

FOCUS

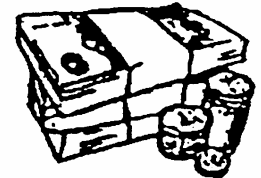
www.epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk
email town-focus@epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk

www.surreylibdems.org.uk

www.libdems.org.uk



RESIDENTS' PARTY COUNCILLORS VOTE THEMSELVES 14% PAY INCREASE



Residents' Party councillors voted themselves a huge increase in their allowances from August this year despite a move from the Lib Dem Opposition to limit the rise to the rate of inflation.

Cllr David Buxton, who is deaf and uses a sign language interpreter at council meetings, was voted down when he opposed the increase and was personally attacked by a Residents' Party councillor who implied that the massive increases would help pay for his interpreter. Cllr Buxton said "The point I was making was nothing to do with anyone's council expenses. It was about the huge pay increase being suggested. To twist my argument and launch what I and just about everyone else regarded as a personal attack on my deafness, was disgraceful."



FAIR TRADE CAMPAIGN GATHERS MOMENTUM

Prospective Parliamentary Candidate (and Borough Councillor) Jonathan Lees reports that the Fair Trade Forum meets regularly and held a number of events during National Fair Trade fortnight. The next step is to get Epsom categorised as a Fair Trade town. The Lib Dems are pressing the council to apply for Fair Trade status. You can help by continuing to ask for and buy Fair Trade products in all your local stores.

SURREY FAILS TO SPEND £5 MILLION ON ROADS — JUST AS RESIDENTS ARE DESPERATE FOR MORE INVESTMENT

Lib Dem county councillors were stunned to be told at a meeting on 19th July that last year was the third in succession that the County Council has **UNDERSPENT** on roads – this time by £5.2 million. The excuse given was "a loss of key design staff and vacancies".

Local County Councillor Colin Taylor told FOCUS "You couldn't make this up. It is beyond satire. This is the same council that spent most of last year cutting the staffing of the highways department by a third and paying out millions in redundancy. New schemes have slipped for the second year running and important road improvements have not been delivered in many parts of the county."



RECYCLING PUT ON THE BACK BURNER

Doorstep collection of plastics and cardboard is not likely to begin until April 2009 at the earliest when new vehicles might be able to take non-compostable kitchen waste as well as other materials. The good news, however, is that it's hoped to introduce doorstep collection of batteries quite soon, when the recycling lorries will have a separate and secure box attached to the vehicles in which to deposit them. Opposition parties have repeatedly pressed the ruling Residents' Party to invest in recycling by reprioritising expenditure, rather than through an increase in Council Tax. However, RA councillors insist on "cost effective recycling" which FOCUS interprets as doing just enough in Epsom & Ewell to comply with central government diktat.



BACK GARDENS PETITION HANDED TO MINISTER

Lib Dem councillor Julie Morris, Tom Brake MP and councillors from other boroughs handed in petitions against back garden development to Minister Hazel Blears. 980 signatures comprised the Epsom & Ewell petition, collected over two Saturday mornings in Epsom High Street, which in turn contributed to an A4 box full of signatures from people living in the south-east. Liberal Democrats want back gardens to be re-classified (they are currently brownfield sites) so that local authorities have more power to refuse permission when it comes to developing these green spaces. For more information on back garden development contact Cllr Julie Morris on 01372 744297 or local pressure group RAVE (Residents Against Vandalism of our Environment) on 01372 728600.



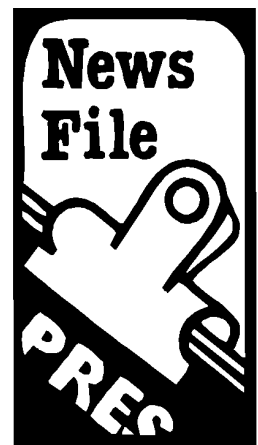
Julie Morris (centre) holding the box of signatures with Leslie Coman (resident of Epsom), with Tom Brake MP for Carshalton & Wallington (right)

TOWN WARD NEWS

The Rosebank area is free of gas works and most of the grass has grown back except where cars have parked. Some of the wall was damaged by the contractors and it has now been replaced and the area is looking much tidier. Parking is still a significant concern. See our note re parking issues.

Network Rail has taken responsibility for the bushes at the junction of West Street and the visibility when turning left is much improved and after contacting the officers the flower beds in the centre of town have been weeded. The frequent rain had led to an overgrowth of weeds.

County Cllr Colin Taylor has worked with the officers from Surrey County council and has a plan of works that will keep the Highways team occupied until Christmas. Most notably the kerbs have been replaced in the Hazon Way area of Town.



At a March meeting to discuss parking issues, despite the best efforts of County Cllr Colin Taylor and the Lib Dems, the issues for Prospect Place were considered and the Residents' Association decided that "The consensus of opinion was not to progress with any further restriction in this road". This is due to be reviewed in 2008.

