



# InTouch

**Fareham North West** **GRAPEVINE No 102** **Summer 2018**

## Fury as new housing criteria could ruin Fareham draft plan

**NEW HOUSING** levels proposed by Government could wreak havoc with Fareham's draft planning strategy, putting hundreds more acres of countryside at risk.

It is now trying to move the goal posts by applying a new factor relating to the ratio of average income to average house prices.

Furious councillors have told Whitehall enough is more than enough.

Fareham would have to find yet more space to cram in another 1,110 houses – nearly a 50% rise in the current number of greenfield sites required.

And work on the amended draft plan, which the Council hopes to have available for final consultation and submission to the inspectorate by this autumn, would have to be halted and sent back to the drawing board.

Councillor Keith Evans, executive member for strategic planning and development, said: "We have responded to the Government by rejecting these proposals as unreasonable and unachievable in the short term

"We have written to our local MPs asking them to add weight to our objections."

The Government is expected to announce its decision by August and Keith Evans said: "Hopefully they will have seen sense and continue with just the rational objectively assessed numbers.

"If they do not, Fareham will have to halt work on the existing draft plan and decide how to incorporate all these additional requirements and how to consult on the resulting new recommendations.



"All this will take additional time and leaves the Council planning exposed to even more unwelcome applications."

Fareham had already met the previous Government criteria by objectively assessing the 5-year housing supply requirement.

This showed 11,300 homes were needed. After discounting Welborne (3,840), completions and permissions (2,995) and remains from the existing plan (208), the Council



had to accommodate an extra 4,250 and had managed to find brownfield and windfall sites for around 2,000.

When developers learned the remainder had to come from greenfield sites, it sparked a Klondyke-style rush with over 100 applications totalling 12,700 homes submitted against the 2,500 still needed.

As Fareham doesn't yet have an agreed plan, the planning committee must consider planning applications for any submitted site without the protection of all the usual planning policies.

**FOOTNOTE:** Assuming a density of 40 per acre, an extra 2,000 homes would swallow another 500 acres of greenfields.

**PHOTOS:** Councillor Fred Birkett shows a vulnerable area at the end of Hillson Drive and (inset) Kay Mandry discusses the proposed Old Street development and its impact on Titchfield Haven Nature Reserve with residents.

## Fareham pioneers first conference to deal with rough sleepers problem

**GIVING** money to begging rough sleepers will not help to remove them from the Borough's streets.

Donating it directly to many local charities which are working hard to help the homeless is a far better idea.

This was the conclusion of more than 70 delegates who attended the first conference hosted by Fareham Council to tackle the problem.

Its aim was to share information and identify strategies to support the work of agencies and to launch 'Fareham StreetAid', a new initiative through which joint communications can be published.

Outreach workers said drug addiction was one of many issues they were dealing with daily, so any money given would simply be used to fund that habit.

Council Leader Seán Woodward said: "We are determined to help rough sleepers off the streets rather than helping them to stay on the streets.

"It is so important that people who wish to offer support such as money, food, sleeping bags, clothing etc should give it to the local charities who, with support agencies, deliver what is needed to these vulnerable people."





**NEWS ROUND**

**Pop in for a coffee**

We have a 'Grapevine' drop-in coffee morning at the Highlands hub on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. We would love to chat with you.



If it is more convenient, give us a ring and we'll come round to your home. Our contact details are at the foot of the page.

**Pick it up**

Dog mess is an eyesore and a health hazard and owners have a legal duty to clean up every time their dog messes in a public place or face a fine.

Registered blind people are not required to clean up after their guide dogs. There is also exemption for dog owners on some public land, including:

- Land used for agriculture or woodlands
- Rural common land
- Land mostly marshland, moor or heath

If you cannot find a dog bin, double wrap the dog bag and place it in a normal litter bin and if your street is littered with dog mess, you can ask the Council to clear it.

**Final 'No' to crossing pleas**

A bid by ward councillors to get a pedestrian crossing for Highlands Road is doomed.

Many residents had asked for a light-controlled crossing to make it safer to cross the busy road near Place House Close.

