

Money matters: spotlight on Adult Social Care

On paper, Dorset Council has balanced its budget for 2024-25 through a 5% rise on Council Tax, fees and charges, and using up to £8m of its reserves if it can't find further savings. But it has already spent £40m of reserves in its first five years financing unplanned overspends, and this is the first time it has actually 'planned' to use reserves to avoid service cuts. The Council Tax rise will hit many residents really hard but, with various councils across the country going bust, Dorset Council has little choice unless central government policy changes. Funding to local authorities has been slashed by half since 2010, with Dorset remaining almost bottom of the pile, and Adult Social Care in particular, which already accounts for over 40% of Dorset Council's expenditure, is chronically underfunded.



Local Care Home Manager Claudia Webb

Local Care Home Manager Claudia Webb writes: *"This is an extremely pressing issue which successive governments have failed to address. In 2022, the House of Lords Adult Social Care Committee stated that adult social care is largely "invisible": something that happens behind closed doors, that is about "them" rather than "us". This was very apparent during the pandemic, with tragic consequences, and results in services that are underfunded, a workforce that is undervalued and underpaid, and a system that is only really seen in terms of the impact it has on the NHS. At the same time, a recent survey of unpaid family carers found that over 90% feel ignored by government. I work with people who are directly affected by this. It's very clear we need to develop a more compassionate vision. If you have specific concerns for yourself or a loved one, please contact me on 07769 973593 or claudiawebb300@yahoo.co.uk and Clare and I will try to help.*



Val Graves and pipe at Castle Cove

Stop dumping sewage in our sea!

Our coordinator Val Graves writes: "Like many local people I swim in the sea throughout the year. As you may know, our sewerage network is a 'combined system', where both sewage and surface water flow into the same pipes. When that system becomes overloaded, for example when it rains heavily, water companies are allowed to discharge human sewage into the sea, at places like Sandsfoot and Castle Cove, where you can actually see the pipes. Local swimmers use the 'Surfers Against Sewage' app to find out when these discharges have taken place. Then we don't swim for 48 hours afterwards, as people can get sick.

"This simply isn't good enough. The water companies are monitoring themselves whilst paying huge dividends to their shareholders,

and Dorset residents will pay the highest water bills in England from 1st April. As readers of our Autumn newsletter will know, Green councillors got a motion passed last September which commits Dorset Council to working with central government and water companies to prevent sewage discharges into our rivers and beaches. Since then, Dorset Council has been increasing pressure on developers to separate sewage and surface water and Green councillors consistently press for this through the Planning process. But central government needs to take responsibility. The Green Party remains alone in committing to take water back into public ownership and using the 'profits' to resolve this."



Printed on 100% recycled paper



dorsetgreenparty



dorset.greenparty.org.uk



@DorsetGreens



dorsetgreenparty@gmail.com

Promoted by Andy McEwen on behalf of Dorset Green Party, at Garden Cottage, Netherbury, Dorset DT6 5NB.
Printed on 100% recycled paper by Print Team (Dorset) Ltd. 21 Mereside | Navigator Business Park | Portland | Dorset | DT5 1PY

RODWELL & WYKE GREEN MATTERS



SPRING 2024

Dear Resident

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter. All details are correct as we go to press but some may have changed by the time we've delivered to all 7000 households. If you'd like to lend a hand with deliveries please contact our coordinator Val Graves on val654@icloud.com and, as ever, do contact us if there's anything we can help with.

With all good wishes

Clare Sutton
clare.sutton@zen.co.uk
tel. 07453 3369191

Brian Heatley
brianheatley@me.com
tel. 07824 774941



Clare and Brian on the Underbarn

Underbarn Walk: are we nearly there yet?

... and the answer is - yes! Clare secured Dorset Council's commitment to reinstating this in 2021 and much of it was cut through, but progress then stalled for various reasons. However, landowners were informed last month that works would recommence and this has now started. Once it has been cut through fully there will be a 21 day statutory consultation period. Following that, the plan is to install handrails and sleepers where needed but keep additions to a minimum to maintain the naturalness of the area.

Clare says, *"I'm sorry this is taking so long but it's been more complicated than we'd envisaged. Massive thanks to Dorset Council's Greenspace Team and to the Trustees of Friends of Castle Cove for all their help, and to Underbarn Walk fans for your patience."*

For up to date information, please contact Clare on clare.sutton@zen.co.uk or Chair of Friends of Castle Cove Beach Charity Steve Elsworth on steveelsworth@me.com

Portland Waste Incinerator hangs in the balance

As many readers will know, **Powerfuel appealed against Dorset Council's decision to refuse permission for this.** The Public Inquiry was held 5 to 21 December and the final decision, not expected until at least March, will be taken by Secretary of State Michael Gove based on the Inspector's report.