Your councillors are well aware of the problem of parking enforcement. Recently we asked for detailed information of what's being done. For example, though it may seem there is constant abuse in The Parade, in the 14 days from Monday 24th September, wardens visited The Parade 86 times and issued 24 parking tickets.

Good news for residents that live near the **Town Hall**. We are advised that the wiring work has been completed in the new building. This means that the lights react to movement and go off after a set time. Please be aware that the system is in a test phase at present and that in the Old Town Hall people still have to remember to turn off the lights.



PROJECTS

Stones Road There is currently a project underway to look at ways of improving the Stones Road allotments to make them usable. In July a meeting was held with allotment holders, the police, Epsom & Ewell officers and the ward Councillors. Unfortunately Surrey County Council did not send a representative and yet without their input we cannot enforce the tenancy agreements for the travellers' site which gives rise to many of the problems. We are advised that work is ongoing in this area and FOCUS is expecting an update later this month. Meanwhile the Rangers and the RSPCA have been asked to pursue the removal of the horses which are not a police matter as they are grazing on private land. FOCUS is recently advised, when meeting a member of the Lower Mole Countryside Team, that they have been clearing rubbish and repairing the gate of the Stones Road pond SSSI to the benefit of the protected newts.

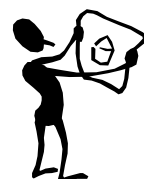
Parking Dismayed that parking and congestion problems of Epsom have not been listed as one of the Borough Council's "key objectives", Lib Dem councillors at the September meeting of the Local Committee stressed the severity of parking problems in and around Epsom. The committee explained that they were just about to set the budget for the next four years and consideration would be given to a variety of parking scheme options. They were keen to await the outcome of trial schemes in the Reigate and Banstead area. They did request information on roads which might support such a scheme and these have been sent to the committee. Suffice it to say most roads in Epsom town centre are included. Watch this space.

Lorries The Britaniacrest lorries continue to be a problem for local residents. We have had very negative responses from SITA, the contract company, about possible rerouting. We will continue to talk to them about their routing through a busy town centre!! We have also written to companies whose lorries use **Upper High Street** and the town in the early morning requesting that their drivers observe the speed limits to minimise the noise and vibrations. Some of the replies are unprintable but others were much more positive and sympathetic. A number of you have commented that lorry drivers are often seen using mobile phones whilst driving. Remember, you can report anyone for using a mobile whilst driving - make sure you have the location, number plate, time and date of the offence, and take details to the Police station or phone 0845 125 2222 with the information.



PLANNING

The second **51-55 Church Street** appeal has again been dismissed by Government Inspectors. Town Ward Councillors have repeatedly spoken out against the development. The main issues quoted were "the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of



PLANNING (continued)

the area” and “its effect on the living conditions of the proposed occupiers of the flats”. No new plan has been sent to the planning officers as we write (October). The revised application for houses on the **Rosebery playing fields** with modifications including pitched roofs has been granted following further substantial changes to the existing trees as a result of comments. The committee also agreed a condition proposed by Cllr Colin Taylor requiring a continuous security fence on the Meadow Court boundary.

Following the public meeting convened by the Lib Dems a decision on the **Lintons Lane development** has been deferred for a second time. Town Ward Councillors requested more information about the management of the site which has not yet been forthcoming.

STREET SURGERIES - THE CONTINUED SUCCESS

“What a brilliant idea” - a comment recently from a resident we met on one of our monthly “mobile” street surgery. Your FOCUS team post a letter through your door about a week before a visit is due. You then display the yellow letter in a window and your councillors stop and discuss your issue. These mobile surgeries are in addition to the monthly surgeries held at the Ebbisham Centre (on the second Saturday of each month, 10-12 midday).



WE NEED YOU!

We have been meeting many of you on the doorsteps since the election, thanking you for your continued support. In this way we've been building our network of newsletter deliverers in the ward but we are always pleased to hear from others willing to help. Please contact us if you feel you can help us. Thank you.

How to contact your Liberal Democrat Focus Team

Cllr Alison Kelly	8 Whitehorse Drive, KT18 7LY	Telephone 01372 726504
Cllr Charles Wood	26 Horsley Close, KT19 8HB	Telephone 01372 747042
Cty Cllr Colin Taylor	32 Christ Church Mount, KT19 8N	Telephone 01372 721336
Julia Kirkland	20 Monro Place, KT19 7LD	Telephone 01372 739430

Email town-focus@epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk

**Please use this space to send us your ideas and grumbles :
Epsom & Ewell Liberal Democrats (Town), FREEPOST KT3525,
Epsom KT19 9BR (If you use a stamp it saves us money!)**

