

Bedhampton Focus

News and Views from the Lib Dem Team

Happy
New
Year



January 2008

Councillor Ann Buckley writes

I should like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year and thank so many people for the support they have given me.

It was just over six months ago that I was elected to Havant Borough Council. It has been a busy time and I have found combining the two roles has worked well. I now sit on Strategy and Regeneration and the Standards Committee at Havant Borough Council and I find my knowledge and training from County has helped enormously.



Missing money found



A local resident advised Cllr Ann Buckley that £3,000 had been allocated for safety improvements to the busy Hulbert Road where the speed limit is often ignored. The money had never been spent. Ann said, "It took months to get to the bottom of this and I had to take it right to the top at Havant Council".

Following Ann's intervention the money has been found and will be used soon to improve road signs and markings in Hulbert Road.

"I was very pleased that this matter was brought to my attention. Speeding on this road is a real cause for concern." Ann said.

Green light for yellow lines despite united opposition



Bedhampton's councillors teamed up to oppose the Traffic Regulation Order in Bedhampton Hill. They were joined by dozens of local residents writing to oppose the yellow lines on the Southern side of Bedhampton Hill.

But the scheme got the go ahead from HCC cabinet member, Cllr Mel Kendal.

Councillors said removing the parked cars would speed up the traffic and make the road more dangerous.

Welcome Nick Clegg

Local Lib Dems have welcomed the election of Nick Clegg as their new leader after narrowly beating Hampshire MP, Chris Huhne.

Havant Lib Dem Chair, Ray Cobbett, said, Nick's drive and passion will make the Lib Dems the real alternative to two parties that look more and more the same."

40-year old Clegg won his Sheffield Seat in 2005 with an 8500 majority over the Tories. Before then he was an MEP. Married with two young sons, Nick speaks several languages.



Hooks Lane Green hope

Local residents continue to be concerned about the future of Hooks Lane open space.

Local resident, Toni Bates, wants to get the area designated as a village green. She will need help with this. Please contact Ann if you can help with this campaign.

Evidence will be needed from local people to show the green has been used for sports and pastimes over the last 20 years.



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Tesco splits Tories



The massive new Tesco approved by the council has left local Tories in disarray. One Havant Tory councillor eagerly pushed for it while the Tory chair and his vice chair of planning opposed it. In the end an alliance of just two Labour and five Tory councillors made it a perfect day for the giant multinational.

Lib Dem councillors, Ann Buckley and Susan Stocker, joined residents, traders and environmental groups plus the 2000 petitioners and six deputations who said NO to the new store. They reflected the huge concern over the impact the superstore could have on the troubled centre of the town.

Ann told Focus: **“The council has ignored expert advice and public opinion and pinned all its hopes for reviving the town on a mammoth Tesco. The white tidal wave building is out of all proportion with anything in Havant.”**

If approved by the Government South East Office work will begin after further road works are completed to deal with the surge of traffic around the store due to open in 2009.

Lib Dems hit out over pay hike

Attempts by Lib Dems on Havant Council to defer increases in the basic allowances of councillors were thrown out by the ruling Tory group.

Lib Dem, Faith Ponsonby, had urged members not to award themselves increases costing £23,000 over a year. “We must avoid putting a burden on the borough council tax payers. The money could be spent

elsewhere in the Borough”, she said.

Under the Tories, the Tourist Information office has closed, the museum is under threat for lack of funding and car parking charges have increased. More cuts are likely to fund free bus travel for pensioners. Lib Dems want more local pressure to get a much better deal for Havant from the Labour Government.



Groups fight against crime

Bedhampton has been experiencing a high volume of anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood Watch are working closely with the police and have been able to set up a number of new schemes locally.

Ann Buckley welcomed the groups and said they were very effective, praising the local volunteers who put in a lot of their time and energy into making them work. Ann has been able to help by funding some new Neighbourhood Watch street signs from her County Councillor budget.

More info on Council Tax rebate

Bedhampton County Councillor, Ann Buckley, has asked the county council why the HCC publication *Hampshire Now* does not publicise information on applying for Council Tax Rebate.

It has now been agreed the information will be in the next Older People's issue of the magazine. Thousands of older people are eligible but do not apply. A recent take-up campaign by Age Concern on Hayling Island found a lot of residents were eligible for benefits that they did not know about.

Museum survey

HCC is asking for people's views on Havant Museum and Art Centre. **Click on www3.hants.gov/Havant-museum**

DID YOU KNOW?

Conservative councillors now fill over four-fifths of the 38-seat council - the highest in Hampshire. Help us provide a healthy opposition.

Call: **02392 473512**

Email: ann.buckley@hants.gov.uk
Website: www.havant-libdems.org.uk

