparation of the Core Strategy includes the biggest series of ongoing consultations and opportunities to comment in the Borough's history.

Local groups, businesses and anyone asking to be kept informed have been regularly updated and consulted. This has included dozens of groups from outside the Borough, such as Wickham Parish Council.

*Fareham Today*, which is delivered to every household, has included articles about every six months since spring 2005.

Advertising on backs of buses has been used to ask people to give their views, and the plans publicised through Community Action Team meetings and exhibitions.

**Are you affected? See Page 4**

### FACT

The SDA will be a wholly sustainable, rigidly controlled development with its own shops, schools, doctors' surgeries, an integrated road network and transport based on the Bus Rapid Transport system.

Affordable housing for young people and families will be paramount.

### FACT

The Council can't adopt the Core Strategy before the Examination in Public by an inspector to be held in June, with the report - which is binding - in October or November.

If it's found to be unsound, Fareham would be exposed to developers winning appeals to build in the strategic gaps.

### FACT

We succeeded in reducing the number of houses from at least 10,000. But without robust evidence, this can be a disaster.

Test Valley cut their figure by 700, lost an appeal and will now have 350 houses in a strategic gap exactly where they didn't want them, with the likelihood they will lose more appeals.

### FACT

The SDA isn't the only part of Fareham's Core Strategy.

It includes planning policies for Coldeast, the former Daedalus airfield and the town centre.

Consultation will continue with emphasis on the Area Action Plan and Master Plan for the SDA, including exhibitions of plans for major developments.

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

**WARD NEWS BRIEFS**

**CAT meeting**

The Western Wards Community Action Team meeting was held in Burrige Village Hall on February 3.

There were discussions on the proposed closure of the Locks Heath Surgery and Trading Standards, reference to cold calling.

Next meeting: June 15 at Sarisbury Community Centre.

**Help your council**

If you are over 18, live in the Borough and wish to improve services, you can by joining Fareham's e-panel.

The Council uses the e-panel to gauge opinion about important local issues.

You can register via: [www.fareham.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.fareham.gov.uk/consultation)

**Fraudsters beware**

Cheats better think twice before trying council tax fraud.

Fareham is leading a county-wide purge involving 9 districts to catch the culprits who cost the country millions of pounds.

Over £200m of single person discounts may be falsely claimed across Britain.

It could total £130,000 a year for Fareham.

**Fix bayonets!**

A Freedom March of HMS Collingwood, led by The Royal Marines Band, Portsmouth will take place on Saturday May 7 at 11am in West Street, Fareham.

The base was given Freedom of the Borough in 1974, entitling them to march through the streets of Fareham with 'bayonets fixed and colours flying' every four years.

**Residents are pleased with new, safer cycle route**

**A PARK GATE resident enjoys the new cycle path along Botley Road from Rookery Avenue to Duncan Road .**

Ward Councillor Marian Ellerton is pleased that the clearly marked extended pavement over the motorway provides a wider, safer path for cyclists.

It was paid for by developers' contributions to Hampshire Highways.



**Doctors accused of putting business before health care**

**DOCTORS at Locks Road surgery are putting business before the health care of their patients, ward councillors have claimed.**

The possibility that it could be closed and patients sent to the Whiteley surgery has angered residents who use it.

Patients were shocked to receive a letter from the surgery in December advising that consideration was being given to close the surgery on March 31, 2011.

Conservative ward Councillors Brian Bayford and Marian Ellerton are concerned that a visit to the Whiteley Surgery involves a round trip by car of a minimum of 7 miles through the heavy traffic at Park Gate, Segensworth and Junction 9 over the M27.

There is also limited car parking at the Whiteley Surgery.

Marian Ellerton said: "The Locks Road surgery is on a bus route, but patients fear that little consideration

appears to have been given to those without personal transport."

Brian Bayford said: "The practice has a contract with the Primary Care Trust to provide a service to the people of the Locks Heath area and Whiteley.

"Any changes to that contract need to be approved by the PCT, which will consider a number of issues, including the quality of care for the patients and the access to the Whiteley surgery."

Both ward councillors added: "The GPs have made a good business case for the practice, but not a good health care case for their patients."

Councillors also believe that the surgery is an integral part of the local community and that losing such a facility is detrimental to the well being of the patients.

Fareham Council has advised the PCT of its concerns and also requested the doctors to delay the March 31 date to allow further debate and consultation to take place.

**Nice idea, but doubts over siting of care village plan**

**A PLANNING application for a care complex is being submitted for the land behind the Village Inn, Botley Road and into the area of scrubland off Beacon Bottom.**

The care village would include several bungalows with a residential unit for residents requiring short-term care and a rest home for those no longer able to care for themselves.

