

# Wealden News

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wealdenconservatives.com

from the



Conservatives

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## CHAIRMAN'S BREXIT VIEW

Dear Supporter,

Welcome to the July edition of Wealden News. I was going to write an article this month on a completely different topic but the events of the last week or two have led me to write about Brexit.

During the Referendum campaign I was clear that the Wealden Constituency Conservative Association would not take a position and would not campaign for one side or the other. Of course the officers and members of the Association held their own views and were free to air them and to campaign for whichever side they wished but not holding themselves out to be doing so on behalf of the Association. This was because I was aware that there were many different and very strong views held by all of you. To have campaigned would have been divisive and damaging. That was then and we are in a different position now.

### Referendum Decision

The country voted to leave the EU; not to leave it partially. The majority of the people who voted to leave were not ignorant bigots or racists. They voted to leave as a matter of principle and appreciated that if we left the going would not be totally smooth; that the economy may initially suffer and we might, for a time, be poorer but that ultimately the benefits outweighed the difficulties.

The people of this constituency voted emphatically to leave. As a Conservative Party we have to deliver what we promised or the public will punish us at the ballot box and we will be out of office for a decade. Since the Chequers compromise position was made public we have received many telephone calls and emails complaining about it saying that it

is a fudge and a betrayal. Consequently as a Party we are between a rock and a hard place. If as a voluntary Party we do not support the Prime Minister we will be said to have betrayed her, and yet if we do many of us feel that we will be betraying our principles and the long term good of the Party. It is the most difficult situation I can remember in over 40 years as a member.

All I can say is that in my professional life I have negotiated many settlements and agreements, and as a qualified mediator I have seen many more, and it is almost unheard of for a party's first offer (which the Chequers proposal essentially is) to be accepted or be expected to be accepted. Normally that offer would be rejected and negotiations would then really start and, hopefully, would result in a settlement less good than the original offer but better than the bottom line that the negotiating party had in its own mind. There is no indication that the other 27 nations will accept the Chequers proposal. There is no indication that the UK electorate would readily offer more. We seem to have boxed ourselves into a corner and the way forward is unclear.

If anyone wants to know what I think it is that this is still a country which punches above its weight, which because of its people can achieve more than the BBC suggests, and that the EU needs us and our money as much as we need a deal from them, so that a deal should be capable of being negotiated which is acceptable to the majority and which enables us to prosper as a nation. Rolling over and whistling Dixey is unlikely to achieve that.

With very best wishes  
Helen Galley, Chairman WCCA



## Policing Update

by Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner



LAST week I was shown a key planning document produced by Sussex Police, the Force Management Statement. Whilst this might not sound significant or particularly relevant to front line policing, it is actually hugely important because it helps the force understand the breadth of crime and policing challenges it faces, and the skills, processes, leadership and resources it needs to deploy to meet them. This in turn informs the budget and our financial planning processes.

I am pleased to see the thought and effort that has come from across all parts of Sussex Police to collate this assessment. The very process of looking at every aspect of police activity provides a necessary stocktake and gives senior officers better oversight. As PCC, I have a duty to ensure that the Chief Constable delivers effective and efficient policing for local people, and I can see how this excellent Force Management Statement will be a valuable guide to him, as well as to me, when setting the police budget.

### More police

Having recently launched its four-year Transformation Strategy after a long period of re-adjustment of local policing, police officers and staff and local people have every reason to be wary of changes, but there is a very positive change just over the horizon.

With the police budget now in a much healthier condition thanks to local people contributing more, and money from reserves, over 160 new PCs are being recruited and will start training in the next six months. Sussex Police has already recruited a pool of 104 successful police constable applicants and 72 will start their training in September, and a further 32 will start in December.



## WEALDEN'S WINNING WAYS



Conservative Party Chairman Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP (centre) presents the certificate of achievement to Wealden's Chairman Helen Galley and Hon. Treasurer Robin Farmer.

WEALDEN proved they were among the best Conservative Associations in the country and were rewarded for their 2017 fundraising achievements. Achieving Premier Division status, Wealden's Chairman Helen Galley and Hon. Treasurer Robin Farmer were invited to a gala dinner at the Carlton Club to receive a personal endorsement from the Party Chairman.

"This is testimony to all our hardworking volunteers in Branches across the constituency who pulled out all the stops to stage an amazing array of fundraising events throughout last year", said Helen Galley. "Well done to each and every one of them for making us winners."

 Wealden Conservatives

# KIER'S WOEFUL WASTE



Councillor Roy Galley, Wealden's Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Waste Management, has the latest on Wealden's waste disposal problems.

IN THE last few weeks the waste collection service provided by Wealden's contractor, Kier, has deteriorated significantly. I apologise to all residents who have been affected.

Kier at first blamed the unreliability of hired vehicles. Then their excuse was a lack of staff. On Monday July 9th, they were four teams short of the numbers required, either from sickness or simply not turning up for work. I'm sure that Kier have had some difficulties but their consistently poor management has, in my view, been the root cause of the problem. The situation became so bad I decided we should give notice that we would bring in an-

other contractor to do part of the work. This seems to have had the desired effect with Kier now performing better and trying to clear the backlog within a few days.

## Clearing the backlog

We cannot contractually terminate the contract immediately. In any event, there will be a new contractor in place next July and it takes a long time to negotiate a new contract and to put in place the necessary staff and vehicles.

