



In Touch

with our community

SARISBURY & WHITELEY – AUTUMN 2008

Hospital go-ahead after 25-year wait

But is the prognosis another quarter century before the beds arrive?



Gentle curves: Shape of the new hospital is captured in the artist's sketch (above) as the Coldeast site (right) awaits the first digger.



IT'S BEEN hanging around for 25 years in the waiting room, but this month the trauma finally ended when the community hospital was given the all-clear.

Initially, it will not be a hospital in the true sense because there are no beds in Phase 1, but there will be space for a two-storey extension with beds.

The Borough Council's planners approved plans for the new hospital at Coldeast with parking for 120 cars on October 1 and work should begin soon.

It was hoped that access to the hospital could have been achieved via Cold East Way, but both the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the Hampshire County Council argued that this was not possible.

The entrance will be via a new access on Brook Lane, which will mean some tree loss although the curved roadway should ensure that the visual damage will be kept to a minimum.

Councillor David Swanbrow, Executive

Member for Planning and Transportation, said: "All traffic studies suggest that traffic on Brook Lane as a result of the hospital will be only marginally increased."

The building will be of single-storey design in the shape of a gentle curve. It will be built on a part of the Coldeast site that was reserved for health facilities in the 2000 Fareham Local Plan Review.

High quality care

The hospital will provide a brand new facility that will focus on the needs of the local community and improve patients' access to high quality health care close to their homes.

There will be diagnostic and imaging facilities with space reserved for a mobile MRI scanner. Services currently provided by the Sylvan Clinic will transfer to the new facility.

These amenities should save many residents having to make visits to Gosport or Portsmouth for diagnosis or treatment.

Acute conditions will still be treated at Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth.

Free parking

The PCT originally wanted to charge patients for using the car park, but after pressure from local councillors it has been agreed that the use of the car park will be free for the first 3 hours.

"This should ensure that most patients visiting the hospital will not have to pay for parking, but will meet the PCT's requirement to prevent the car park being used as a free all-day car park for commuters using Swanwick Station," said Councillor Swanbrow.

He added: "Fareham has waited a long time for a community hospital. What has been approved may not yet be all that residents want but it is a start.

"Further facilities that would normally be found in a hospital will, hopefully, follow before another 25 years are up."

New look West Street wins top award in regional 'In Bloom' contest



FAREHAM'S new-look West Street won the Best New Commercial Landscape award in the South and South East in Bloom contest.

The day was crowned by Fareham scooping the overall winners prize for the fifth year running and a gold medal in the Large

Town/Small City category at the regional awards ceremony in Crawley.

The sensory garden in Osborn Road won the Best Small Park category and a gold medal and the Fareham in Bloom team won the Community Involvement Award for their outstanding work over the past 13 years.

•Pictured (left to right) volunteers Heather Othen and Jean Kingdom, TV gardener Chris Collins (presented awards), volunteers Bridget and Geoff Thickett, Matt Wakefield (Horticultural Development Officer) Councillor Connie Hockley and Heather Scott (volunteer).

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



WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Planning changes

The Government has changed planning rules making it easier for people to make changes to their property by building extensions, erecting garages or sheds etc.

From October 1, many changes no longer require planning permission.

For example, you may now be able to build a two-storey extension on the back of your house without planning permission provided it meets certain guidelines.

Sign vandalised

Vandals have destroyed the interpretation board on Sarisbury Green near the Parish Rooms.

Sarisbury Residents' Association is to make a bid for its replacement through the Western Wards Community Action Team.

The board showed the history of the area and of the listed buildings around the Green.

We look forward to seeing it back in its proper place and hope that the 'low-lives' that chose to wreck it after 10 years will leave it alone.

Scrap the tax

Hampshire County Council has asked the Government to scrap the 10,000 miles per tax year threshold for volunteer drivers reclaiming mileage expenditure.

