



## The Only Party Fighting to Keep Britain Open, Tolerant and United

### What Are They (Not) Playing At?

All our children should have somewhere safe and entertaining to play. In our Ward we have the new Freshfields play space - which local residents worked so hard for. There are popular play areas at Seaside Road and Newts Way. At Edinburgh Road Optivo has taken away the swings claiming they can't deal with the vandalism. If vandals can be dealt with at Freshfields, Newts Way and Seaside Road why not at Edinburgh Road?

**Peter Clarke, Eve Montgomery and the Focus Team** are asking the Council to take steps to get the playground properly managed.



Peter Clarke at Edinburgh Road

### Grove School Darwell Close

The Labour-run Borough Council is resisting **Lib Dem Focus Team** questions about progress, or the lack of it, in dealing with the unresolved planning application for 210 houses at Grove School. The Council has been demanding payment for very basic information which is not on their website. The application has sat in a Council filing cabinet for two years or more - leaving local residents in limbo. Quite a lot has changed in that time, including traffic on Harley Shute settling down following the opening of the Link Road. **Eve Montgomery and the Lib Dem Team** suggest that these changes may mean the scheme needs a re-think. **The Focus Team** has now launched a Freedom of Information request which may force our Labour-run Council to tell the public - who do after all pay for a planning service - what is going on.



Eve Montgomery at Grove School

### New Focus Team Member

Peter Clarke has joined the **Lib Dem Focus Team**. Peter lives with his family in Bexhill Road and has already been working hard on local issues - notably helping to lead the all-Party (and no-Party) Bulverhythe Protectors. Peter works for the London Fire Brigade and has a British Empire Medal.

### Bexhill Road's £450,000 Tory Bus Lanes ... Again

Local residents may have seen heated correspondence in the columns of the Observer against (mostly) the Tory waste of £450,000 on the proposed and much delayed bits and pieces of bus lanes along Bexhill Road. Since the time when the County Hall Tories took the decision to go for these hugely expensive "bus lanes" the Cabinet Member for Highways has changed. The new chap comes fresh to the job and it may still be worth lobbying him to get the money spent on more useful things. He is County Councillor Nick Bennett. His email is [cllr.nick.bennett@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.nick.bennett@eastsussex.gov.uk) or you can write to him at County Hall in Lewes. Let **the Focus Team** know what feedback you get.

### Lib Dems in Action All Year Round Not Just At Election Time

#### 16 Houses at Bexhill Rd

Our Labour Council is proposing to build 16 houses on the grazing land (which the Council owns) and car park behind numbers 419 to 447 Bexhill Road. This is a site which the Council didn't even consider in the Local Plan because of the obvious flood risks. The proposal will lose valuable parking spaces loading more parked cars on to Bexhill Road. The layout shown would be very in-your-face for Bexhill Road houses. In theory the land is a wildlife site (H22) - though it has been neglected by the Council since it was designated in 1998. There's still time to comment by going on the Council's planning website and look for reference: HS/OA/17/01071



**Darwell Close** Peter Clarke stands next to just one of the Tory potholes in our Ward which we have reported to the County.



### Parking at Field Way and Harley Shute

Some time ago the County Council put double yellow lines around the junctions of Field Way, Kite Close and Reedswood. For a time this eased the school parking problem. However, without regular visible enforcement, they've picked up again. This is life and death for some residents unable to get in and out of their driveways, it is dangerous as fast traffic weaves round parked cars along Harley Shute and a thorough nuisance for everybody. **Lib Dem Focus Team member Peter Clarke** is contacting the County Highways safety team and the Schools to see what more can be done.

