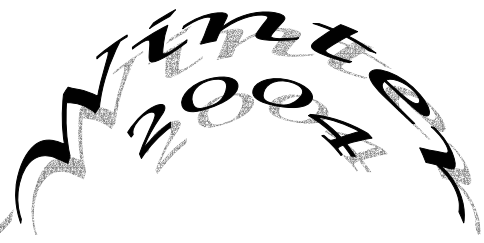


InTouch



SARISBURY WARD



**BURRIDGE
SARISBURY
SWANWICK
LOWER
SWANWICK
AND
WHITELEY**

YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS:

FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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FAREHAM COUNCIL TAX SET AT INFLATION-ONLY INCREASE

We are pleased to report that Fareham Borough Council continues to have one of the lowest Council Taxes in the country with a rise of just 2.5% bringing the total for a band D property to £123 per year. The Council, which has just been rated as GOOD by the Audit Commission (in the top 20% in the country) in terms of its services and management has also recently become debt-free meaning that it is not penalised by interest rates.

The low tax has been achieved despite a need to fund an ever-increasing number of Government "initiatives" many of which receive little or no financial support and cost the Council over £500,000 annually, and a steady reduction in the proportion of expenditure funded by Government. The average council only has to raise 25% of its expenditure via the Council Tax but for Fareham this figure is 52% due to receiving a grant settlement no higher now than 10 years ago. The whole band D bill including the County, Borough, Police and Fire Authorities is £1,123 per year.

We are pleased to report a number of service improvements including:

- ⇒ An enforcement team to clamp down on and issue fixed penalty notices for litter dropping, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles, fly tipping, etc
- ⇒ Pay-and-display car parking charges frozen for the third year running and introduction of pay-on-foot
- ⇒ Vandalism Task Force with £40,000 to spend on community safety initiatives such as covert CCTV
- ⇒ Five new neighbourhood facilities for young people including skate parks
- ⇒ Provision of a Cinema and other leisure facilities in the Market Quay development in the town centre

Commenting, Council Leader and Sarisbury Councillor Seán Woodward said: "I am pleased to have been able to propose such a low increase in Council Tax with some useful increases in services. I am delighted that 5 years of Conservative administration has turned around the Council's finances from a predicted £2.2 million ongoing annual deficit of revenue, a £3.8 million capital deficit and £5.8 million of external debt to the present debt-free state with all funding in balance and no use of reserves being necessary to maintain one of the lowest Council Taxes in England."

**We keep InTouch throughout the year
- not just at election time!!!**

ACT NOW CARD

We are pleased to reproduce this card. If you have any items for attention please fill it in and send it to us.



FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

CIVIC OFFICES CIVIC WAY FAREHAM HAMPSHIRE

ACT NOW CARD

We are constantly striving to provide the best possible service to our customers and would welcome your help.

If you are aware of a problem in the area, please take the time to complete the details below and post this card back to us.

PROBLEM DETAILS

LOCATION: Road Name _____

Exact Position _____

YOUR DETAILS

Please complete your personal details so that we may let you know what action we have taken.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POST CODE _____

DATE _____ Tel. No. _____

PLEASE TICK IF YOU DO NOT REQUIRE
A WRITTEN RESPONSE

DEMOLITION APPLICATION FOR THE SARISBURY SUBMITTED

Planning applications have just been received from KingsOak to demolish The Sarisbury pub and replace it with 20 dwellings including one-bedroomed flats and two- and three-bedroomed houses.

We feel it would be very sad to lose this important local landmark and hope that the unconvincing case for its demolition will be rejected.



COLDEAST HOSPITAL HOUSING PLANS PASSED

Fareham Borough Council reluctantly gave detailed planning permission recently to the Secretary of State for Health's planning applications to build 251 houses on the built part of the site of the old Coldeast Hospital. This totals some 35 acres out of the total 170.

Readers will recall that 5 years ago the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, gave outline planning consent on appeal against the wishes of the Council for the development which includes an access to Brook Lane utilising the driveway to the mansion. This left the Council only able to rule on house siting, design and landscaping.