The Council is asking for volunteer drivers to be allowed to claim all mileage incurred providing volunteer services, without fear of tax penalties.



Conservation area kiosk should survive payphone purge by BT

THE PUBLIC phone box in Bridge Road Sarisbury looks likely to escape BT's purge of Britain's payphones that do not pay.

Three payphones were identified at Hispano Avenue, Whiteley, Old Swanwick Lane, Lower Swanwick and the little green at Bridge Road, Sarisbury for the axe.

No case could be made out for the first two, but the Bridge Road kiosk is used enough to warrant keeping it. It is also part of the historic Sarisbury Green Conservation Area.

Councillor Seán Woodward used his executive powers at Fareham Council to object to its removal and it now looks almost certain it will be saved.

Parish council attacked for roads survey interference

THREE origin and destination surveys aimed at easing future travel in and out of Whiteley were carried out on September 9.

The one-off surveys were undertaken under supervision of the local police traffic management team.

Meantime, Whiteley Parish Council was criticised by local councillors for treading on the County's toes by sending out survey forms which included requests for similar information.

The surveys on Whiteley Lane, Whiteley Way and Botley Road, Burrige were needed to help construct a SATURN (Simulation and Assignment of Traffic to Urban Road Networks) model that will inform the Whiteley Access Study and allow the County Council to model different scenarios for the future opening of additional accesses into Whiteley.

The surveys help to find out where people are travelling to and from, enabling the highway authority to model how the opening of additional accesses will affect travel patterns and traffic levels on surrounding roads.

Councillor David Swanbrow, Executive Member for Planning and Transportation, said the quality of the data depended on the completion and return of the postcards handed out.

"Unfortunately, no formal warning could be given in such surveys as people would then have the opportunity to change their travel behaviour on the day of the survey.

"The response was good with a total of around 2,500 returns following 8,000 requests for information to individual drivers."

Once the data has been collated and modelling carried out, effects on the local highway network around Whiteley of any combinations of opening Yew Tree Drive and Rookery

Avenue on local roads, including Botley Road (which runs through Burrige, Swanwick and Park Gate), Yew Tree Drive and Rookery Avenue, can be predicted. This work should be completed early in 2009.

Next, a questionnaire will be given to residents of Burrige, Park Gate, Swanwick and Whiteley who are likely to be affected by any decisions to open access roads.

Whiteley residents may ask why, when they recently received a survey including traffic issues from Whiteley (Winchester) Parish Council, is this work being done?

Councillor Swanbrow said: "It is all very well asking questions but it is certainly unhelpful if the consequences of road openings are not known by those answering the questions.

"Whiteley Parish Council was asked to await the SATURN survey results before going ahead with its survey, but unfortunately chose to do so anyway and distribute it to Fareham residents."

County Councillor for Sarisbury Division (which includes most of Whiteley's residents) Seán Woodward said: "It is unfortunate that the survey work was not well co-ordinated. I can assure all of residents of my division that the consultation data used for helping to inform decisions on future access to Whiteley insofar as they relate to Yew Tree Drive and Rookery Avenue will only be based on the responses received to the survey.

"The parish council survey was also asking a series of questions on other topics, but it would have been better if highways issues had been asked about once we were in possession of knowledge of the consequences of possible future decisions. I am pleased that we will now be able to rectify this unfortunate situation."

No end yet to plague of A27 road excavations

WHEN will it all end, residents are asking about the incessant excavations along the A27?

Bridge Road through Park Gate, Sarisbury and Lower Swanwick has been plagued throughout the last two years with various public utilities tearing up the road for improvements to their services.

Many residents have asked us what future works are planned so that they can plan their journeys accordingly.

Scottish and Southern Energy have recently finished their mains laying project.

Southern Water need to install new services to the Coldeast development, but could not share the road space with Scottish and Southern Energy due to differing excavation methods.

