

MILTON MATTERS

Issue No. 48

Milton Neighbourhood Forum

Jan. 2013



TOILETS UP FOR CLOSURE – SEE PAGE 4

Hear more about the Council's 2013 Budget at an open session in the Guildhall Council Chamber, on Monday 4 February 6pm, questions welcome

Wednesday 6 February 7.00 pm

Mary Rose School, Gisors Road, off Locksway Road

NEXT FORUM AGENDA

Amendment to Constitution

Peter Roberts - Ranger on Milton Common

**Richard Lee, Pollution Control Manager, Portsmouth City Council
will update us on Air Pollution in the City and our area**

FORUM MINUTES

3 October 2012

UPDATE SINCE LAST MEETING

Following the promised local consultation by St James Hospital, plans to develop parts of the hospital site for residential accommodation are continuing. The Forum had raised objections on grounds of increased air pollution through more traffic onto Velder Avenue but the scheme to build 13 homes at Riverhead Close was approved by the city council with plans for a further 50-60 homes to be submitted soon.

Under the Localism Act, residents are able to form a Neighbourhood Planning Forum, subject to certain requirements, and the Neighbourhood Forum has been exploring this on behalf of residents. It is hoped that such a body could identify particular sites in the area that would benefit from local input to the planning process. Members of the Milton community living or working in the area were invited to join this body and a list was passed around.

GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHEME

A presentation by Kelly Martin and Andrew Waggott from Portsmouth City Council explained how residents can become green neighbours, by recycling and saving money and energy in the home. Two schemes are operating, one in Paulsgrove and one in Milton, with workshops planned to show residents how they can reduce household energy bills. One of the new homes on Copnor Bridge will be open soon to show how modern building techniques can save energy and money.

To volunteer, contact the team on 023 9283 4670, or e-mail address :- green.neighbours@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

NOTE: Since the meeting the energy efficient house has been changed to Tokar St. Eastney to demonstrate how older properties can benefit. It should be completed in summer 2013.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Sherry Anne spoke about the need for volunteers to assist at the Milton Library with a view to identify ways to enhance library usage by establishing likes and dislikes. A further 8 volunteers are needed (applications to 023 9268 8065 - Beddow Library Group).

13/14 BUS SERVICE

Danny Johnson (Passenger Transport Officer for Portsmouth City Council) gave an update on what the current situation is regarding bus services across the city and in Milton. First Bus has undertaken a radical review of all services revised routes and timetables will operate with effect from 25th November 2012.

He confirmed that the 13A bus service has been monitored and it is established that only 14 people are using it each day. This makes 13A uneconomical and the service will be cancelled with effect from 20th October 2012. However, to help compensate for the loss of this bus, the current 13 service will continue to operate via its "loop" route, and will still run along the southern stretch of the Eastern Road, into Langstone Road and on to Milton Road and St Mary's Hospital on a permanent basis, every half-hour.

NOTE: Go to Page 5 to catch up with the latest consultation being carried out by the Council on Subsidised Bus Routes and Tokens.

FORUM MINUTES 3 Oct. ..cont

RANGER SERVICE ON MILTON COMMON

Unfortunately, Peter Roberts, Countryside Officer with Portsmouth City Council, was unable to attend. This was regrettable, as several residents had come along specifically for this item. Views or concerns of residents could not therefore be fully discussed without the appropriate responsible bodies present to advise the Forum and residents.

It was agreed that Milton Common, and in particular the question of dogs on the common, would be discussed at the next public meeting and that the Peter Roberts and officers able to advise residents would be invited to attend.

