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InTouch

FAREHAM WEST – Summer 2020

Volunteers answer the call just as they did 80 years ago

UNLESS you are in your 80s you will have experienced nothing like it in your lifetime.

In summer 1940, the RAF fought almost down to the last Spitfire and Hurricane to drive the Luftwaffe from our skies.

Eighty years on another Battle of Britain began, only this time the outcome against an unseen enemy is not yet in our sights.

But the national spirit that led us to victory through the dark days of World War 2 surfaced again when an army of volunteers and professionals answered their country’s call.

Fareham Council Leader Seán Woodward summed up local reaction: “We have lived through very difficult and unprecedented times. Council services have been stretched along with family budgets.

“Services that we all took for granted had to cease while the priority was to deliver the lifeline services such as refuse collection, environmental health, social services and education.

“There have been some fantastic examples of support throughout our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“People have tirelessly helped to put together essential parcels and activity packs, delivered items to shielding residents, collected food donations, picked up prescriptions or just been amazingly good neighbours.

“Many hundreds of people in need have been helped across the Borough and it is right that your Council should express thanks to them all.”

It was a privilege to add his signature to Mayor Pamela Bryant’s on hundreds of letters thanking all the Fareham volunteers who stepped up through the COVID-19 pandemic to help their community.

They include Acts Of Kindness Community (Solent), Waypoint Church, Citizens Advice Fareham, AFC Portchester, One Community and Portchester Community Association.

If you know of any unsung heroes we may have missed, we’d like their names and a brief description of their efforts.

You can get a nomination form at www.fareham.gov.uk/thankavolunteer

BORIS REWARDS KERRY’S ACTS OF KINDNESS

Kerry Snuggs, leader of Acts of Kindness, was presented with a Points of Light Award from Prime Minister Boris Johnson by Fareham MP and Attorney General Suella Braverman.

How we helped over 100 small businesses to stay afloat

CRIES for help for businesses, industry and a host of other organisations flooded in from all corners of the UK.

But not all benefitted from Government schemes, including many in Fareham.

So the Borough Council hopes Discretionary Business Grants will make all the difference to those struggling with property-related costs.

Council Leader Seán Woodward said so far over 100 small businesses across the Borough had received grants up to £10,000. Applications were invited last month and this round of the scheme is closed. A total of £1m has been paid out.

Types of business which have been helped include small manufacturing firms, businesses located in shared offices, dentists, a podiatrist and a nail bar.

“This funding will be a lifeline for businesses which had slipped through the net for Government support during the pandemic,” he said.

Electronics business Lee Godbold Ltd based in Fareham Innovation Centre received a share of the funding.

Managing Director Lee Godbold said: “We were at a loss how to manage this unprecedented situation.

“I’d especially like to thank the Borough Council for approving our application for the Discretionary Business Grant funding which kept us up to date with our payments to Fareham Innovation Centre.”

The Council also gave market traders at Fareham and Portchester £2,500 each.

Acts of Kindness volunteers are using one of the business hangars at Solent Airport@Daedalus provided free by the Council.

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InTouch 3

Only a CONSERVATIVE COUNCIL can deliver the goods year after year

Survey reveals concerns about police presence on Fareham’s streets

LACK of police on the streets, anti-social behaviour and speeding were highlighted in a survey of West Ward residents.

Conservative candidate in the post-pandemic Fareham Council elections Stephen Child used his survey during canvassing to discover what mattered most to voters. He said the overall response was better than expected, with returns from 219 homes out of 653 addresses and 311 survey forms – 29% – returned out of a possible 1,057.

By far the greatest concern (75%) was at lack of police presence followed by anti-social behaviour (52%), speeding (41%) and drug and knife crime respectively at 20% and 17%.

Conversely, 54% said Fareham was a safe place to live.

There were a variety of responses to other issues, where the main concern was homelessness and begging, followed by parking.

Stephen commented: “The high level of responses to the police question seems to indicate there is a problem, but many people don’t take into account recent Government initiatives.