Southern Water has agreed that its three weeks of planned work will not take place until the Easter break of 2009 to minimise disruption and to give residents and road users a break. The site has a water supply, but it requires an upgrade. After that there is no work planned.

At Fareham Council's request, Hampshire County Council is looking into applying a Section 58A notice to this stretch of road, which is a temporary embargo on non-essential works due to on-going disruption.

This is a new piece of legislation under the Traffic Management Act. Southern Water has agreed to comply with these conditions which is why it will wait until Easter next year.

Holly Hill Woodland Park wins Green Flag award at first attempt



HOLLY HILL Woodland Park in Fareham has won a prestigious Green Flag award.

It has long been considered a welcoming, safe, clean and well maintained place to relax.

It keeps this way because of the enthusiastic work of its volunteers, the Friends of Holly Hill Woodland Park, and Fareham Borough Council ranger Mark Trigwell.

And these factors, plus its sustainability and community involvement, has now been recognised by the award.

The Green Flag Award scheme started 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country.

Salisbury Councillor David Swanbrow said: "It is seen as a benchmark of excellence for parks and open spaces.

"This is the first year that Holly Hill has applied for Green Flag status so it is a remarkable achievement to win the award at the first attempt.

"The challenge now is to keep the Green Flag as it must be re-applied for each year."

The best: Volunteers aim to keep the Green Flag flying.

New route will ease traffic

THE NEW distributor route from Dibles Road through the old Warsash Motors site to Warsash Road roundabout should be open soon.

Access to Warsash Road from Cutter Avenue will be closed.

It completes a Hampshire commitment to address the safety aspects of exiting from Schooner Avenue so close to the bend in Warsash Road.

All-conkering Louis takes the championship

FORECASTS predicted stormy weather for The Friends of Holly Hill 2008 sixth annual Open Conker Championship.

Drizzle and gusty winds prevailed throughout the afternoon, but the competition soon warmed up.

Early rounds were keenly fought as competitors got their eye in.

Adults and kids advanced to the final rounds with Vaughn Thomas representing the adults playing Louis Barrett, the brother of Millie the 2006 champion.

With skill and a little luck Louis overcame Vaughn to take the Champion's Shield.



Photo: Robert Thomas

Champ: Louis receives his awards from Salisbury Councillor Seán Woodward.

Public service nominations

NOMINATIONS are invited for the 2009 Citizens of Honour and Young Person of the Year awards.

Closing date for nominations for outstanding acts of bravery and voluntary services which benefit the community is January 30 and these can be made on-line at www.fareham.gov.uk/citizenawards, or forms can be obtained by calling our customer service team on 01329 236100.

SARISBURY & WHITELEY 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

Salisbury

Seán Woodward

8 Persian Drive

Whiteley PO15 7BJ

Tel: 01489 881030

email: swoodward@fareham.gov.uk



David Swanbrow

7 Mulberry Lane

Salisbury SO31 7LJ

Tel: 01489 572723

email: dswanbrow@fareham.gov.uk



COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Fareham Salisbury

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

As part of the Conservative Treasury team, I spent much time over the summer thinking about how the Government got us in a mess.

During the good times rather than save for a rainy day, Gordon Brown continued to borrow to the point that he has, according to statisticians, breached his own borrowing rules, which were meant to control government finances and are now in tatters. Now we are in more difficult times, he can't help families and businesses to weather the storm.

How do we put our public finances back into good order and ensure governments stick to the rules? We will set up an Office for Budget Responsibility to keep politicians on the straight and narrow when it comes to tax and spending. It will be like the old fashioned bank managers, the ones who would let you know that you were overdrawn and rather than offering more credit, suggested you might like to reduce your overdraft and live within your means. That's what the office will do. When Gordon Brown was overdrawn, like Oliver Twist he asked for more credit.

Once we have the public finances back in order, we will be able to do what government is meant to do, which is to be on your side. So when the economy is not going so smoothly, the Government has the money to help businesses and families, rather than doing what has happened this year, raising taxes on families with big hikes on car tax or asking small companies to cough up more.

