

Not Enough Affordable Housing

The affordable housing target is 40% for most of East Hampshire, 35% in Whitehill and Bordon.

The average for 2015 to 2017 appears to be **less than 25%**, although it's difficult to work out exactly. Only some of them are for affordable rent.

Housing companies want to build larger, expensive houses, not what is needed. We also need homes for people to downsize to.



Affordable houses under construction - good. But more of them need to be affordable for rent.

The young and those on lower wages are suffering, because money for affordable housing is being used for infrastructure which they probably won't use much.

Right-to-Buy has meant a loss of homes because only 1 in 6 houses have been replaced.

It should actually have been 1 for 1.

Making wise investments?

EHDC has borrowed over £100 million from the Government to buy property, but unlike other Councils this borrowing and spending spree is not to improve our services in East Hants. It is just for financial gain, but at what risk?

EHDC bought this hotel at Liphook services in 2014. It's been empty since 2017 when the lease was handed back to the Council. It is now up for sale or rent. How much has been lost in rental income as a result of this investment, and how much will the Council have to write off if it disposed of?

David Podger's examination of the Council's property portfolio shows that much is invested in retail properties far from East Hants. Almost every day we read of more trouble on the High Street. Shops are going bust leaving property empty, or

owners pleading with their landlords for reduced rent. As is the case with the failed investment in the Liphook hotel, if the rent goes down (or stops), income from the investment will fail to keep up with the payments on the borrowing. The EHDC could end up owing more than the properties are worth. Then what?

East Hants Lib Dems call for this policy to be reviewed to reduce the risk, and for future investments to be focused in our District, responding to local needs.



Owned by EHDC - empty for two years

Town Visitor Centre A Move Too Far?

Last year the Tourist Information Centre in Petersfield Library was re-branded as the Town Visitor Centre thanks to Petersfield Town Council stepping in with financial support. The centre had been under threat of closure after Conservative-led East Hampshire District Council withdrew funding.

Recently a plan has been floated to move the Town Visitor Centre from Petersfield Library to the Town Hall. Lib Dem Town Councillors have concerns over this plan. We feel it would be too far from the centre and that its current central location is best for visitors and Petersfield residents. The idea will now be investigated in detail by Petersfield Town Council.

Lib Dems listen to you. We want to hear your views. **Please let us know, using the contact details over the page.**



Lib Dem campaigners John Hutchinson, David Podger & Phil Shaw outside the Town Visitor Centre. Where should it be?

Festival Hall improvements

There have been various headlines in the press about £7 or £8 million to be spent on repairing and improving the Festival Hall and council offices.

This would be the total cost if all the items were done separately - an expensive way of doing it.

Some maintenance needs doing, **but Lib Dem councillors will only support expenditure which is both necessary and affordable.**

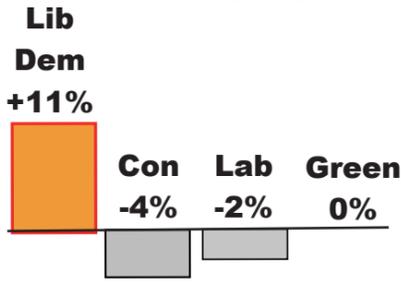


Definite room for improvement



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2019 Local Elections



In English local elections this year involving Lib Dems, Conservatives, Labour and Greens, only Lib Dems are averaging a gain in vote share.

Average gain in share of the vote in 2019

Bye-bye PCSOs

Hampshire Police has decided not to extend the Petersfield PCSO pilot scheme funded in part by EHDC. It also plans to reduce 14 specialist teams by 110 officers and 52 police staff from to save £8m.

These cuts are being forced on Hampshire Police because its budget is under constant pressure. In the last five years in Hampshire, hundreds of police posts have been lost and police stations have been closed. Austerity comes at a price. Are we any safer?

Going local - for better decisions

The existing local community forums have no powers, and are therefore often poorly attended and frequently cancelled.

