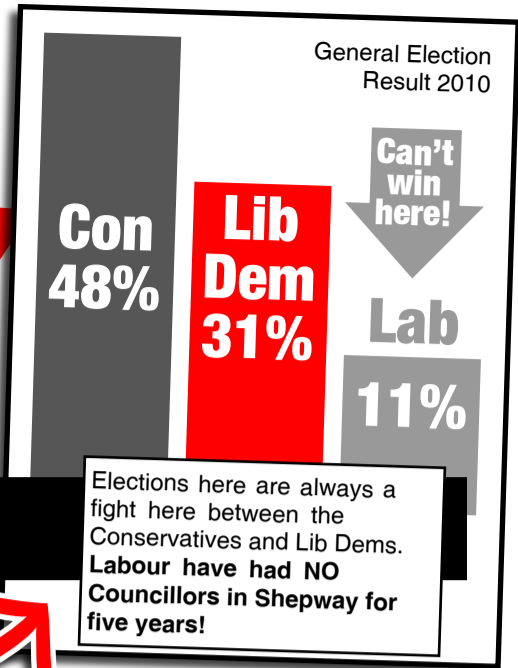


Folkestone FOCUS



Shepway Lib Dems • www.shepwaylibdems.org.uk • Winter 2011

It's Lib Dem or Conservative here!

COUNCIL TAX FROZEN AGAIN

- Folkestone Town Council Zero Tax Rise
- Fourth zero rise in 4 years

For the **FOURTH** year, Folkestone Town Council have **FROZEN** Council tax.

The Lib Dem backed budget was passed in January and kept Council tax stable while protecting and developing local services.

In 2011, it is likely that both Shepway District and Kent County Council will agree zero tax rises at the request of the Coalition Government.

The Town Council provides allotments in the town, pays for new facilities including new street litter bins and repainting, flowerbed planting, Christmas lights and events, part-funds Folkestone Town Centre Management and Discover Folkestone as well as providing hundreds of grants to local groups and events.

Sandgate Parish Council also set a zero rise for the new year.

Your Local Councils working for you: Folkestone Town and Sandgate Parish Councils jointly own a community speed watch device, which can be used to warn motorists of their speed in areas where local residents are concerned.



Folkestone Mayor stands up for Town

Town Mayor **Tom McNeice** has been representing Folkestone at over 150 events since being elected Mayor in May 2010.

From visiting the local Samaritans to attending civic events across the town and promoting Folkestone across Kent, Tom has also helped raise thousands of pounds for local charities

including B-4-8's and the Folkestone Rainbow Centre.

All Folkestone residents can help with the Mayor's fundraising for his local charities, which support local residents and services.

On 15th February, Tom will be hosting "Sound of

Shepway – The Mayor's Festival of Song" at the Leas Cliff Hall.

Tickets cost just £5 for a great evenings entertainment, with funds raised going to charity.

You can learn more about the event and book at the Leas Cliff Hall website at www.leascliffhall.co.uk



Local News IN BRIEF

Huge Success for Shelter

The Folkestone Winter Shelter has helped 29 people with overnight accommodation, food and support in just 7 weeks. The shelter provides a place to stay for those who would otherwise sleep rough. During the coldest months of Dec - Feb, the project brings together local churches, organisations and volunteers. The service is in its 2nd year, with a record of providing practical help and getting people off the streets permanently.

Lynne Beaumont says: "The Winter Shelter is the best possible example of community action and the 'Big Society'. Huge thanks to the hundreds of volunteers and groups that make it possible."



Visit www.folkestoneshelter.com for more information and to make a donation to the project.

Lib Dem Councillor Gives People Power

Folkestone West & Sandgate residents awarded £18,000 to local groups in the Autumn.

Lib Dem **Tim Prater** is the only County Councillor in Shepway to give local residents a say on how they want to see their County grant money spent.

Tim said "Other County Councillors decide where to spend your money. I think local people should get a say. It makes a big difference to local groups, and develops a real sense of community and working together."