But Hampshire County Council rejected the request for not meeting several criteria which made it impossible to achieve

**Peter thanks voters**

Councillor Peter Davies thanks all those in Fareham North West who supported him in the May Borough Council elections.

**Park sensibly plea**

**DON'T** park like this – that is the message from Councillor Fred Birkett after mounting complaints about vehicles blocking pavements in NW Ward.

He acknowledges lack of parking spaces is an issue and a cause of inconsiderate parking across the Borough.

He said: "The problem with parking on the pavement is that in some cases there is not enough room for pushchairs, wheelchairs, mobility scooters and even for pedestrians young and old to get past without being forced onto the road, putting people at risk when they should not be."

Police have powers to remove vehicles that are obstructing pavements, but they do not have resources to cover all areas.



**Weeds are out of control**

**WEEDS** are running riot in streets and footpaths across Fareham Borough.

Residents are demanding that the County Council, which is responsible for highways weed control, should take urgent action to clear up the unsightly mess.

Up to this year, the County Council undertook pesticide spraying on roads and pavements twice a year to kill the weeds, which were then removed by Fareham Council's street sweeping service.

But Hampshire reduced the treatment to once a year to cut costs.

Councillor Fred Birkett (pictured) said "It's a false economy as it simply allows the weeds to take greater hold and causes damage to the highways for which the County Council will have to pay to put right."



**Eyesore site gets planning go-ahead at last**



**THE HAMPSHIRE ROSE** site has at last formally been granted planning consent.

This includes the acceptance of the ecology mitigation strategy demanded by the planning process.

So why has it taken so long to get to where we are?

After the Borough Council eventually

bought the land from HCC, the main delay centred on surface water drainage at the site and concerns from the County Council in their role

as lead flood authority.

Councillor Fred Birkett (pictured left) said: "This issue was subsequently resolved through a condition on the planning approval.

"But could FBC have undertaken the ecology strategy earlier? The answer is no. "There would have been additional risks in undertaking translocation of relevant species before the planning permission was granted.

"For example, there could be risk of re-population if done too far ahead of building works and also a risk of giving an impression that planning



permission was assumed before it had been issued."

It was appropriate for FBC officers to await planning approval before further action was taken or additional cost incurred.

Building work will have to wait until the ecology strategy has been fully resolved, so development cannot begin until spring 2019, with anticipated completion in summer 2020.

Officers will continue to expediate the delivery of this site so that it can contribute to addressing affordable housing need.

A firmer programme will be available once a contractor has been appointed.

**Kids' holiday guide is 'a must'**

**LOOKING** for ways to entertain your children during the summer holidays?

'My Amazing Summer', published by the Borough Council, has all the information you need and contains a range of events and activities at libraries, Westbury Manor Museum, Portchester Castle, Ashcroft Arts Centre and Holly Hill Play Area.

'Play Rangers' sessions for children up to 12 years will run at venues across the Borough and 'Thumbs Up Thursday' is back with a different activity every week from Lego building, arts and crafts, to a petting farm and circus skills in West Street, Fareham.

Fred Birkett said: "Fareham has much to offer children and families over the holiday period and I encourage people to look at the guide."

**Cash available for good local causes**

**IF YOU** work with or know of an organisation in our community that may benefit from a small grant to assist their work, ask them to contact County Councillor Fred Birkett.

He said: "Over the past year I have been able to help charities, sports clubs and youth organisations with cash totalling £8,000."

One of the organisations Fred helped was Fareham Bowling Club who were able to buy some outdoor lighting as an aid to safety.

"I would be very happy to hear to from any organisation – not individuals – and I will certainly do my best for you."



**Rotarians present defibrillator to Highlands Hub**



**FOR THOSE** who have walked past the Highlands Hub recently, you could not help noticing the new green box affixed to the outside front wall of the coffee shop.

It was Fareham Meon Rotary Club who kindly donated this defibrillator to the Highlands Hub, so many thanks and appreciations go out to them.

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart through the chest wall to someone who is in cardiac arrest.

This high energy shock is called defibrillation and can be an essential lifesaving step in the chain of survival.