A health centre with physio and other

amenities would also be provided.

Councillor Brian Bayford said: "The principle is excellent, but your councillors have reservations as to whether this is the best location in the interests of local residents.

"This is especially relevant after the failure to stop the planning application for a day nursery in Beacon Bottom recently, which was opposed by both Councillor Marian Ellerton and myself."

**Major Fareham stores are on course for completion**

**DEBENHAMS have begun fitting out their new store in Fareham Shopping Centre.**

The store and adjoining multi-storey car park expected to be finished by the end of this summer.

Tesco's store in Quay Street should be finished by the end of this year or early in 2012, but it won't be allowed to trade until the Quay Street roundabout improvements it is paying for are finished.

**Localism Bill will not be a cure for all planning issues**

**THE Localism Bill currently going through Parliament is not the panacea many believe will enable them to reject or accept local developments as they wish.**

Councillor Leslie Keeble, executive member for performance and improvement, stresses the Bill is in draft legislation only.

It will probably be substantially amended with some clauses rejected or significantly changed before it receives the Royal Assent late in 2011.

When it comes into force early in 2012, it will abolish Regional Strategies.

Local people will be able to initiate the making of two things:

- 1 A Neighbourhood Development Plan, which will be additional to a current local development plan.
- 2 A Neighbourhood Development Order which will permit local development of a specific type in the neighbourhood, either generally or on a specific site, and which amounts to a grant of planning permission.

It will not, however, allow residents to reduce development, only to propose extra development in their area.

In each case the support of at least 50% of local people is required.

This is a general description of the impact of the proposals set out in the Bill.

However, these will be subject to regulations made by the Secretary of State which will place controls on how these powers can be used.





Residents' joy as garden grabbing bid is thwarted

**RESIDENTS** are celebrating victory over a garden grabber.

An appeal to build houses and flats in a garden plot in Bridge Road was thrown out by a planning inspector.

The plans had been fiercely opposed by local residents and **Conservative** ward Councillors Marian Ellerton and Brian Bayford at the appeal hearing in November.

Fareham Council had refused planning consent on the grounds that it had a harmful effect on nearby residential properties and was an incongruous, poorly designed scheme with unsuitable access.

Marian Ellerton said: "Park Gate residents and their ward councillors will continue to object to any unsuitable infill development that is applied for in the area."

**Royal wedding**

The Council is updating its website so that information is available for those wishing to organise a street party to celebrate the Royal wedding on April 29. It should be ready as we publish.

**Draft plans for former Coldeast hospital site on the way at last**



**New lease of life:** Stately Coldeast mansion features in development plans.

**THE FUTURE** of the old Coldeast Hospital site is closer to being settled, with a wealth of community benefits in the pipeline.

Working with the Homes and Communities Agency, Miller Homes and the Primary Care Trust, Fareham Council hopes to have an approved draft development brief ready this summer.

Councillor Brian Bayford said It could not be formally adopted until Fareham's Core Strategy had been approved.

But there are unlikely to be any significant changes made as a result of the Core Strategy examination.

"It has always been the Council's aim to gain control of as much of the site as possible for use as public open space, and to preserve the mansion which is locally listed.

"As was pointed out during a consultation a few years ago, this has always meant giving up part of the site for development," he said.

The current proposal is for a further 150 to 170 dwellings to be built on the site, plus up to 60 units of much

needed sheltered accommodation.

Also, an area previously reserved for use by the Primary Care Trust will see up to 30 houses built.

As this is part of the current urban area it would be impossible to prevent under current planning rules.

The mansion will be preserved and restored and used in a way that will benefit the area and open parkland to the south will be retained.

Community benefits include:

- Use of the many acres of remaining woodland as public space
- New cemetery, sports pitches and a sports pavilion/community hall
- Allotments and a site for the Western Wards swimming pool.

There is also space for the recently opened Community Hospital to be extended.

A first draft brief should be available in April with a consultation and exhibitions outlining the plans in May or June.

The plans should be finalised later in the summer and adopted before the end of the year provided the Fareham Core Strategy is approved.

**£3,500 for Speedwatch campaign**

**COUNTY** Councillor Seán Woodward has awarded over £3,500 to Burrige and Swanwick Residents' Association for equipment and uniforms to carry out Speedwatch campaigns.

It will enable residents to encourage motorists to drive with respect through the village.

The Speedwatch campaign is to be run in conjunction with police and volunteers who will note registration numbers of speeding traffic and pass them to the police to follow up.