“It could also reflect a belief that the police should be doing more to address the present problems in society, i.e. anti-social behaviour caused by a general lack of discipline and poor parenting in some families – arguably not the role of the police.”

PHOTO: Counting the responses.

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 West Branch of Fareham Conservative Association? Please phone Tina on 01329 843936.

Borough Councillor

Fareham West

Tina Ellis
173a Highlands Road
Fareham PO15 1PR
Tel: 01329 843936
email: tellies@fareham.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Fareham Crofton

Pal Hayre
52 Gosport Road
Stubbington PO14 2AN
Tel: 0771 269 5467
email: pal.hayre@hants.gov.uk

Fareham Titchfield

Geoff Hockley
27 Heath Lawns
Fareham PO15 5QB
Tel: 01329 287365
email: geoff.hockley@hants.gov.uk

Stephen Child
1a Cherry Tree Avenue
Fareham PO14 1PY
Tel: 01329 319062
Email: stephen.child@ntlworld.com

InTouch co-ordinator

Stephen Child
1a Cherry Tree Avenue
Fareham PO14 1PY
Tel: 01329 319062
Email: stephen.child@ntlworld.com

No weed killer for 18 months

WEEDS are running riot across the Borough due to the Council’s reduction in spraying.

Councillor Tina Ellis said the service had been reduced to once a year, but the County Council then put Fareham bottom of its list.

So instead of spraying being carried out at the optimum time in spring, it won’t now be done until September.

“This means we will have seen weeds growing over an 18-month period,” she said.

“It is not how we wish to see our Borough and we are very grateful to those residents who take the time to clear the gutters of weeds.

“However, we know that not all our residents can undertake this type of work.”

Executive member for Streetscene Councillor Simon Martin has challenged the County Council on the issue.

Overwhelming response by Covid crisis volunteers

EFFORTS of volunteers who responded to the Covid-19 crisis have won praise from every corner of the Borough.

Fareham West Councillor Tina Ellis said it was a massive relief to know there were organised groups ready to respond when residents called for help.

“It has been a real personal privilege to be part of the team of volunteers with Acts of Kindness, One Community and Citizens Advice as our partner charities,” she said.

“From the outset Kenny Snuggs, of Acts of Kindness Solent (AOK), and a dedicated team collected food and donations of essentials to give out to the community.

“They quickly convened a COVID-19 response group with co-ordinators and What’s App groups, efficiently collecting and delivering vital prescriptions and food.

“As the Fareham Foodbank couldn’t operate from their existing building, a huge operation was undertaken, co-ordinated by Fareham Council and AOK, so the operation could continue with safe social distancing.

“Tina said Hayley Hamlett, of One Community, organised volunteers to do referrals, bespoke shopping, pharmacy trips and support phone calls to individuals.

“Being a hub for so many volunteer groups they have been at the forefront of helping with risk assessment and governance.”

Hayley was overwhelmed with the generosity of volunteers and hopes those who enjoyed the experience of giving to others will continue to give their time.

Tina added: “The main message throughout is don’t struggle alone, there is help out there, you just need to know where to go, reach out to one of the local volunteer groups.

“Details can be found on the Council website. Alternatively, ring or email me using the contact details below.”

Litter bill runs into thousands

LITTER is a mounting problem across Fareham due to thoughtless people.

Councillor Tina Ellis often finds it out walking her dogs in West Ward and Blackbrook Park.

“I carry extra doggy bags just to pick up dog mess left by a few irresponsible owners.

“We have nearly 700 litter bins in our Borough, so use them and save Streetscene staff to pick up after those who can’t be bothered,” she said.

Litter always carries a cost. A Portsmouth woman had to go to hospital recently after badly gashing her leg on metal that had been fly-tipped.

Over-the-fence tippers warned

PEOPLE who dump waste over their garden fences on to public land are fly-tipping and liable to prosecution.

Councillor Tina Ellis received several complaints on the issue and discovered the culprits’ properties.

She said: “Be aware – if you wish to put any form of access from your own property, for example a side or back gate, out into public amenity space or throughway, then you need to get permission from the Council.”