NOTE: As a result of this discussion, the Council's Senior Enforcement Officer has set out the 2011 Dog Control Orders which apply throughout the city. You can read this on page 17

LOCKSWAY ROAD ROUNDABOUT

Unfortunately, Barry Rawlings from Portsmouth City Council, could not attend this meeting, and the Chair asked residents to indicate their views on the effectiveness of the new roundabout at the junction of Locksway and Milton Roads. Opinions were divided, with 18 people believing that the new roundabout was beneficial and 13 against the roundabout. The Chair agreed to communicate residents' views to Barry Rawlings and to request that appropriate monitoring at the junction be undertaken before any final plan is agreed,

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

James Sandy, Portsmouth City Council Engagement Officer, sought nominations for committee members and officers to serve on the Forum committee for a further year with effect from November 2012. The present officers and committee were re-elected.

Following questions from residents about the validity of these elections because no formal notice of the elections had been published, it was felt that the Constitution should be checked and if necessary, formal elections be deferred until the next public forum meeting in 2013 to allow for appropriate publicity to be provided. If the Constitution did not cover the requirement to give notice of an election, then an amendment should be introduced to this effect.

SUSPICION OF DOG POISONING

The Forum was asked by a resident to warn dog owners that 2 dogs have been poisoned at the end of Kingsley Road.

TRICK OR TREATING: a poster for display in houses which do not wish to be disturbed by trick-or-treaters.

has been produced by the police

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

In the short time available at the end of the meeting, Cllr Lynne Stagg gave a brief presentation on the 15th Nov. 2012 election for the position of Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire. She also spoke about the Police and Crime Panel and passed out leaflets for residents to consider at their leisure

NOTE: since the meeting, the constitution has been checked and there is no formal requirement for prior notice of elections to be communicated to residents but this will be introduced.

WHERE'S THE NEAREST TOILET?

Our Council is facing tough decisions and wants your help in making the right ones. Currently they are asking for our views on closing 13 out of our 25 public toilets. The toilets under threat are at Castle Field, Clarkes Road, College Park, Eastney Esplanade (by the Baths), Highland Road, Hilsea Lido, Lower Drayton Lane, Marsden Road, Paradise Street, South Parade Kiosk, White Hart Road, and locally

- MILTON PARK TOILETS
- BRANSBURY PARK TOILETS

The Council suggests that the toilets which should be kept open are those used by tourists and shoppers. Is this the right emphasis? As residents of the City, paying Council Tax, should we not have the right to access a toilet when we walk the dog, play in the park, visit a library, go to the smaller shopping areas, walk the seafront, take out our children and need to change a nappy? Further, there are many people who through age, medication or disability require toilet facilities. The last Census told us there a large numbers of disabled people living in Portsmouth. Without sufficient toilets in our city, many people will be disadvantaged and inconvenienced!

In Milton our local shopping area is valued, well supported, varied and popular, giving us a place to meet, saves bus and car journeys, encourages walking to the shops, but without a toilet in Bransbury Park, we will be less likely to spend long on local shopping. When the Park toilets were closed for repairs last year, it was extremely inconvenient. The Community Centre did not offer an alternative service and the issue affected the decision on whether or not to 'go local'. Likewise Milton Park toilets are essential for park and Beddow Library users as well as visitors who stop on the main road to access this prominent site with parking alongside. Fewer toilets will keep us in our cars.

This issue is more than just our personal convenience, it is also a hygiene issue. When toilets are closed, the need for them does not go away and people will find their own solutions! Toilets serve our most basic human needs! These closures are uncivilised and unacceptable.

WHERE'S THE NEAREST TOILET?



"You never know when you'll need a loo". Sheena Smith with pre-wedding nerves on the way to her Wedding in August 2010

You have until **31 January** to tell the Council if you agree or disagree with their plans. To read their report in full go to

www.portsmouth.gov.uk/yourcouncil/28275 and click to fill in the survey on line. Write with your views to - toilets@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or If you do not use the Internet, you can complete the Council's paper questionnaire in **Milton Library, Bransbury Park Community Centre, or Milton Village Hall**, who will forward them on to the Council, saving postage.

