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New Tory Council shocker



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What Council leaders don't want you to see

Bought at the cost of tens of thousands of pounds to local Council Tax payers, Shepway's recycling fleet has been taken off the road.

Conservative Council leaders have yet to say how much it will cost to get these virtually new vehicles back in use.

RECYCLING SHAME



● Local Lib Dem campaigners Bev Rolfe, Lynne Beaumont, Neil Matthews, Tom McNeice, Peter Carroll, Sam Matthews and Emily Sanger are calling for action to sort out Shepway's recycling chaos. Peter Carroll said, "Local people want to recycle, but the service needs to be much better."

Council leader should resign say local residents

CShepway District Council's recycling service continues to lurch from disaster to disaster.

It is believed that the Council has been bombarded by over 20,000 phone calls of complaint since the scheme was launched. Thousands of local people have suffered missed collections week after week.

To add further chaos, just months after the scheme was launched, the Council was forced to take the entire fleet of special re-cycling lorries off the road for safety reasons.

Many residents are now calling for the Conservative leader of the Council to take responsibility and resign.

Lib Dem Cllr Neil Matthews

said, "The Tory Councillors running the Council are responsible for the failure to deliver this service. They just don't seem to be listening to the concerns of local people."

The Lib Dems have launched a petition (on the back page of this paper) demanding that Tory leaders listen to residents.

Sorting out the mess

Local Lib Dem Councillors are pledging to work positively on the Council to help sort out the problems.

Lib Dem Deputy Leader Cllr Lynne Beaumont said, "The recycling scheme could be the pride of Shepway. We've been looking at other councils' schemes, and know it's possible to get regular collections and good recycling rates."

COMMENT

What a fiasco!

Conservative run Shepway Council has managed to turn the brilliant idea of recycling into a nightmare. Tens of thousands of people have suffered problems with the scheme.

Perhaps most embarrassingly, the Council have had to take the fleet of recycling lorries off the road. The Council Budget is rumoured to be in crisis and we all know that it is local Council Tax payers who will have to pick up the bill.

Make no mistake, responsibility lies not with the hard pressed employees of the Council and the contractors tasked with trying to make the scheme work.

The ruling Conservatives are trying to blame everyone and everything for the mess. They need look no further than themselves.

Shepway needs local politicians who have the honesty to admit when they are wrong and to do the honourable thing and resign.

Lib Dem statement concerning Colin Tearle

In an edition of Shepway News published in May last year we ran an article which stated that "the last Conservative budget in Shepway led to a £700,000 black hole in Council finances".

We did not intend to suggest that this was a deliberate act on the part of the Conservative Cabinet or Mr Tearle, only that it was an unforeseen consequence.

We are completely satisfied that it was the Council which entered into the Highways Agency Agreement and not the Contract Services Board under the chairmanship of Mr Tearle.

We also accept that he did not take part in the decision making process.

We also suggested that the Conservative Cabinet was

responsible for a substantial loss of investment income. We did not intend to suggest that Mr Tearle bore any personal responsibility for decisions in respect of particular investments.

We wish to apologise to Mr Tearle for any misunderstanding that may have arisen as a result.

Winter warning for local pensioners

Ashocking 20,000 pensioners die every winter from cold-related illnesses in our country. This figure is higher than even Finland which suffers a far more severe winter.

With a colder than usual winter being predicted this year, local Lib Dems are advising local pensioners to take steps to ensure their home stays warm this winter.

Lib Dem campaigner Sam Matthews said, "No one should be in a position where they cannot keep their home warm. We need a better basic pension for older people in our country so that people can afford to heat their homes properly."

For information, contact the Government's Winter Warmth advice line on 0800 085 7000.



● Campaigner Sam Matthews is advising local pensioners to keep their homes warm.

New MEP hits the ground running

Shepway's new Lib Dem MEP Sharon Bowles has hit the ground running.

Sharon became our new MEP following Chris Huhne's election as MP for Eastleigh in the General Election.

Speaking in her new role as MEP for the South East, Sharon Bowles said "I am delighted that I will be able to represent and fight for Shepway's interests in the European Parliament.

"Chris Huhne has been a highly successful MEP over the last six years and I will endeavour to continue and add to the excellent Lib Dem track record in Brussels".

Sharon barely had time to settle into her new office before taking on the complexities of the 'Software Patents' Directive - a real baptism of fire but one which, as a European Patents Attorney,



● New Lib Dem MEP Sharon Bowles with Kent schoolchildren.

Sharon was qualified to take on.

Chris Huhne said "Sharon Bowles will be an excellent MEP. She will represent us and our interests in Brussels and Strasbourg."

Since becoming our local MEP, Sharon has been very

active meeting local people across Kent. She has launched a new website (see bottom right) where local people can find out about Sharon's work and get in touch with their local MEP.

If you wish to contact Sharon, please visit her website or write to her at Feldon House, Dower Mews, High Steet, Berkhamstead, HP4 2BL.

Save the Moon Bears

Local Euro-MP Sharon Bowles is calling for an end to one of the most cruel treatment of animals known to take place anywhere in the world.

As many as 9,000 bears in China are kept in tiny cages that prevent their movement to be 'milked' for their bile using metal catheters inserted into the animal's gall bladder.

Known as 'Moon Bears' for the golden crescent across their chests these endangered bears are subjected to a lifetime of misery.

Half the animals are said to die during or shortly after the insertion of the catheter. Those that survive suffer from tumours, infections from open wounds, abscesses and hernias.



The bile taken from the gall bladders of the living bears is used in Chinese traditional medicine for the treatment of ailments including stomach and digestive disorders and kidney problems.