There are many defibrillators available in public places and they are often known as public access defibrillators (PAD) as anyone can use them in an emergency.

Many of the team at Highlands Hub have undergone training in its use.

Although it would be nice to think this defibrillator is not required for a very long time, having one at the hub of our community can only be a good thing if the need arose.

**PHOTO:** Members of the Highlands Hub team show the new defibrillator which they have been trained to use.

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**WE SERVE YOU ALL**

Whether you voted for us or not, your Conservative councillors promise the highest standards of service to everyone in the community. Contact us any time and we'll respond personally within 48 hours.

**COME AND JOIN US**

If you support **Conservative** principles and would like to vote to select your Council and Parliamentary candidates, to attend social and political events or help us by delivering InTouch in your street, then why not join Fareham North West Branch of Fareham Conservative Association? Please phone Fred Birkett on 07505 000 987.



# Tired old Ferneham Hall to get a multi-million pound refurbishment

**FERNEHAM HALL**, Fareham's top venue for stage shows, exhibitions and main events will be closed at the end of 2019 for a massive multi-million pound overhaul to meet 21st Century demands.

After almost 40 years' service, the building is looking tired, dated and in need of a facelift and the Executive decided it was time to meet modern community demands.

Portchester Councillor Sue Bell, executive member for leisure and community, said: "In 2015, a feasibility study showed the layout and design no longer met customer expectations which have changed significantly since 1982.

It means temporary venues will have to be found elsewhere across the Borough and when the hall reopens it will be under a new management structure.

But it will also fulfil one of the **Conservative** Council's long-awaited ambitions to provide a community venue in the town centre.

Councillor Bell said: "Remodelling of Ferneham Hall offers a real opportunity to combine a new arts and entertainment venue with a busy community facility.

"A key part of this vision is to plan a new facility which will be more commercial in its outlook and this will be achieved by appointing an operator."

Today's patrons demand large, air-conditioned buildings with space and natural light, auditoria with comfortable seats, unrestricted views, wheelchair access and café fa-



ilities. So the new Ferneham Hall will include:

- Alterations to foyer and box office area to provide a sense of arrival
- Improved audience facilities, toilets, catering areas, in terms of comfort, appearance and overall experience
- Improved access including a lift
- Fuel efficiency – individual parts to be lit, heated and ventilated independently
- Improved cast/crew areas, including stage and back-stage, to support high quality performances
- Community rooms for hire and/or workshops enabling venue to operate as a busy community centre
- Reduce size, improve comfort of main auditorium to suit audience numbers (400-500

- seats)
- Smaller, intimate secondary performance space (100 seats) including screen and projector room
- Options for retractable seating and dance studio with sprung floor

When it reopens it will be under the management of a leisure trust operator.

Future operations will be based on the premise that the Borough Council owns the hall, the leisure trust manages it and the Council pays an annual revenue contribution to the trust until there is no deficit.

Sue Bell added: "Our vision is to provide a busy community and entertainment venue which includes daytime and evening activity, seven days a week.

"Our new-look building will offer a great choice of entertainment and provide new community facilities for those living around the town centre."

## Start is imminent on M27 and M3 Smart Motorway work

**HIGHWAYS** England will shortly start work on a major scheme to increase the capacity of the M27 by a third between junctions 4 and 11 and the M3 between junctions 9 and 14.

It includes a replacement M27 all-moves junction 10 to serve Welborne.

The design for junction 10 is currently with Highways England for sign-off, so the Council will be able to determine the Welborne planning application for 6,000 new homes over the next 25 years.

Council Leader Seán Woodward,



pictured with Regional Sponsor for Smart Motorways Adrian McCrow, said:

"I have campaigned for years to see the M27 and southern section of the M3 upgraded to Smart Motorways and am delighted that £500m are now being spent to do just that.

"A third increase in capacity will bring many benefits to businesses and residents who suffer daily on these roads. Delays cost money, put off trade and add to pollution.

"I believe concerns about the loss of a hard shoulder are unfounded as many 70mph dual carriageways work well with an occasional lay-by.

"Thirteen emergency refuges will be placed on the M27 – one every 75 seconds for somebody travelling at 60mph."