Potholes After Snow Joke for Town

The Mid-December snowfall brought chaos to many roads across Folkestone and Sandgate.

A few cm of snow fell, which on many roads compacted quickly to ice. Key routes including Black Bull Road and the A259

Sandgate Hill became barely passable. Local campaigner **Darren Briddock** said: "Kent's response to the snow in December shows little improvement on their dire performance last year."

Many local residents were left asking why even key routes did not seem to have been gritted by Kent Highways beforehand, despite weather forecasts predicting snow. Since the snowfall, large potholes have been

appearing in some local roads. The Folkestone Lib Dem team have reported many potholes. To report directly call Kent Highways on 08458 247800 or online at www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Getting in touch with your local Lib Dem team

Email: Mail@shepwaylibdems.org.uk
Phone: 01303 239 796
www.shepwaylibdems.org.uk

Or fill in the form over the page!

Post Offices **saved**

Lib Dems in Government win campaign to stop further Post Office closures

Local Liberal Democrats have welcomed news that the Government is putting a stop to the closure of Post Offices.

Despite big public spending cuts, Lib Dems in Government have ensured that there will be **no** Post Office closure plans in the next Parliament.

Local Lib Dem campaigner **Lynne Beaumont** said:

"The Lib Dems have spent years locally campaigning against Post office closures.

"This has been going on under both Conservatives and Labour.

"By being in Government, Lib Dems are now able to make a difference and stop these vital community hubs from closing."

The Government plans under Lib Dem minister Ed Davey will see £1.3 billion invested in modernising Post Offices.

The Post Office network could become a mutually-owned organisation like John Lewis or the Co-Op.

Post Office branches will be helped to offer more banking and local Council services to make them more viable.



FLASHBACK: The Local Liberal Democrat team campaigned against Labour's Post Office closures for years - including Folkestone Central Post Office. The new Government have called an end to the closure programme.

Lib Dems bring in tough new rules against "garden grabbing"

Local Lib Dem Councillor **Gary Fuller** has backed tough new planning rules brought in by the Coalition Government.

The rules aim to protect against so-called "garden grabbing".

The phenomenon - where developers build homes on existing gardens because they are classified as "brownfield" sites - is a concern of many local people.

Now gardens are to be reclassified as "greenfield"

sites, making it much more difficult to built on them.

"I'm delighted at these changes as they will help protect the unique character of our local area," said **Gary Fuller**.

"It may just be a house here or a house there, but these developments can really change the character of our local area.

"It means that these developments will be much less likely to go through on appeal, which is great news."

Five key Lib Dem achievements in Government:

- Scrapped Labour's intrusive ID cards plan ✓
- £2.5bn "pupil premium" to benefit schools ✓
- Reclassified gardens to curb "garden grabbing" ✓
- More low earners to be taken out of income tax ✓
- No more Post Office closures ✓

Labour's legacy of debt and waste

Why every man, woman and child in Britain owe £24,400 because of Labour:

What it cost then...

ID cards: £5 billion

Iraq war: £7 billion

Failed NHS IT system: £12 billion

"We were in a pit of debt and we just kept digging"

Labour's Lord Mandelson

...and what it's costing now.

Projected national debt: £1 trillion

Debt interest payments: £80,000 per minute

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Tell us what you think

Want to tell us something? Something you'd like us to help with? Let us know here!

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Mobile _____

E-mail _____

- I will vote Liberal Democrat next time
- I can help deliver FOCUS in my area for 1-2 hours per month
- I would like to vote by post at the next local election

Return free of charge to:

Freepost RSEZ-TGTS-CTGA

Shepway Liberal Democrats

98a Sandgate High Street, Folkestone CT20 3BY

FOCUS POLL:

Do you agree with the Lib Dem plan to stop any more Government post office closures?

Yes

No

If you return this slip the Liberal Democrats and their elected representatives may use the information you provide to contact you. Some of these contacts may be automated. You can opt out of communications at any time by contacting us.