The large attendance over the two weeks reflected the pretty much unanimous rejection of the Incinerator by local people. Brian and Clare were among over 50 people who spoke at the Public Evidence day, all against the plant. Clare focussed on the impact of 80 (huge!) HGV journeys through Wyke every day, and on the potential harm to



Standing room only at the Public Inquiry in Castletown

our tourist industry and local economy. She asked, *"If you were a cruise ship passenger greeted on arrival by a massive waste incinerator, what would you put on Trip Advisor?"* Brian concentrated on the heritage arguments - the inspector was a heritage specialist - which are of particular significance in planning decisions. He said, *"I think many of us are cautiously optimistic that the appeal will be rejected. The inspector listened very carefully to the well-informed and often passionate objections put forward by many local people. It's hard to imagine that more could have been done, especially by the fantastic Stop Portland Waste Incinerator campaign."*

Rodwell and Wyke Round Up

There is a long history of **traffic problems on Cross Road**, which make it dangerous for children going to and from Holy Trinity School, and for users of the Doctors' Surgery. Dorset Council plans to introduce a **20mph zone**, also covering nearby roads. Brian says, "This won't solve all the issues but it's good to see 20mph zones being used to promote better road safety and more walking and cycling."



Clare has worked closely with Independent councillor Luke Wakeling on improvements to Chapelhay Steps.

Since our last newsletter, a new bench has been installed, which helps those with limited mobility, and foliage has been drastically cut back, opening up visibility of the 'secluded' bench. Users of the steps report that antisocial behaviour has reduced but there have been some very worrying **ASB incidents** elsewhere in the ward, especially **in Wyke**, where Clare is liaising with local police and the Housing Association.



A recent planning application to turn the **old Methodist Church on Portland Road** into six flats has been turned down. Many local residents objected because no parking spaces were included, in a part of Wyke where this is a pressing issue. Brian, who also objected, said: "Dorset Highways comments on planning applications often focus only on the impact on traffic flow. Other issues, like on street parking in this case, or noise and pollution, are largely ignored."

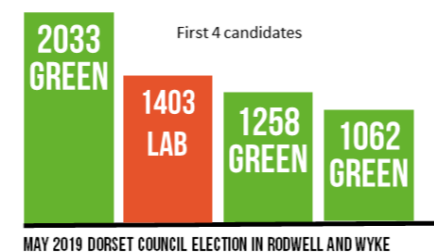


Weymouth Museum has been homeless since building work began at Brewers Quay, though there was a temporary version in the Town Centre last summer. It has now put in a funding bid for an outdoor screen in Hope Square to show off its collection, which Clare and Brian have strongly supported. Clare said, "The Museum is hugely important for locals and visitors, and the businesses that rely on them. This would be a great way for it to sustain a presence in the town until it returns to Brewers Quay."

Brian and Clare have also tried to help with many other issues which residents have raised, including road and pavement surfaces (2 successes!), planning applications and housing concerns. They can't always resolve your issues but always do their best.

To vote on May 2nd - and of course there's still a chance of a General Election that day too...how thrilling! - you will need **photo ID**.

To check if you have valid ID, apply for a free voter ID document, or register to vote, go to www.bit.ly/3SunBDO



Helen Toft, Weymouth Town Councillor for Wyke, writes:

"I was contacted by a Williams Avenue resident in November who told me that, on Halloween, a large group of young people banged and kicked cars in the road and verbally abused residents who challenged them. As this was corroborated by other residents, I organised a meeting that was attended by around 20 residents, the Police, senior staff from All Saints School, Dorset Council's ASB officer and councillors Clare Sutton and Lucy Hamilton. Residents shared their concerns, offered support to each other and we agreed a plan going forward. Reports since the meeting are that there have been no more incidents. This type of behaviour is particularly alarming for elderly residents and those living alone. If you have a door bell with a camera and you record ASB you can send a copy to www.dorset.police.org or, if a young person is wearing school uniform whilst misbehaving, contact All Saints School office with the details. Big thanks to Wyke Workies for hosting this meeting and providing refreshments.



You can contact Helen on 07790 536963 or cllrhelentoft@weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk

On a happier note, plans are afoot to open a new Youth Club at Ryemead Community Centre after February half term, with weekly sessions for younger and older age groups. For more information, to lend a hand, or to donate games or equipment, please contact Claire Beaumont on wykeyouthproject@outlook.com or 07557503831.

We are fortunate to have many allotments in Rodwell and Wyke but there's still a waiting list. With a changing climate and unpredictable world events we all threatened by food insecurity and I've attended a couple of 'Growing Connections' workshops - a project to nurture a network of local growers and engage with the next generation of food growers. To find out about this and the other great work being done by Weymouth Climate Hub go to www.weymouthclimatehub.com."

Green councillors are also encouraging Weymouth Town Council to implement its Climate & Ecological Emergency Plan. Recent initiatives have included supporting council tenants to improve energy efficiency, encouraging solar PV projects, developing new walking routes and the successful 'Love your Weymouth' festival.

Local Elections 2nd May 2024

Brian will sadly not be standing for re-election to Dorset Council because he and his wife are moving back to London. Clare says:



Claudia, Val and Clare

"Brian has been a brilliant councillor, always extremely diligent and effective, whether trying to resolve local residents' issues or challenging Dorset Council's budget projections. We've been good friends for 14 years and I will miss him hugely. On the upside though, Val Graves, Claudia Webb and I have been selected as the three Green candidates for Rodwell and Wyke. Both Claudia and Val have SO much to offer. You can find out more about them at www.tinyurl.com/GreenClaudia and www.tinyurl.com/GreenValGraves".

Elections to Weymouth Town Council will also be held on 2nd May. If you think you might be interested in standing as a Green, please contact our coordinator Val for a chat on 07940 702703 or val654@icloud.com