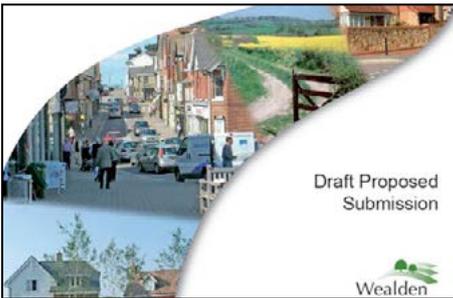
In the meantime, the plan is to have the right mix of stick and carrot. We are charging the maximum defaults and will use other contractors if necessary for some manageable parts of the contract such as clearing the Neighbourhood Recycling sites. We also try to help them with our management expertise.

We should also bear in mind that 90,000 bins are collected each week. Despite the dire performance recently, 95% of bins have been cleared within 24 hours of their scheduled time.

Some people have, of course, asked for their money back! Legally, we cannot refund Council Tax which covers the full range of council services. The price of the waste service is 34p per week per household.

I will try to keep you informed - meanwhile the Wealden website and Twitter feed @WealdenDistrict are updated regularly.

On July 18th, I will be meeting Kier's Managing Director to agree a way forward.



## LOCAL PLAN PROGRESSES

THE NEW Wealden Local Plan Draft Proposed Submission Document contains a range of environmental measures to ensure growth can proceed without causing irreversible damage to our regionally important ecology.

"Our proposals are in line with the latest Government aims to meet the widespread housing need," said Councillor Ann Newton, Cabinet member for Planning & Development.

"Mitigation measures and a thorough review system will ensure that the growth and prosperity needed in Wealden does not conflict with our many environmental responsibilities. These include Ashdown Forest, one of the largest stretches of lowland heath in Britain, the Lewes Chalk Downs and the Pevensy Levels.

"Developers will be expected to install certain infrastructure items on site and make a contribution to ensure this protection succeeds."

The Wealden Local Plan will meet its Objectively Assessed Housing Need, and will mean 14,228 homes in total should be built across the District between 2013 and 2028. Some 7,700 dwellings are already built or have planning permission.

By embracing a wider range of environmental safeguards, the Council has been able to increase housing numbers from the 2013-2028 figure of 11,456 published in March 2017.

The focus of growth remains on the south but the 2018 Plan allows for a more balanced approach to housing and economic growth across the District to reduce the need to commute. It outlines opportunities for retail and employment to support this.

Smaller sites for housing allocations have been identified within sustainable settlements. The majority of these allocations are in Hailsham, Polegate and Willingdon, Stone Cross, Ninfield, Horam, Heathfield, Mayfield, and Wadhurst. These will account for the sites for 4,012 new homes.

Windfall developments may account for a further 2,516 dwellings. Some of these can be delivered within development boundaries and through Neighbourhood Development Plans, which allow the local community an involvement in site allocation.

Development of single dwellings in the countryside is not ruled out, providing they conform to development plan policies, particularly those regarding property on agricultural land. The delivery of road improvements, schools and medical provision has always been a key part of the Wealden Local Plan. Wealden will be working with key local stakeholders, strategic transport providers and developers to enable the funding and delivery of the strategic road at the earliest opportunity. It will be presented to a meeting of Wealden District Council's Full Council on 18 July. If approved, there will be a period when the public can make representations as to the soundness of the Plan, before it is sent to an independent Planning Inspector for a final decision.

View all the documents online on the Wealden District Council's website:  
<http://council.wealden.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=534&MId=4548&Ver=4>

## Making history



Cllr Hardy with Deputy Chairman Cllr Pam Doods

**Cllr Chris Hardy, member for Hartfield, begins an historic third term as Chairman of Wealden District Council and talks about his life in and out of the council chamber.**

IN MAY 2016 I was delighted to be elected as Chairman of Wealden District Council and at that time I had no inkling that this year I would be serving a three-year term.

To date it has been a really stimulating experience and a great honour to fly the flag. In the last two years I have met so many dedicated individuals and numerous volunteers, all of whom have interesting stories to tell and all of whom play their part in ensuring that Wealden functions successfully. We are fortunate to have an army of committed and hard-working volunteers who operate charities and service organisations through which we all benefit.

Every year the Chairman, via the Democratic Services Team, receives a substantial number of invitations which may be military, civic or ceremonial occasions or congenial receptions. These have enabled my wife, Sue, and I to visit much of Wealden including areas and hamlets not previously known to us and it is very evident why the area has become such a popular place to live for so many.

The engagements attended by the Chairman or his deputy during the year are most varied and include a plethora of celebrations, services and visits to schools, not only in Wealden but also West Sussex and, especially, Kent.

I have frequently been asked which event I have attended has been the most enjoyable and impressive. My answer is easy; I most enjoyed two luncheons I have attended at Chevening House in Sevenoaks, hosted by the Local Mayor, which I considered a great choice of venue. The building was constructed circa 1620 to a design reputedly by Inigo Jones and is now a country house used by the Foreign Secretary. The house stands in beautiful grounds and the antiques and collections of armoury within is mind blowing! I have lived within a few miles of Chevening House for 25 years and visited twice when it was owned by Lord Stanhope.

Within Wealden, we are most fortunate to have Herstmonceux Castle, one of the first French brick-built buildings in the country, completed in the 15th Century when it was initially built as a country house. From 1992 it was acquired by the Bader International Study Centre of Queens University, Canada, and is now widely used for celebrations and civic functions throughout the year.

The most difficult decision the Chairman has is selecting personal charities. I've always been keen to support young people, particularly those with learning difficulties and those who do not have the advantage of having contacts with the business world and support networks, which can become a barrier to finding employment.

Therefore, I selected Wealden Works based in Heathfield and The JPK Project in Eastbourne who provide exactly what is required for those who need help.