**West Marina Lido Site  
Meeting 6.30pm 21<sup>st</sup> March  
W St Ls Community Centre**



**Labour Throws  
Away £2.5m  
Housing Money**



Keepmoat has announced withdrawal from the development of housing on the Bexhill Road Playing Fields. They couldn't see any way to make the sums add up – even though the Labour Council was offering an effective subsidy of at least £1,700,000 on the value of the land. The likely costs of a sports stadium and affordable housing, sorting out the appalling drainage and getting better access to Bexhill Road should have knocked the plans on the head. But this unworkable idea is not yet dead. Our Labour Council is hoping to use about £2,500,000 of Central Government funds to get the zombie back on its feet. Our Tory MP has expressed her “delight” at this idea. **Lib Dem Focus Team Member Peter Clarke** points out that the Playing Fields weren't even considered for housing in the Council's own Local Plan. There **are** sites in the Borough which are shown for housing, e.g. the former Westerleigh School and the former Stamco depot and the Council's own land at Cinque Ports Way. These and others could be much more easily and quickly transformed from eyesore to family homes. Sadly our Labour Council only put in a bid for funding for sites involved in the controversial sports complex proposal. If this proposal fails we lose the money for any other housing scheme. If you share the doubts of the **Lib Dem Focus Team** you may want to join the Bulverhythe Protectors in their campaign to protect the playing fields (contact **Peter Clarke** or **Eve Montgomery**). You could also write and object to the Labour Leader of the Council, [cldr.peter.chowney@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:cldr.peter.chowney@hastings.gov.uk)

Contact **Eve Montgomery, Peter Clarke** and the Focus Team

Your Name.....

Your Address, Phone or Email

Problems in your street?

Can you help the Team?

**Email:** [eve.montgomery1066@gmail.com](mailto:eve.montgomery1066@gmail.com)

**Phone:** 07717 125512

**Or Write c/o**

4 St Saviours Road

St Leonards on Sea TN38 0AP



The Labour Council without - as they promised - consulting local people is seeking further tenders for the redevelopment of the Lido Site. Word is that one of the possible contractors told the Council that it ought to be a community-led project and refused to submit proposals. Central Government support can be available if a community wants to take such matters into their own hands (as has happened in the Ore Valley). One possibility could be a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole West Marina area not just the Lido site. An all-Party (and non-Party) Public Meeting is being held at 6.30pm on 21<sup>st</sup> March at the West St Leonards Community Centre. The **Lib Dem Focus Team of Eve Montgomery and Peter Clarke** hope to work with local residents as they progress their ideas.

**Private Eye** reports that Tory Leader of East Sussex County Keith Harvey got a 37% increase in his allowance taking it to £46,740. Councillor Harvey said “*I'm absolutely convinced that the difference I can make to the people of East Sussex is worth the money, and more.*” What do **you** think?

The County Council Chief Executive got nearly £230,000 in pay, benefits and expenses in 2016-17.

**Lib Dems Lead Fight  
Against Tory Spending  
Plans at County Hall**

The annual ritual of Tory slash and burn cost-cutting at County Hall – sorry, serious and thoughtful budget setting – came round again in February. Budget cuts of £17million for 2018/19 have been approved by the Tories. Strangely the Tories put the blame for these cuts on a Tory Government - which they support and helped to elect. A council tax rise of 5.99 per cent has also been agreed.

**The Lib Dems** voted to restore Tory cuts in assessment and care management, supporting people services, support for carers and early help, home to school transport, the closure of seven libraries (including Ore) and grass cutting. This would have been funded through such as saving £3.5m by leaving vacant staffing posts unfilled longer and £1.6m by changing how much money is set aside for debt repayments. £1m would be used from reserves for a plan which would have seen a reduction in the number of senior and middle managers.

(Source: *Hastings Observer*)

**Casework Corner**

Some other issues that local residents have raised with **Eve Montgomery** and **Peter Clarke** and the Focus Team:

- **Newts Way:** Following withdrawn planning applications what is the status of the land round the electricity sub-station?
- **Edinburgh Road:** Can the Filsham Schools do more about littering etc. by School pupils?
- **TKMAX:** The Council now owns the site. Will they sort out the near non-existent landscaping on Bexhill Road and ensure access for emergency vehicles to the houses?
- **Air Quality:** The Borough Council has revoked the Air Quality Management Area for Bexhill Road. When will they be publishing the replacement Air Quality Strategy for the Borough?

We'll report back on these in future Focuses.