The equipment will be available to any residents' groups in Sarisbury Division which includes Burrige, Park Gate, Sarisbury, Swanwick, and Whiteley.



**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.

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**MARK HOBAN**  
Your man in Westminster



Whilst the first few months of the Coalition Government were focused on tackling the deficit and laying the foundations for economic recovery, Parliament has been debating measures which form another part of our reform programme – devolution of power from Westminster to local communities.

I have long felt it is local people who should decide what happens in their communities, not people sitting in Whitehall or Westminster. I want to see local people taking control.

Why should decisions about how schools are run be made in Whitehall rather than by head teachers and governors? We're changing that.

Shouldn't decisions about the type of healthcare we get be made by doctors at the sharp end? Our Health and Social Care Bill makes that a reality.

Our Localism Bill gives new rights to local communities, including the right to buy community assets.

The crime maps now available on [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk) will enable you and I to hold directly elected local police commissioners to account.

We have reduced the number of ring fenced grants that Whitehall gives to local councils so they have greater freedom over how they spend your money.

We are also pushing new laws through to ensure you have the final say in a referendum if there are any new powers to be transferred from Westminster to Brussels.

Over the last 13 years, we saw power being taken away from local communities in the belief that Whitehall knows best. It is time to turn that tide and this Government is doing it.

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**It could be looming the other side of your garden wall**

**SHORT-SIGHTED critics of plans for a new eco-town north of Fareham are refusing to accept the disastrous alternatives.**

Without the SDA, thousands of houses could be built without social or transport infrastructure and most green gaps will disappear.

You wouldn't know where Fareham town ended and Stubbington or Titchfield began. And that's just two examples.

If you live near one of these green gaps, you should pray that Fareham's Core Strategy passes public examination so that we, not the developers, keep control of what goes where.

If you think this is political spin, you can check the facts for yourself.

- Log on to [www.fareham.gov.uk](http://www.fareham.gov.uk)
- Click 'Most popular pages'
- Click 'Local Development Framework'
- Click 'Site Allocations'



**At risk:** The Council couldn't stop the rash of flats at Park Gate. Without the Core Strategy, 350 homes could be built between Beacon Bottom and the railway.

At the bottom under 'Exhibition Material' are 10 maps showing 48 vulnerable sites edged in green. Thousands of dwellings could be built in your back yard..

**FACT** 42% of the new eco-town area will stay as green open space

**Not a penny more! Nobody does it better than the Conservatives**

**IT'S ANOTHER good news year for Fareham council taxpayers - we have frozen the rate and you won't pay a penny more.**

And that is all down to shrewd budgeting by your **Conservative** Council.

Even better news, is that all other authorities (County, Police and Fire) have followed our lead and also frozen their taxes.

Remember the James Bond theme *Nobody Does It Better?*

Nobody in Fareham will see an increase in their bills until at least April 2012.

Only a **Conservative**-run council can be trusted not to fritter your money.

For years, we have kept Fareham's taxes as the lowest in Hampshire and one of the lowest in the country.

Executive Leader Councillor Seán Woodward said: "We are in a recession and everyone is doing their very best to save money.

"Fareham Council is no exception. Not only are we keeping our costs down, we have also absorbed a reduction of 26% in the grant we receive from the government.

"We already set almost the lowest council tax in the country, despite receiving one of the lowest levels of government grant. This year, without taking action, we would have needed to implement a 37% increase in council tax."

Anticipating the massive grant reductions, the Council took swift action such as reducing staff by 18% and amalgamating some services with Southampton and Gosport.

**Yet we managed to set aside savings for new schemes**

**Creation of a New Skills Fund**  
**£200,000 is set aside to establish 'apprenticeship' placements which offer work-based training programmes leading to nationally recognised qualifications.**

These will be probably come from partnerships with local colleges or other training providers. Funding is also being sought from the National Apprenticeship Service which could offer up to 100% for training costs.

The scheme will be designed around Council services such as grounds maintenance, business administration, ICT, communications and customer services. It is hoped to start in the summer and run it for a few years.

Councillor Woodward, who proposed the scheme, said: "The importance of appren-

ticeships and training cannot be overstated."

**Area-based home insulation**  
**This involves attracting significant external funding to retro-fit home insulation and provide energy saving and solar related advice.**

A commitment of £33,000 by the Council will attract approximately £2.4m of insulation works to homes in the Borough.

For every £1 of investment by the Council, there will be nearly £73 of matched funding. It is estimated that over 2,800 homes will benefit, reducing the total cost of energy consumption by £300,000 per annum.

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