Government is not about flashy gimmicks and wheezes; it is about doing the dull, sensible things that make real differences to families when it matters. It is about reassuring people that you have got a firm grip on what is happening. Our Office for Budget Responsibility shows that we are serious about putting our economy right.

•You may contact Mark via his office
14 East Street, Fareham PO16 0BN.
Telephone: 01329 233573
email: mail@markhoban.com

Free swims for over 60s

But who pays for 10 Drowning Street's latest brainwave?

THEY ALWAYS look wonderful on paper...free bus travel nationwide for over 60s and now a new Government plan for free swimming for old and young.

But Labour's grandiose freebie schemes have one flaw. Who splashes the cash in the long run?

Concessionary bus passes are already forcing Fareham Council to swim against a rising financial tide and Conservative councillors fear free swimming sessions for under 16s and over 60s will plunge finances into deep water.

Nationwide bus passes started in April, but the scheme was not funded properly, leaving several councils with huge problems.

"In most authorities, the gap will have to be met by the council taxpayer and the additional costs could be significant," said Councillor David Swanbrow, Executive Member for Planning and Transportation.

And that is the worry following the Government's approach to councils asking them if they are interested in a grant towards the introduction of free swimming sessions.

Funding has been promised for only the first two years for the over 60s; no details have been given for the under 16s group and nothing beyond.

Councillor Connie Hockley, Executive Member for Community, said: "On the surface, this seems a wonderful idea provided it is **fully funded** and applies only to local residents, BUT – and there is always a catch in many schemes proposed by this Government – what happens after the first two years?"

"Is the initial funding sufficient or will the local taxpayers end up by subsidising another Government initiative?"

It's the question that's already been answered in respect of the concessionary fares debacle, for the Government pays only 43% of the cost in Fareham.

"The cost over the first four months suggests



At a stroke: Free-style may take on a new meaning for over 60s at Fareham swimming pool.

that by the end of the financial year the Council is likely to spend at least £280,000 on top of the £1.5m it budgeted for concessionary travel, with the possibility it could rise much further.

"This equates to a council tax rise for Fareham of 5%-6% on its own," said Councillor Swanbrow.

Councils have to pay for any pass holder's journey starting within their boundaries. For example, a Gosport resident travelling to Winchester will have to change at Fareham and it's Fareham Council which then pays for the rest of that traveller's journey.

"The Gosport resident gets the benefit of free travel, Winchester shops may well benefit, but all Fareham gets is the biggest slice of the cost – and the Fareham council taxpayer pays," said Councillor Swanbrow, who said the Council was asking the Government to re-assess a wholly unfair situation.

The Council has expressed interest to get funding for free swimming for over 60s, provided it is restricted to local residents..

Councillor Hockley said the Council was also interested in operating a scheme for free swimming sessions for under 16s which could be run during school holidays, but only for Borough residents and provided it was fully funded.

The Council also asked the Government for cash towards the cost of building a new swimming pool in the Western Wards.

She added: "We await the Government's decision with bated breath."

Borough crackdown on untaxed vehicles

THIRTY untaxed vehicles were clamped and impounded in a two-day crackdown across the Borough by Fareham Council, the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency and the police.

A further joint operation was planned for October.

The DVLA used a vehicle equipped with Automatic Number Plate Recognition

equipment which identified any untaxed and uninsured vehicle.

The vehicle was then clamped and a notice attached stating that it had been seized and would not be released until a valid tax disc was obtained.

If a valid tax disc could not be provided, the vehicle was towed away to a storage pound until the owner provided a valid tax disc

If no tax disc was provided,

the vehicle was crushed or, if of value, was sent to a further vehicle pound in the Midlands to be sold

Each day a vehicle is in the pound charges are incurred by the owner.

Vehicles shown by the ANPR camera to be uninsured were also removed.

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