PCC CONSULTS ON BUS SUBSIDIES AND TOKENS

Another chance to have your say! The Council plans to withdraw the £25 of travel tokens that can be claimed by eligible elderly residents (except eligible disabled people) AND to reduce the subsidies they provide to bus companies. The withdrawal of travel tokens would mean eligible elderly residents paying for some of their travel needs instead of using tokens, while reduced bus company subsidies could result in some bus services ending.

The council wants your views by **1 FEB**. They are writing to all who currently receive the travel tokens, or you can complete a survey online at www.portsmouth.gov.uk/yourcouncil/24793. If you have any questions or comments please telephone 023 9283 4355, email publictransport@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or write to Transport Planning, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, PO1 2NE. To see the full report with details of bus routes affected, go to www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/TSM_Bus-Subsidy-Consultation_Proposed-Changes_January2013.pdf or view a paper copy in **Beddow Library**. 5



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John Dardis, Manager of Lloyds Bank, Milton Branch with Mary and Anne

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9am - 1.00pm Saturdays

We are so lucky in Milton to still have the services of a local bank with such extensive opening hours and friendly and helpful staff. This is a boon to our local businesses as well as everyone in the area, especially with free parking nearby! **Good luck and best wishes Milton & Southsea Branch, for your next 100.**

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Milton Village Community Association

Milton Village Hall, 182 Milton Road, Southsea, Hants, PO4 8PR
Tel. 02392873788 Email: info@mvca-milton.co.uk
Office Hours: 9.30am – 12 noon Monday to Friday

Current Activities at Milton Village Hall



We have 3 areas now available for hire – whether you need a regular meeting place for your club or a venue for a child's birthday party!

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DEVELOPMENT OF MILTON COMMON



This photo shows the Salterns Avenue estate, Good Companion pub and Velder Avenue off into the distance. Warren Avenue can be seen ending by the line of Poplar Trees. This photo was taken before the Council began reclamation from the sea. Do you know the date? **



This 1968 photo shows how the area which became the common was used as a tip, taken just 3 years before development of Moorings Way was completed.

Today Milton Common is a large area (approx. 40 Ha) of grassland, scrub and ponds located on the eastern fringe of Portsea Island. The site is reclaimed intertidal land and was used as a municipal refuse tip until the 1970's.

It was then capped with clay and topsoil and the area landscaped. Subsequent low key intervention has resulted in areas of grassland and scrub, both of which provide a suitable habitat for a wide range of wildlife. The addition of paths and regularly mown amenity grass allows visitors to relax and children to play and learn about the wildlife around them.



DEVELOPMENT OF MILTON COMMON

The grassland has developed a good diversity of species, with a strong coastal element. Overall the species diversity is excellent, with nearly 200 flora species noted within the Common. These include 3 acid/neutral grassland indicators and the Nationally Rare Slender hare's-ear (*Bupleurum tenuissimum*) and Yellow Vetchling (*Lathyrus aphaca*). In order to maintain this diversity of species sections of the rougher grassland need to be cut in rotation so that they will not become dominated by the more invasive species

There is extensive dense and scattered scrub throughout the site, especially to the east. Bramble is an important habit for a number of species but if left unchecked it will rapidly colonise the Common. To combat this, some clumps have to be removed whilst others need to be cut back to prevent further spread. The age and structure of the scrub is also important for different species so some of the removed clumps will be allowed to re-grow to provide this diversity.

A good indicator of the importance of Milton Common to wildlife can be gauged from the published bird records. In Britain there are 52 bird species on the 'Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List' (BOCC-Red) of which 39 have been reported from the site.



Whitethroats can be seen on the Common

So overall the site is extremely important, not only for wildlife, but also as a great public amenity for the community. This is especially true in context of its location within one of the most densely populated cities in the country.

Peter Roberts
Countryside Officer – Covering
Milton Common.
Tel: 07958353152
Email peter.roberts.cse@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

**CAN ANYONE DATE THE FIRST PHOTO?

Can you tell us what was on the Avocet House site at this time?