South East Liberal Democrat MEP Sharon Bowles is backing a call for the Chinese government to bring about a complete ban on bear bile farming.



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WWW.SHARONBOWLES.ORG.UK

Council in crisis

Tory leaders warn of Council Tax hike and new charges for local residents

Conservative Council leaders have admitted they are looking at cutting services, introducing new charges AND a big Council Tax rise.

Local newspapers have reported that over half a million pounds worth of cuts could be made to local services in the new year. The Council is also considering introducing new on-street parking charges and charging residents for collecting green waste.

Cllr Lynne Beaumont said, "The Conservatives pledged to sort out the Council's finances, but things look worse than ever. We will be fighting to protect vital

local services and making sure the voices of local people are heard on the Council."

Will the toilets be safe?

Some residents fear that Shepway's public toilets could again come under threat in a new wave of cuts.

Earlier this year local residents were shocked when Councillors who backed the closing of Shepway's toilets, including former Council Leader Linda Cufley, were brought back into the ruling cabinet by the Conservatives.

Peter Carroll added, "We will certainly oppose any attempt to close public toilets."

What the local papers say...

PAY FOR PARKING OR FACE BIG CUTS

New charges being considered include - "a £30 annual charge for collecting green waste and a scheme of on-street parking charges which could be in place by 2007."

"We face choice between services or taxes"

£540,000 worth of cuts from services could be on the way

Airport fears grow

Fears are growing across the district about the possible effects of massive airport expansion at Lydd.

If expansion plans get the green light, around 2 million passengers a year would use the airport. This would bring huge amounts of traffic onto our already busy roads and noisy low flying jet aircraft into our skies.

As well as those living close to the airport, people living further away in places like Dymchurch and parts of Hythe could be affected by noise from low flying jets. Several jets are expected to take off and land every hour and night flights are also a possibility.

Local Lib Dem campaigner Peter Carroll said, "The expansion of Lydd airport could have far reaching effects. That's why we continue to demand a full public inquiry into these plans."

Mr Carroll continued, "The noise in particular could really affect the quality of life of



● Peter Carroll and local residents campaigning against airport expansion at Lydd.

residents as far away as Hythe. There are justifiable concerns about the future of tourism in Dymchurch, St Marys Bay and the rest of Romney Marsh."

Campaign Grows

The campaign against airport expansion continues to

grow in strength. Local Lib Dems including Cllr Lynne Beaumont are playing a major role in the campaign.

Cllr Lynne Beaumont said, "More and more people are joining the campaign every week as the case against

expansion grows. The extra traffic, the noise and the environmental damage from the airport would do huge damage to Romney Marsh."

For more information about the campaign, visit www.shepwaylibdems.org.uk

Lib Dems turn heat up on Blair



Boosted by the best Lib Dem General Election result in over 80 years, leader Charles Kennedy has turned up the heat on Tony Blair and Labour.

Labour have become increasingly out of touch in recent years highlighted by the war in Iraq and the introduction of university tuition fees. They have also failed to keep their promises on pensions and the NHS.

Mr Kennedy said, "At the General Election, the public begrudgingly gave Labour a third chance - and I believe it should be the last."

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Residents demand crime action now

YOBS CREATE OUR LIVING HELL

Hythe Herald,
10th November

Residents' lives are being made a misery by yobs and vandals in several parts of Shepway.

It was recently reported that some residents in Hythe were even considering forming a vigilante group to tackle the problems.

Lib Dem campaigner Peter Carroll is demanding action from Kent Police to reclaim our streets. He has written to the Chief Constable inviting him to visit our area to see the problems at first hand.

Peter Carroll said, "Local people are understandably reaching breaking point. Why must they put up with daily abuse and vandalism? It's time

we had a proper police presence on our local streets to make them safe for all residents."

Community policing success

National newspapers have recently told the story of how one community policeman managed to change the area he polices beyond recognition.

Constable Coetzee who works in Mansfield made over 300 arrests in just nine months on the estate he polices there.

Peter Carroll said, "I would like the police in our area to take similar vigorous approach to tackling problems. The current situation cannot be allowed to continue."



● Peter Carroll and local Lib Dems are calling for more police on local streets to crack down on crime and anti-social behaviour.

Hythe skate park re-opens

Lib Dem controlled Hythe Town Council have secured the re-opening of Hythe skate park after an extended closure.

Hythe Town Councillor Neil Matthews has welcomed the re-opening of skate park.

Neil said, "We were delighted

that we could re-open the skate park - it was a well used facility for young people locally, and we hope it will be again."

"With security provided by a CCTV system, the park is open all day, and notices have just gone up advertising that its back in business!"



'Operation Stack' progress

Plans for a lorry park for up to 1,500 trucks have been unveiled by Dover Harbour Board. The Board said it would end Operation Stack, where lorries wait on the M20 when port operations are delayed.

Local Lib Dems have been campaigning for many years for

action to end the problems caused to local residents by Operation Stack.

Peter Carroll said, "When the M20 is closed, it causes huge problems for local residents. I am delighted that Dover Harbour Board is taking this issue seriously and looking at solutions."

RECYCLING ACTION PETITION

HELP OUR CAMPAIGN

I/we the undersigned call on Conservative Council leaders to listen to local residents' concerns about the new recycling scheme and make the necessary changes to address these problems.

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The Lib Dems would like to use the information above to contact you from time to time to keep you informed of campaigns we may think of interest to you. Please write to us if you do not wish to be contacted in this way.

Please return this form to: Shepway Lib Dems, FREEPOST CU592, CT20 3BR

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