



Alderney FOCUS

Spring 2006

Rossmore Route Saved

Following the dropping of the 168/169 by Wilts and Dorset, Bournemouth Transport took over the subsidised route until the end of March 2006. Last Autumn, Bournemouth Transport announced that it was unable to continue operating this service when the contract ended. We made a plea for this service to continue and after some investigation Council Officers agreed that this was a necessary service. As a result a modified version of this route, route 8 – covering both routes and a link to Penn Hill, was put out to tender. This has been awarded to a Bus Company new to Poole, Roadliner. The service will run hourly during the day except between 3 and 4.

Please complete the bus survey on page 3 with your residents survey.



HOSPITAL BUS CAMPAIGN

Older residents that travel to Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals before 9.30am should benefit as the result of a move led by your Ward Councillors. (continued inside left)



New Bus Needed

Following the loss of yellow bus service no. 39, we are pressing hard for the Council to support a route linking the parts of the Alderney Ward not served by the 165 with Bournemouth Hospital and Castlepoint. The Council have already received a petition for a bus to link Upper Parkstone to Tower Park. We asked that this service should also extend to Alderney West.

For more info, check out the web site www.poolenorth.net



Left to right, Alderney Councillors Tony Trent and Lindsay Wilson and Newtown Councillor Graham Wilson at the launch of the new bus

Play Area Funding Approved



£120,000 of funding from the Council held "Planning Obligations Fund" has been approved to allow the construction of a long awaited play facility and other improvements to the Bourne Valley Youth Club, bottom of Arne Avenue.

Plans will be drawn up for a consultation in early spring, and it is hoped construction during the Summer Holidays. A lot of the money was collected from housing developments in and around Arne Avenue and topped up by funding from the adjacent Newtown Ward.

Secret Development List

Poole Council has a secret list of development sites that they are financially involved in which we are forbidden to tell you about. They include both publicly and privately owned sites – some controversial. Some of these are in and around the Alderney Ward.

Cllr. Lindsay Wilson says... "We are pressing for the list to be made public in the interests of open government. At present you will only find out when the development is almost a done deal. We will let you know how this goes and will seek to publish the list on the web site or in Focus when we are allowed."

YOUR ALDERNEY LIBERAL DEMOCRAT COUNCILLORS ARE: -

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Fire - The Ever Present Danger!

Fires in Poole have caused major disruption over the past few years, with the Canford Heath fire as recent example.

Fortunately this has not resulted in any loss of life. The highest risk of fire deaths and injuries come from fires in the home. Smoke detectors are a must. Are you sure that yours is working? Electrical sockets may be overloaded.

Home Visits For Vulnerable

Those most vulnerable to fires are older people, the very young, and people with disabilities. If you are worried about a friend, neighbour, or family member, ring Dorset Fire and Rescue Service and we will happily do a full Home Fire Risk Assessment. Where we find problems we will do all we can to address them. Without your call we may not get there until it is too late.

Ring 01202 538282 during office hours for advice or to seek a home visit.

Steve Shuck - Area Manager Dorset Fire and Rescue Service

YOUR MP

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INSIDE FOCUS: Funding for new play area, secret development list, and more

£££ Tory Stealth Taxes Rife

What have Poole Council's Tories and the "New Labour" Government got in common?

Answer... they both love imposing stealth taxes!

Poole Tories have taken advantage of better central government funding since 2004 to raise extra money whilst seeking credit for financial prudence. They have salted away millions in Council bank accounts and now have a "war chest" to "buy" support when they need it. They have also raised many charges and introduced new ones, doubling some car parking rates and introducing winter charges. These penalise locals the most. They have also slowed down projects (see library replacement item) to create artificial savings.

Cllr. Charles Meachin added... "Because so many decisions by the Tory Council are made behind closed doors by a single party clique, they are hidden from scrutiny and not opened up for debate. Please let us know of your experiences over the last three years so we can check them against known problems."

Where's The New Van?

Back at the end of 2003 the Council proposed scrapping Poole's Mobile Library Service. They claimed that the van was unfit and could not be kept on the road. We suggested that as this recommendation had come from the "Mayoral Car Replacement Working Party" it had more to do with the provision of a new limo for the Mayor. After some debate, and probably spurred on by the Alderney By-Election, the Tories did a U-turn and agreed to keep the service and provide a new vehicle. This was promised initially for the summer of 2004. With the 2006/7 financial year about to start there is still no sign of the new van.



The old library van

Following a question to full Council they claim the new van will be in place by the late summer. There is now a suggestion that a new van will replace both the mobile library AND home delivery van – so a cut in provision?

Meanwhile the mayoral limo has been in service for at least two years!

...HOSPITAL TRAVEL CONTINUED

Under the Government free travel for the over 60s scheme, the Councils who implement the scheme could choose whether or not they offered free travel before 9.30 in the morning. Poole chose not to.

We argued that because so many of our residents have to use Bournemouth Hospital, which is a minimum of 30 minutes away by bus, an exception should be made for hospital visits.

The Council agreed to our proposal to seek an exemption from the 9.30 ruling for those with appointments and asked Officers to negotiate a scheme with the bus companies and/or hospital.

At the time of writing the negotiations with the bus companies were not going well, but an agreement in principle has been made with the Health Trust running Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals, to reimburse the fares paid by Connect card holding patients who had to travel in before 9.30. This was likely to be in place by late April.

Cllr. Tony Trent, who drafted the call in of the original decision, said... "We are pleased that the Council accepted our request to exempt journeys to Bournemouth Hospital from the 9.30 ruling, and widen the range of vulnerable people also exempted. We are disappointed that the bus companies could not accept our original idea but the proposed reimbursement is better than nothing. The results benefit our most vulnerable residents."

To find out the latest developments on this and other issues check out the Alderney News Web Site on www.poolenorth.net



Bus Services – HAVE YOUR SAY!

Between now and June, Poole Borough Council will be reviewing all the subsidised bus services in Poole in advance of re-tendering. Most Evening and Sunday services and several bus routes depend on Council subsidies. With an anticipated increase in tender prices there is the real possibility of cuts in the services supported by the Council. We have managed to persuade them to take action early to maintain the "Rossmore Flyer" which has become even more important since the closure of the Rossmore Road Post Office. This process takes place against a background of cuts in the "commercial" services operated by Wilts and Dorset and Bournemouth Transport.

Your Councillors have representation on the "Route and Branch" Working Party, and by filling in this survey form you can help us fight your corner. The new contracts will start in the autumn.

Please fill the questionnaire below in, and return it to the your Alderney Councillors using the Freepost Envelope Provided.

Do you currently use local bus services?
Y/N

If the answer is yes, what are the main services you use?

How often do you use the bus? (Daily / 2 to 3 times a week / weekly / less often – please specify)

What time of day do you travel?

If you do not use the buses what is the main reason?

Do you encounter any particular difficulties when using the bus?

Are you over 60? Y/N

If you are over 60 you will be entitled, under the new Government scheme implemented by local Councils, to travel free of charge after 9.30am. Will this make you more likely to use the bus? Y/N

If the scheme were amended to allow free travel to over 60s before 9.30am (see item on left page), would you be more likely to use the concession? Y/N

Are there any places you need to get to where there is an inadequate or no service?
Y/N

If the answer is yes please specify.

What, if any, measures would make you more likely to use the bus?

In your opinion what should the main priorities be when deciding the services that are to be financially supported by Council Tax payers?

Please add any further comments below.

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THANK YOU!