Please email the Forum on MiltonNForum@aol.com if you can help.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE BLITZ?

Completing Eddie Wallace's recollections as a City Police Fireman during World War 2

January 10th 1941 has been noted as the heaviest fire raid suffered by the City. On this occasion, I was a crew member of No.4 turbine, our day-time 'first away' engine. From memory it was a very clear moonlight evening. About 7pm a wave of German aircraft flew over Portsmouth, guided by the shining waters of the Harbour and the whiteness of the large chalk pit at its head. Although an endeavour had been made to camouflage the pits, they could still be seen on clear nights. The German planes indiscriminately dropped hundreds of incendiary bombs over the City, the majority falling on High Street, Old Portsmouth; Palmerston Road, Southsea; and Commercial Road area, Landport. Our call was to the Landport Drapery Bazaar (now Debenhams) on Arundel street corner. I cannot now recall who our driver was nor the sergeant in charge although I suspect it was Sergeant 22 Albert Cooper. I remember our crew consisted of Bob Furbank, Lynn Evans, Ken Bridges and Constable Harry Colverston – mainly cadets or apprentice firemen as we teenagers were called!

The top floor of LDB was alight and after dragging a line of hose up the three flights of stairs we managed to extinguish same. On returning and 'making up' the hoses, our attention was next directed to the area of Crasswell, Buckingham and, Chandos Streets where the five-storey building of Messrs. Timothy Whites & Taylors was on fire. This was the main storage place of the firm, essential for all the firm's shops in the city. There was a great deal of smoke being emitted but after an hour or so and a great deal of endeavour heaving canvas hose up to the upper floors we managed to successfully put out the fires on the top floors.

We hurriedly made up the hoses and returned to our engine and back to Commercial Road. It was now about 10pm and many shops were well alight. Once again we used the fire hydrant near LDB and ran hoses from the engine's pump to once again Landports and also the store immediately opposite – the 50/- Tailors. All of a sudden water ceased to flow and whenever saw water again from the hydrants for the next 24 hours. We later learned that German High Explosive bombs had blown up major water mains in Old Portsmouth and north Landport, depriving us of that precious commodity. The raid was well planned as at this time, the tides around Portsmouth were at their lowest.

This had been foreseen and large lorries carrying collapsible water 'dams' had been kept at the majority of AFS fire stations in readiness. These were called upon and sent to Canoe Lake and Broad Street slipway to be refilled. At the same time a relax of pumps and hose was set up from the end of South Parade Pier, the hoses being directed to the many static water dams which had the previous year been set up on many strategic roads around Portsmouth.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE BLITZ? cont.

Not only was Commercial Road aflame but also the shopping centres of Palmerston Road, Elm Grove and the beautiful High Street, Old Portsmouth. All places where fire fighters both regular and AFS were in urgent need of water.

Help had come to Portsmouth from County AFS units and at last I was able to hand over my branch and hose to a couple of those firemen so that I could return to the Central Fire Station. On reaching the Guildhall Square I saw that the Guildhall was well alight, the majority of its floors having fallen in one or top of the other. I knew that my father had been on duty that night at the north-east door of the Guildhall at ARP Headquarters. I ran to the door and into the entrance to find that side of the building had succumbed to the flames and was well alight. There was no sign of my father or any other person. Equipment had been left in the mad scramble to get out. I called out 'Dad, Dad' several times but it was clear all had been evacuated. I learned later that the ARP Control had been moved to Fort Widley and the Police Station from the Guildhall to the old chapel, part of the Municipal College Commerce Dept. in northern Commercial Road near Charles Dickens' birthplace.