Out of the total number of houses 63 units will provide affordable shared equity and rented accommodation. The application also includes:

- ⇒ Playing field, children's playground and informal open space
- ⇒ Community hall for public use
- ⇒ Education and public transport contributions
- ⇒ Upgraded access to A27 and Brook Lane
- ⇒ Traffic calming on Brook Lane
- ⇒ Cycle routes and parking
- ⇒ Retention and management of most trees
- ⇒ A bat house!

Given the fact that the Council was tied by the consent already issued by the Government the Sarisbury and Park Gate Councillors (David Swanbrow, Seán Woodward, Marian Ellerton and Brian Bayford) attempted to make the development as acceptable as possible and made a number of demands some of which the applicants agreed to negotiate upon subject to receipt of the planning consent:

- ⇒ Relocate the Brook Lane access to the roundabout
- ⇒ Provide a proper community centre by extending and renovating the inadequate community hall. This will be so that the Scouts can continue to use the building.
- ⇒ Provide a skate park
- ⇒ Footpath access across the site to give safe routes to the schools and reinstate those footpaths currently blocked off by the owners
- ⇒ Secure a Community Hospital on the allocated 25 acre site
- ⇒ Discuss the long term future of the remainder of the site totalling some 110 acres of countryside which we would like to see as a country park
- ⇒ Discuss the future of the mansion

We will report the outcome of these discussions in future issues of InTouch but rest assured that we will not let them drop. After all there have been many attempts to house-build on this site over the last 18 years and not one house has been built in that time!

SARISBURY GREEN CAR PARK

Last year users of Sarisbury Community Centre complained to Councillor David Swanbrow that it was difficult to exit from the car park due to the need to turn a very tight corner to pass through the anti-traveller barrier. This barrier was erected by Fareham Borough Council at the request of residents who wanted to prevent travellers invading the car park again. The cost was partly paid for by donations from residents.

The erection of the barrier, however, did cause difficulty when trying to leave a full car park. Councillor Swanbrow took up the challenge and is pleased to report that this situation has now been improved by the removal of the parking spaces directly opposite the exit. This has caused the loss of eight spaces but by using the previous access lanes at the western side of the car park seven spaces have been added so there is a net loss of only one.

Councillor Swanbrow said "It is still not the easiest thing in the world to manoeuvre out of some of the spaces, but at least now there should not be any more expensive scratches along the sides of cars caused by scraping the barrier posts."

ALLOTMENT ROAD RECREATION GROUND—management and maintenance

As reported in the last issue Fareham Borough Council is currently considering a partnership agreement for Allotment Road Recreation Ground with Sarisbury Athletic Cricket Club for the management and maintenance of the site.

Despite the fact that out of 500 households consulted the vast majority agreed that the management and maintenance of the ground should be undertaken by the Cricket Club and the existing adult football pitch should be replaced by junior or mini soccer pitches a number of residents closest to the site have continued to express concerns about the management proposals.

We have previously stated that we would not support any proposals that would reduce public access to the site and this remains our view. The main concern appears to be that maintenance may occur during the times (evenings and weekends) when most casual users want access. This is certainly an issue that could be controlled by a lease, should one be granted by the Council's Executive on 22nd March. We feel that if a lease is granted then it should be for a temporary period to see whether there are any problems.

SARISBURY CONSERVATIVES

Sarisbury Conservatives are very active with social and political events and membership drives. If you would like further details, to join Sarisbury Conservatives, or to help in any way such as in the distribution of InTouch Newsletters in your road then please contact David Swanbrow on Locks Heath 572723.

