

FOCUS

News and action from your local Liberal Democrats

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So how was the Snow for you?

We've recently had the worst winter weather since 1962/63.

It's been great fun for the young and young at heart who enjoyed a rare winter wonderland.

But there were serious aspects too - elderly and vulnerable people marooned in their houses needing supplies and trying to keep warm.

And who knows when we might see weather like this again? After all, this was the fourth snowfall in 18 months.

It's important, therefore, we ensure the authorities learn any lessons that can make things better next time.

If you have comments on how things could be done better, let us know.

Please write to: **The Blackwater & Hawley Lib Dem Focus Team, 47 Globe Farm Lane, Darby Green, Blackwater, GU17 0DY**, or email County Cllr Adrian Collett at acollett@cix.co.uk, or phone any of the Lib Dem Team on page 4.

Tributes are due to everyone who worked hard to keep services going,



Does your road need grit bins? Here in Hawley Hill there was great difficulty coping with the hills, reports Adrian Collett.

including Highways, who worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to keep "Priority 1" roads clear.

These are roads on which we make our main journeys. Around here they are **the A30, Fernhill Rd, Hawley Rd, Reading Rd, Rosemary Ln, Vicarage Rd**, plus access to hospitals, etc.

It is rare in Britain for estate roads or pavements to be salted when weather is so bad, so self-help is essential where the terrain is dodgy.

Would Grit Bins help?

Would it help if the council installed grit bins in your road?

Highways will fill grit bins with salt or grit, so residents can take action for themselves. The grit can't, however, be used on private drives.

Again, let us know if you think your road needs a grit bin.

Crossing now working!

After several years of waiting, the pedestrian crossing at the Hawley Church traffic lights is now working!

This means people can get across Hawley Road more safely and parents can park by the children's play area when collecting children from Hawley Primary School.

The next task is to get the speed of traffic along Hawley Road, past the school, down to sensible levels.

See page 3 for more about the speed



Adrian Collett and Jeff Smith try out the new crossing!

Lower taxes for local families

Lib Dem Leader Nick Clegg has announced new tax plans to help local families.

The Lib Dem plans mean no-one will pay tax on the first £10,000 they earn. This will save workers £700 each in income tax.

Many low paid and part time workers will pay no tax at all.

These tax cuts will be paid for by closing loopholes used by the very rich, taxes on pollution and a 'mansion tax' on houses worth more than £2million.

Local Lib Dem campaigner Adrian Collett said, "Labour has failed local families. People are paying more and getting less in return.

"Meanwhile the very rich easily dodge taxes they're supposed to

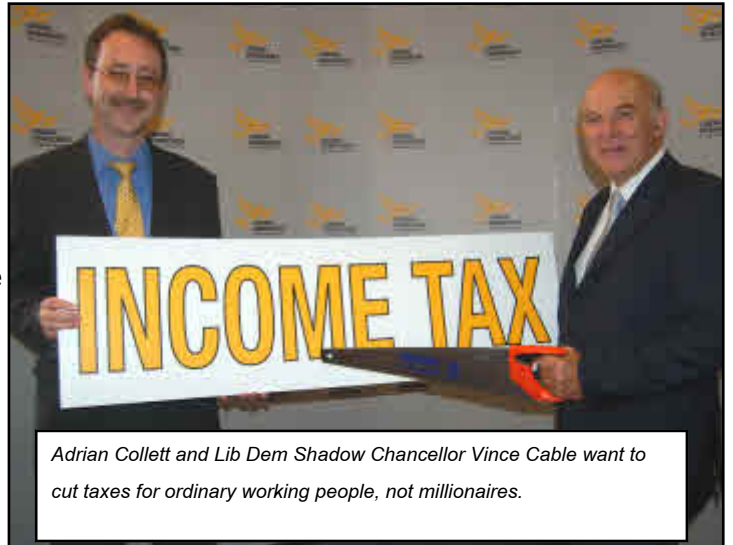
pay.

"Our plan will put money back in the pockets of local people.

Homes with two earners, could be up to £1400 a year better off."

The Lib Dem plan to help families couldn't be more different to Tory plans to cut taxes for millionaires.

Adrian Collett said, "It shows how little the Conservatives have changed. They only want to help their very rich chums.



Adrian Collett and Lib Dem Shadow Chancellor Vince Cable want to cut taxes for ordinary working people, not millionaires.

"Only Nick Clegg's Liberal Democrats will deliver lower taxes and real change for local residents."

Brian campaigns for rail improvements

Local Lib Dem councillor Brian Blewett is pressing First Great Western trains (FGW) to improve performance on the Reading-Guildford-Gatwick line which goes through Blackwater.

He has written to them about a catalogue of poor performance issues, including:

- * Poor punctuality
- * Some trains even cancelled
- * Others driving straight through Blackwater Station
- * No information on the station screens or via the speakers
- * The Help Point not working

* Even the artificial floral displays have been removed.

In response, FGW have promised that new information screens, help points and a new PA system will be provided this year.

They also claim that they are doing a lot to improve punctuality and performance overall.