I then returned to my quarters in the Fire Station finding the heat from the burning Guildhall had scorched the paintwork surrounding my room. Still in my wet uniform I joined the rest of the crew re-filling the engine's bunkers in readiness for another call-out. I suppose by this time we had been on duty since 9am the previous morning, about 25 hours and were ready for our beds. Sleeping until 2pm we awoke, had a quick meal brought in by an AFS mobile canteen and up Commercial Road to see what assistance we could give. The area was just one smoking ruin, RN personnel had been called in to assist troops in demolishing dangerous buildings and explosions could be heard from all around the city where explosives were in use to try to cause 'fire breaks' between burning properties. ARP personnel could be seen all over the area trying to locate buried persons, repairing gas and electricity mains, the water company employees trying to re-instate collapsed water mains in case the enemy returned that night whilst armed troops and police officers were standing guard over the remains of buildings which had merchantable and valuable property to prevent looting. Happily, as far as I was aware their presence was not needed.

That night had seen the death of Constable 221 Harry Whiteman whilst he was the driver of our turntable ladder in St James Road, Southsea where a HE bomb had dropped close by and the blast caught only Harry. He was taken to a temporary mortuary set up in the hall of the Milton Congregational Church on the corner of Edgware and Milton Roads and was identified by another police fireman Constable Denny Kewell. A few days later along with six other police firemen I helped carry his coffin to his last resting place at the cemetery at Bishop's Waltham where his father was the village blacksmith. We took Harry on our No.5 engine minus its wheeled escape ladder and we formed a Guard of Honour for our comrade. *cont. ...*

DO YOU REMEMBER THE BLITZ? *Cont.*

Around 6pm I managed to obtain a couple of hours leave, thanks to the good offices of Sgt. 22 Albert Cooper and I quickly cycled home to 63 Salterns Avenue to see how mum, day, my two sisters and brother had fared. Thankfully they were OK. I cannot recall whether my father was at home asleep, or had returned to duty but it seems the family had spent a very disturbed night in the air raid shelter at the bottom of our long garden being flung around several times when high explosive bombs had been dropped in Langstone Harbour or on Fort Cumberland. Round about 7pm I thought it time to return to the Central Fire Station so mounting Annie, my Raleigh Lenton Sports cycle, I went via St Mary's Road and Fratton Road. As I passed the burnt out remains of the Co-operative Department Store I could see that what was left of its roof was still burning and knowing that if the Luftwaffe did decide to return that night, the flames would act as a beacon so I quickly cycled to the station and informed Sgt. Hicks who immediately turned out the turn-table ladder insisting I should be part of the crew. Still in civvies I was shot up to the roof with my hose, putting out the fire but at the expense of my civvies being completely we through to the amusement of the rest of the crew.

The Lord Mayor, Cllr. Dennis Daley expressed through the Evening News, the deep appreciation of the city to its fire-fighting personnel who worked through that air raid. Five firemen had been killed and three AFS stations had direct bomb hits

Of course it must be remembered that Portsmouth was only 15 minutes flying time from German air bases in occupied France and from information I have since from the first of the air raids on Portsmouth on the 11 July 1940 until the day I left the City Police Fire Brigade on 18 August 1941, the city had sustained 792 air raid warnings – approximately 2 per day. These took place day and night with the main objective of not only causing severe damage to the city itself but to keep its people awake or at least confined to air raid shelters including of course, all Civil Defence personnel, Police, Auxiliary Fire Service and all Air raid Precaution departments.

All through the War we did our best to continue with our personal lives. In 1940 I had recently returned from a fire and the crew were in the exercise yard, scrubbing the hose we had used prior to hauling it up to dry. I espied a lovely girl making her way up the yard towards the AFS Control room. I knew she was not a member of the normal telephonists and typists stationed there so I presumed she was joining although not in uniform. At the time I was holding a small hose to carryout the scrubbing process so as she passed I 'accidentally' sprayed water over her legs. I learned later she was applying to join the police and had an interview with PC 111 Duffett to join the AFS. She had to sit through her interview with wet shoes and stockings and although she joined the service, did not speak to me for weeks afterwards although I tried every subterfuge imaginable. I even offered to wash her pillow cases after her periods of night duty! In the end she became my wife – but that was 5 years later. *Eddie Wallace* 14

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DOG CONTROL ORDERS - Milton Common



New legislation known as Dog Control Orders came into force on 1 July 2011. The orders relate to the control of dogs in parks and open spaces and the requirement for dog owners to clear up after their dog. They replaced the previous dog byelaw legislation and Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 which was then in force in the city.

