

In this issue we look at a number of local and national issues, including:

- Green Tax
- Libraries
- Recycling Centre
- Town & Community Partnership
- NHS Dentists

## MAKE THE GREEN TAX SWITCH

- No income tax at all for more than 2m on low incomes
- £1000 income tax cut for the average family

Liberal Democrats will give the average family a £1,000 income tax cut and switch taxes to tackle pollution. That's the plan new leader, Menzies Campbell is proposing to tackle climate change. The move also means that the more you switch to greener living, the less tax you will pay.

That is why Liberal Democrats are pressing for action in parliament. The British government, Industries and people will all need to change their ways.

### LIB DEM TAX PLANS FOR A FAIRER AND GREENER BRITAIN

The environment is not the only area involved in proposed Liberal Democrat tax changes. Lib Dem plans will mean no income tax at all for 2 million people on low incomes. And the basic rate of income tax will be trimmed by 2%, saving the average family £1,000 a year. The top rate will be 40% (plus a local income tax of about 3% in place of Council Tax).

In a tax neutral package, the lost income tax is replaced by:

- Greener taxes
- Fairer taxes on income and wealth – rich people's pension contributions will only get tax relief at 22%, not 40%.
- More local taxes.

The Green Taxes include:

- An aircraft tax based on aircraft emissions (only possible on an EU basis).
- More steeply graduating vehicle excise duty for new vehicles based on carbon emissions.
- Reforming the climate change levy: eventually changing it into a carbon tax.
- Indexing fuel duty to inflation except in periods of oil price spikes.

Visit [www.greentaxswitch.com](http://www.greentaxswitch.com) for more information.



*How can we look after our globe?*

### BUT WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Buy low energy light bulbs – replacing a 100W filament lamp with a 20W low energy one will save you £8 a year when it is used for three hours a day.
- Turn down the central heating and wear an extra layer – turning down the thermostat by 1 degree Celsius should save 10% of heating costs and up to £30 a year.
- Insulate roofs – over £200 a year saving for 15 cm of insulation in the roof compared to none
- Insulate walls. Draught-proof rooms.
- Travelling. Plan with care. Car share. Think before flying.
- Calculate your energy footprint (see [www.my-foot-print.org](http://www.my-foot-print.org)).
- If you need help with insulation, contact DEFRA: see page 3 or call Warmfront on 0800 072 0155

### FILM INVITATION

We have organised a special showing of the recently-released feature film "An Inconvenient Truth", about the future of our planet, presented by Al Gore, former US Vice-President. Please join us at the All Saints Church Hall, Redcliffe Road, Swanage on Friday 2nd February at 7.00pm for 7.15pm start. The film ends at 8.45pm, when refreshments will be available. Tickets £4.50, under 18s £2.00; all welcome, but numbers are limited, so first come, first served.



# Swanage Town & COMMUNITY Partnership

It's been a long time coming, but the Draft Strategic Plan has now been published for public feedback. We understand that the final plan HAS to be accepted by Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTI) by 31 March 2007 — or else no funding will be available from this source. This is the story so far .....

## May 10th 2006. No money?

A meeting of the Partnership was astonished to be told that there was no 'revenue flow' and that there was a need for fund raising events. Some time was spent discussing membership fees and targeted fund raising events. It was decided that the latter was the best way forward.

## May 15th 2006. Parish Assembly

The Liberal Democrats ask a question about the link between the MCTI and the Parish Plan, and another about the apparent lack of funds. There are no clear answers.

## July 19th 2006. AGM (postponed from 21st June)

- Change of Chairman - Gary Suttle. The Town Clerk, Alan Leeson, continues as Secretary and Treasurer.
- Change of Structure. There is now a partnership Board consisting of the Town Council and 11 other Swanage organisations such as the Chamber of Trade. Project Groups such as the one for the Multi-Function Centre will report to this Board.
- Parish Plan. We were told that Swanage has not produced one, unlike most other places.
- Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTI). This scheme was started by central government two years ago. Swanage opted out of the Parish Plan in favour of this. It offers more money and is said to be 'Thorough and robust'. Of the 204 towns in the South West, 50 are currently part of MCTI, of which Swanage is one.
- The Strategic Plan for the town will be published in the Autumn.
- Finance. Contrary to what we were told in May, there is grant money available.

## December 20th 2006. Draft Plan published

At last the 30-page Draft Strategic Plan for the town is published and is presented to the meeting. Clearly, much work has gone into this. At the end, it lists desirable projects for the town. Although it is acknowledged that certain topics are missing, it is announced that public consultation will be for one day only on Friday, 19th January.

Councillor Mike Hadley contacts the Chairman (Mayor Gary Suttle) on 5th January asking for a longer consultation period, and for an explanation of how the proposed one-day consultation will be adequately promoted.

## LIBERAL DEMOCRATS ARE CALLING FOR

- a longer consultation period
  - past consultation records to be readily accessible.
- Useful ideas do not need to be endlessly repeated - just followed up!