We will see!



Adrian Collett and Brian Blewett at Blackwater Station. Help Point, Speakers, Screens: nothing works!

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Hawley Road safety campaign goes on

In the past Hawley Road was part of the main A327 route to Reading. The speed limit and nature of the road reflected this.

In the 1980s the route was downgraded to the B3272, to reflect the fact that the motorway network was being constructed for medium and long distance traffic and that Hawley Road is now mainly a relatively local road.

It's time the speed limit was brought into line with the current nature of the road! With a 40 mph limit past Hawley Primary School, traffic is regularly seen travelling at speeds well in excess of that.

Last year the speed limit on the Reading Road through Frogmore and Yateley was reduced to more sensible levels as part of the "Village 30" initiative. But Hawley Road was not done because the Village 30 rules didn't allow it.

Adrian Collett took this up with Hampshire Highways to find another way of sorting out this anomaly.



Dave Neighbour and Adrian Collett watching traffic at Hawley Primary School. Speeding on Hawley Road makes it even more dangerous.

Hampshire are conducting a review of speed limits on all A and B roads, and they have promised that Hawley

Road is now being looked at as part of the first wave.

Local County Cllr Adrian Collett says: **"I can't see how any logical assessment will recommend**

New Children's Centre set to open

A new Children's Centre for Blackwater, Darby Green, Frogmore, Hawley and Potley Hill will open this year.

Children's Centres are opening all over the country to ensure that a range of services to support young families is provided, including integrated childcare, advice, support to fathers, mothers and carers, early learning information, health services, parental outreach, family support and employment advice.

It has now been announced that our local Children's Centre will be built in the grounds of Frogmore Junior School and that it will be run by **Action for Children**.

The Children's Centre will not seek to provide services



Keith Clarke and Adrian Collett at Frogmore Junior School, where the Children's Centre will be.

on site where they already exist locally. Its main purpose will be to make sure parents and carers know where they can get access to those services.

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YOUR BLACKWATER AND HAWLEY LIBERAL

Brian Blewett

(Town & District Councillor)

Tel: 01276 509146

brian.blewett@ntlworld.com

Keith Clarke

(Town Councillor)

Tel: 01276 34224

keith@rjhawksley.co.uk

Adrian Collett

(Town & County Councillor)

Tel: 01252 873786

acollett@cix.co.uk

Dave Neighbour

(District Councillor)

Tel: 07540 607028

neighbod@aol.com

Richard Robinson

(Town Councillor)

Tel: 01252 614590

rickandpen.robinson@ntlworld.com

Jeff Smith

(Town Councillor)

Tel: 01252 614518

jeffrey.smith21@ntlworld.com

Contact any member of the Focus Team with any local problem or to find out more about the Liberal Democrats

Your Police Safer Neighbourhood Team for Blackwater and Hawley

The local Hampshire Police Safer Neighbourhood Team for Blackwater and Hawley is:

- PC Natalie Gardner
- PC Paul Whitehouse
- PCSO Mike Swankie
- PCSO Martin Petto



There are other teams to respond to emergencies, detect crime, fight terrorism and organised crime, etc.

But our local team work full time here in our local community, covering all of Blackwater, Hawley, Darby Green, and Frogmore.

Contact them about any non-emergency by dialling **101**. If they

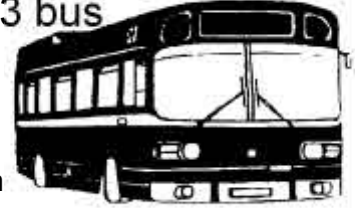
Local News



“Real Time Information” for No. 3 bus

For many years London underground has had signs to tell us when the next trains will arrive.

Some bus routes and railway stations also have them. Soon the no. 3 bus will have them too!



No date has yet been announced for their introduction, but transport planners and bus companies are working together to make it happen.

Watch this space! As soon as we have more details we'll let you know.

Hampshire Police fight Anti-Social Behaviour

A year ago Hampshire Police ran a vigorous campaign

to catch more burglars and cut burglary across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It was tremendously successful.



So last summer they ran another coordinated campaign, this time to cut anti-social behaviour. This resulted in the biggest drop in anti-social behaviour anyone can ever remember.

Vandalism, disturbance, graffiti, noise, gangs intimidating people, all have a bad impact on many lives. It's good to see this being strongly fought. *Keep up the good work!*

Pyestock fury as Tories and Labour both let us down



It's been a bad few months in the fight to stop the Pyestock Mega-Depot, which will generate more lorries a day than planes taking off at Heathrow!

First, it was revealed that the Labour Minister who ignored residents, the Council and the independent inspector to give permission, didn't even bother to visit the site. Apparently he knows better than everyone else!

Then, Hart Tories decided NOT to fight the decision! Thank heavens for SPLAT, the non-party group, who fight on. Lib Dems were furious and pushed through a proposal that Hart support SPLAT in their legal challenge.

Local Lib Dem campaigners remain totally opposed to this Mega Depot and will continue to fight this proposal in every way we can.



Pothole misery follows Big Freeze