After the statutory period of public consultation, over a 130 sites around the city were re-designated, each with their own unique control order. Milton Common was

included within the consultation process and the new legislation related to control of dog fouling and that dogs may be exercised off lead, unless asked to put on a lead by an appointed officer of the council (this is legally titled 'dogs on lead by direction') Because of the wildlife that lives, nests and breeds around the "lakes" area of the common, information signs have been put up requesting that owners put their dogs on leads around that location. These signs are to make the public aware of why they may be asked to put their dog on lead by an appointed council officer when entering that particular location of the common.

With the proposed change in the designation of the common to a "local nature reserve", should that be implemented it would have no impact on the current control order, which would remain in place and be exactly the same. The control order would still allow the public to bring their dogs to the common to exercise off lead, unless of course you were asked to place your dog on lead, in which case the appointed council officer would explain why you were being asked to do so at the time. Such instances may be where a dog is causing nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to another person or dog, in addition to the wildlife issues previously mentioned. **What are the different control orders?**

The Fouling of Land by Dogs Order - this applies citywide. It is an offence to fail to remove dog faeces deposited by a dog under your control

The Dogs Exclusion Order - it is an offence to allow a dog under your control to enter an area designated as a dog exclusion area

The Dogs On Leads Order - it is an offence not to keep a dog under your control on a lead in an area designated as a dogs on leads area

The Dogs On Leads by Direction Order - this is effectively dogs **Off Lead** and allows you to exercise a dog under your control off lead unless asked to put it on a lead by an appointed officer of the council. It will be an offence not to comply with such a request. Dog control orders can be enforced by fixed penalty notices and if required ultimately by prosecution. They are not so expensive to enforce as dog byelaws and are a more effective use of council officers' time.

Senior Enforcement Officer, Portsmouth City Council

FORUM ISSUES

The next Forum will be held on Wednesday 6 February at 7pm at the Mary Rose School in Gisors Road, off Locksway Road. We have a range of topics.

Peter Roberts the Council's Ranger for Milton Common who was unable to attend the last forum has news about the wildlife and birds on the Common and developments he has planned, with your help, to make this an even better habitat for all users. Following the last Forum, we are proposing an amendment to our Constitution to require 7 days notice to be given of an Annual General Meeting of the Forum, Election of Officers and Committee.

We are all concerned in Milton about the levels of Air Pollution caused through traffic, particularly at the Velder Avenue junction which back in 2010 failed EU air quality targets. Mr Richard Lee has kindly agreed to attend our Forum and update us on current levels and how the Council is handling the issue of Air Pollution which is a Material Consideration in Planning Matters.

CENTENARY OF ST JAMES CHURCH, MILTON

The present church of St James replaces the previous 'runaway' church that was deemed not large enough for the growing community in Milton and was dedicated by the Bishop of Winchester on July 25th 1913. This Centenary year will celebrate the building and the life and work of the church within our community. There will be a wide range of events held including concerts, and recitals, Services to celebrate Baptism and Marriage, the Centenary Summer Fete on 15 June and on 25-28 July the Centenary Flower Festival. Full details from a leaflet in the church, www.stjamesmilton.org.uk or phone 92732786

SOW TO GROW EVENT



Tues. 26 February 10am - 12pm

**At the Community Allotment, Milton Piece,
off Locksway Road, Milton**

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Please contact any Forum Representative or Ward Councillor for more information or assistance

If you would like to be a Neighbourhood Forum Representative please write in to the Neighbourhood Forums Freepost address:-

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or e-mail Neighbourhood_forums@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

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