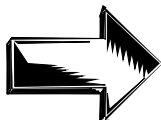
Our website is www.farehamconservatives.org.uk

Your chance to comment

Feedback

*What's
your
worry?*

*tell the
Editors*



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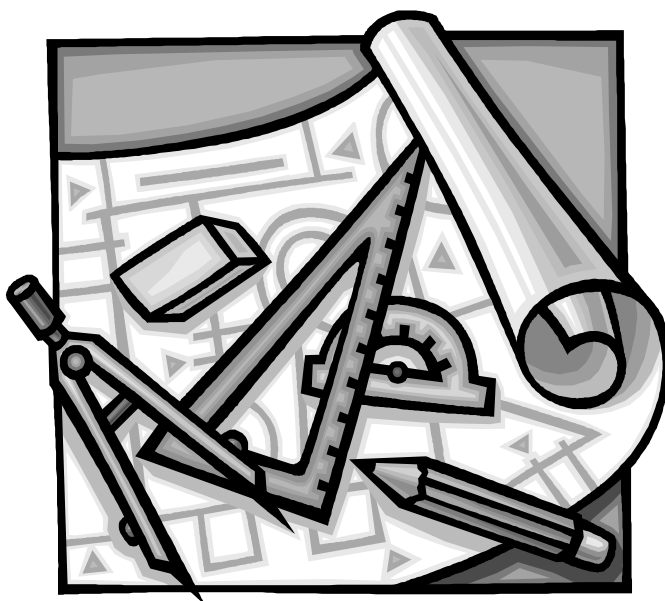
FAREHAM PLANNERS' EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE

Councillor David Swanbrow is Chairman of the Planning Development Control Committee and writes.....

The Government sets targets for councils to ensure that planning applications are dealt with quickly and fairly. The major ones concern the time taken to determine applications and that time is measured from the time that the application is registered to the time the decision notice is sent out. There are also checks on the results of appeals that may be heard if an application is turned down. A high number of appeals lost could indicate that a council is turning down applications without detailed discussion merely to reach a decision within the target time. Fareham Borough Council has a good record in this respect with very few appeals overturning decisions made by the Council. This also helps keep the Council Tax down as losing appeals can be expensive if costs are awarded against the council as they can run into tens of thousands of pounds. Fareham Borough Council has not had to pay any costs during my time as Chairman and I hope this trend will continue for a long time to come.

Despite an ever increasing number of applications, the planning officers have exceeded their targets whilst at the same time reducing the department's budget. The targets class applications into three groups: Major, Minor and Other. The target for determining major applications is that 50% should be determined within 13 weeks. Fareham Borough Council has achieved over 91% within 13 weeks. The target for minor applications is 65% within 8 weeks. The Council has achieved over 84%. The target for the remainder, classed as Other, is 80% within 8 weeks but the planners have achieved over 95%.

As well as over achieving against their target and reducing costs the planning officers have also achieved a high level of satisfaction with residents affected by planning decisions. Two meetings were held last year, one with developers and one with members of the public who had used the planning service either as applicants or objectors. At both meetings the level of satisfaction was high. This in itself is a major achievement for a group which by its very nature deals with some of the most contentious issues handled by the Council.



MARK HOBAN MP WRITES.....

Before I was elected, I worked for a firm of chartered accountants. We regularly asked our clients how we could improve the service we offered and we also spent time examining our own procedures to see what we could do more efficiently to improve our own productivity and reduce the cost to our clients. These are standard techniques for any business wanting to improve itself and now, as an MP, I am always looking for ways in which government can improve itself. What changes could be made to improve our healthcare or free up our police to spend more time on the beat and less time behind a desk or to let a business grow without being hampered by unnecessary red tape?

That is why Michael Howard has asked David James, a top businessman, to look for ways we can improve what government does. If you are a civil servant, a teacher, a policeman, a nurse, an administrator, a patient, a parent, a businessman or anybody who has a good idea about how government can do something better, more cheaply or more efficiently, we want to hear from you. You can do this by contacting me or you can log onto www.thejamesreport.co.uk or write to David at The James Report, Freepost SW3225, London. SW1P 3BR. Your ideas can help us improve our future.

You may contact Mark via his office in Fareham at 14 East Street, Fareham. PO16 0BN. Telephone (01329) 233573 or e-mail mail@markhoban.com