Did you know that in East Hants there is just one Planning Committee covering the whole district?

Most councillors aren't even on the Committee which discusses applications for their ward. This means that many decisions are made either by council officers or councillors from elsewhere who don't know the area.

We believe that Local Area Committees with real powers should be reinstated. These were working well here until the Tories abandoned them, and are still used successfully elsewhere.

Each of the major town areas should have an LAC, and their responsibilities should cover any item which can be devolved from Penns Place:

- Planning and licensing should be decided by local councillors
- Real decisions with real budgets
- Allowing a high level of meaningful public participation

Devolved power and local decision-making would local residents involved.

Bulmer House update

It's now four years since Bulmer House closed and new 'Extra Care' units were promised, but nothing has happened. **Louise Bevan** has just found out that a bidder has finally been identified. A development with a target finish date towards the end of 2021 is being proposed. The project seems to have slipped about 18 months in the last 18 months. This development will need planning permission and we will keep a close eye on that.

Now, to make matters worse, the Day Centre has closed as well. HCC says there was a lack of demand. If this is so, it is no doubt due to increased restrictions on who qualifies for adult social care as a result of inadequate national funding. Many people would benefit from a local day care centre and there must be many carers who would also welcome the respite it could provide.

Phil Shaw, who has years of experience in elder care, says: "We believe the people of Petersfield and surrounding areas are suffering through a lack of funding for adult social care from central government. This then affects the local decisions made by HCC."



DCM Tews site development

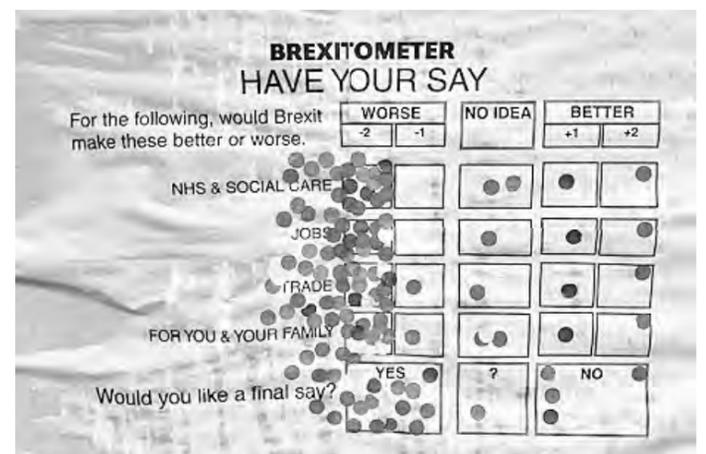
A planning application for housing at the DCM TEWS site near Petersfield station was rejected but there is now a consultation starting for a new application.

There seem to be problems with it: a loss of employment land and lack of affordable housing - nothing like the 40% required. Our councillors will take great care in reviewing any new application, because it goes against the hard-won Petersfield Neighbourhood Plan.

The Mess that is Brexit

Whatever your stance on Remaining or Leaving or half-Leaving or half-Remaining, there is no doubt it is a mess. Theresa May appears to be delaying everything so that MPs are railroaded into voting for her deal, rather than no deal. No deal would certainly be a disaster.

Bearing in mind the current fines, criminal investigations, obvious misinformation and omissions by the Leave campaign, at the very least a second vote should be sought. The Remain campaign wasn't perfect, but it was streets ahead in the ethical & legal stakes. **A second opinion based on our current knowledge should be sought.**



Our damp Brexitometer from Petersfield Square



Contact us about any local or national issues affecting you. You can contact the Lib Dem team

by internet: <http://easthampshirelibdems.org.uk/contact/>

or email: petersfield.libdems@btinternet.com

or post: Woodbine Cottage, Hawkley Road, Liss, GU33 6JP

Join the Lib Dems here → <http://www.libdems.org.uk/join>

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