Overhanging foliage

The impact of overhanging foliage

YOU can help with social distancing by keeping your hedges trimmed.

Overgrown foliage often means people cannot pass safely on the pavement, but have to step into the road.

Councillor Tina Ellis says she’s noted several examples in West Ward and has appealed to residents to cut them back.

“Overhanging public footpaths and highways can have a significant impact and at worst is taking up several feet of the paving in some areas.”

It was particularly important since Government funding was available; active travel routes and more people were walking and cycling since lockdown.

No action on numbers.

First Bus apologise occasionally they stagger your journey time to avoid it on numbers.

Our condolences

Fareham West Ward has suffered losses due to COVID 19.

Councillor Tina Ellis sends a personal message of condolences to the families of our residents who have sadly lost loved ones, friends or colleagues.

“It is never easy, but particularly difficult at this most surreal and challenging time in our community history,” she said.

How have we done?

Borough Council staff have worked tirelessly often with a much-reduced staff, to keep services at full strength.

Councillor Tina Ellis would like your views on how we coped locally and nationally.

To respond, e-mail TELLies@fareham.gov.uk with the subject heading IN TOUCH COVID 19, also indicating if you are happy to be contacted.

A virtual VE Day celebration

Tina Ellis was pleased to attend a virtual VE Day event, a chance to dress up and join in a socially distanced tea in the front garden.

She said: “I’d love to hear the virtual events that have helped you through lockdown or did your street manage to organise any support events.”

Share any great stories with us in our next InTouch.

Stagger journey times appeal

First Bus apologise occasionally they had to leave passengers in Blackbrook Road area due to COVID restrictions on numbers.

If you use this service, please consider staggering your journey time to avoid it happening during the crisis.
Our Plan for Jobs provides a wide-ranging package of measures to support everyone in protecting their incomes at this very challenging time. From July 15, the Government cut VAT for hospitality, accommodation and tourism businesses in Fareham from 20% to 5% until January 12, 2021.

We have also launched the new Eat Out to Help Out scheme — giving people up to 50% off meals out, encouraging you back into restaurants, cafés and pubs. Anyone who eats at a participating business, Monday to Wednesday during August, can receive the discount on food and non-alcoholic drinks, up to a value of £10 per person. Businesses can claim the money back from the Government weekly, receiving funds within 5 working days.

We will also provide £2bn to allow people to apply for a voucher to fund at least two thirds of the cost of upgrading the energy performance of their homes, up to a maximum of £5,000. Low income households will be eligible for up to 100% of Government funding, up to £10,000. This will reduce energy bills by up to £300 per year and help to save carbon.

As a Government, we will not just accept this. Whether it is the Jobs Retention Bonus Scheme, the temporary VAT cut for tourism and hospitality sectors, the Eat Out to Help Out scheme, temporarily scrapping stamp duty on all homes under £500k, the new Green Homes Grant or creating hundreds of thousands of new fully subsided jobs for young people through the new £2bn Kickstart scheme, I am optimistic that there will be opportunities for all as we embark on the next phase of recovering from the crisis.

Bid for cash share to extend rapid transport system

EXPANSION of the rapid transit system across the Portsmouth area depends on 3 cities sharing the spoils. Portsmouth region was invited to bid for a share of £117m with Norwich and Stoke-on-Trent under the Government’s Transforming Cities Fund.

Its bid focuses on developing the next phase of SE Hampshire Rapid Transit (SEHRT) — a network of bus priority routes designed to improve public transport links with 3 new routes between Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Waterlooville and Portsmouth.

There would also be a new transport hub at Ryde to improve links between the Isle of Wight and the mainland.

Council Leader Seán Woodward said: “A funding decision has not yet been made on the Portsmouth city region bid. “We submitted our bid to the Department for Transport on Friday, July 3.”

Contact Suella

14 East Street, Fareham PO16 0BN
Tel: 01329 233573
Email: suella@suellabraverman.co.uk
Facebook: fb.com/SuellaBraverman

Website: www.farehamconservatives.org.uk    Email: farehamconservatives@gmail.com
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