*The Swanage Town & Community Partnership DOES still exist and meets regularly (within the wider framework of the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative.) Minutes of meetings should be available at the Swanage library and on the council website. If you feel that your organisation is not represented or you wish to find out more, contact Mike Hadley (on 477171) for more information. You may also find out more at <http://swanagemcti.tripod.com/> A draft plan has now been published for consultation. It must be agreed within weeks.*



## Where are we now?

Many committed citizens in the town do not know what is going on, since little effort has been made to tell them.

The Partnership Plan is supposed to last for 20 years and is hugely important in moving the town forward. If you have strong views that something is missing, get involved before the plan is finally agreed.

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Meanwhile, confusingly, the first round of consultation on the separate 20-year Local Development Plan from PDC, which has a whole section on Swanage, has just taken place.

## LOOKING TOWARDS 2026?





## CASH CRISIS AT TORY RUN COUNTY COUNCIL

The Conservative-run Dorset County Council has hit a cash crisis, which, unless drastic action is taken, will cause the Council to be in debt by at least £20 million in four years time.

‘Conservatives promise good housekeeping at election times, but this cash crisis proves that they have failed to keep their promises’, says David Budd, Liberal Democrat County Councillor for Wareham. ‘It is Dorset residents, particularly the vulnerable and those in need, who are paying the price of the Tories mismanagement of the County’s finances’ he added.

### Fact File

The Conservatives took control of Dorset County Council in 2001 when the average tax set by the Liberal Democrats was under £700. Now it’s £1,000. Back in 2000, the Council had no debt. Since then, it has borrowed almost £33 million!

Government grants have increased from £195 million to £290 million a year. While income has soared, expenditure has got totally out of control. Staffing costs alone have increased from £86 million to £131 million a year, up 52% Cuts in services and increased services are already hitting the blind, the deaf, and the elderly.

The closure of Corfe Castle village library has been postponed until 2009 but it, along with 12 other village libraries, is still on the ‘proposed closure’ list.

Swanage library, along with others, will probably lose staffing and opening hours. This is to save the library service’s share of the cuts - £847,000.



*Unlike Corfe Castle, Swanage Library is not yet threatened with closure. But new books could be in short supply and opening hours could be cut even further*

## Need an NHS dentist?

The NHS crisis is having a very real effect on any of us who prefer to see an NHS dentist.

The Dorset Primary Care Trust have told us that the only practices nearby which are still accepting any NHS patients are the Mouthpiece Practice in Wool, the ADP practice in Parkstone Road, Poole, and perhaps the Purbeck Dental Centre in Wareham.

The fact is that many dentists have chosen to opt out of the health service because they are unhappy with their contracts.

Jim Knight MP, says that the current shortages of NHS dentists are unacceptable. He points out that extra money has been put into NHS dentistry since 2003-4. He also says that the government is funding an extra 1,000 places at dental schools (after the Tory cuts in training places in the mid 90’s).

This may be good news for some, but not for those who live in Swanage.

### STAY WARM THIS WINTER

You may wish to know that if you are cold at home and receive certain benefits, DEFRA is able to help people with heating, insulation, cavity wall insulation as well as energy-efficient light bulbs. Every applicant for cavity wall or loft insulation receives a grant and some pay nothing. For further information, please contact:

Warmfront on 0800 072 0155 or  
The Heat Project on 0800 0934050

## DOWN IN THE DUMP?

It seems that owing to a change of ownership the much-valued facility to acquire items at the Panorama Road recycling centre has been withdrawn. Councillor Mike Hadley has raised this with the Town Council and also with PDC and DCC.

It would seem at odds with efforts to encourage recycling if this simple and popular facility continues to be denied to the people of Swanage.

## Want to get in touch ?

We can only support the ideas and needs of local people if we know what they are. Please call one of us, or write to the Freepost address below.



## Join the Liberal Democrats and help to make a difference

Liberal Democrats believe in principled government, and when not in power, in principled opposition.

“The Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society. We aim to disperse power, to foster diversity and nurture creativity. We believe that the role of the state is to enable all citizens to attain these ideals, to contribute truly to their communities and to take part in the decisions which affect their lives.”


Join us and help to make a difference. For more information, visit [www.southdorsetlibdems.org.uk](http://www.southdorsetlibdems.org.uk) or contact the Membership Secretary, Anita Chennell.


### Every little helps


You could help in many ways:


- delivering a few leaflets
- helping with clerical work
- assisting at elections
- displaying a poster at elections
- joining the Lib Dems
- making a donation


Please get in touch if you can help in any way at all.

	Bill Wilson bill-wilson@uwclub.net <i>Chairman</i>	01929 425605
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John Wootton wootton@ukgateway.net <i>Vice-Chairman</i>	01929 421433	
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	Peter Clark P.B.C@btinternet.com <i>Honorary Secretary</i>	01929 422118
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Mike Hadley mail@mikehadley.net <i>Councillor</i>	01929 477171	
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	Anita Chennell anitachennell@hotmail.com <i>Membership Secretary</i>	01929 427986
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or visit our website at

<[www.southdorsetlibdems.org.uk](http://www.southdorsetlibdems.org.uk)>



### “I want to say....”

If you have something to say, call one of the people above or write to:

**FREEPOST RRBE-CSXH-JRKC, South Dorset Liberal Democrats, 81 Ulwell Road, Swanage BH19 1QU**