

In this issue we address some of the key issues that concern local people at the moment. These include:

- The town council
- Our schools
- Bayview caravan park
- Recycling
- Swanage & Community Partnership
- Seacourt
- Multi-function community centre
- Ferry Road camping
- Evening council meetings



HILARY O'DONOVAN

I first met Hilary after my wife, Sarah, joined her book group about four years ago. When we were both involved in a by-election for the Town Council I realised that she was a serious campaigner for what she believed in. She was a very popular and well-known member of the Town Council.

In 2002 I helped Hilary launch The Swanage Buildings Preservation Group, concerned with retaining the character of Swanage.

She was a member of many town organizations, taking a great interest in them all — including the Sailing Club, the Pier Trust and Play in Swanage, whose representative Sue Bryant said "Hilary was a great supporter who stuck with us when the going got tough. She was a determined campaigner."

Her passing is a great loss to many aspects of town life. Her many friends have lost someone who had style, glamour, passion and humour.

John Wootton 01929 4231433
wootton@ukgateway.net

Lib Dem to join council?

There is a vacancy on the town council owing to the death of Hilary O'Donovan. As there was no call for a by-election, the council will co-opt someone to fill the position. At the last elections in 2003, Mike narrowly missed election by a tiny margin of five votes, after two recounts. It would be fair, and in accordance with proper procedure, for the council to co-opt Mike. We hope that they will, for we believe he would make a first-class member.

Mike says:

"We'll all miss Hilary, but I'm pleased that I may have the opportunity to follow her lead in trying to make Swanage a better place for everyone, regardless of what political party they may support, if any."

"It was Hilary who helped me when I first became involved with local issues. I was angry that the zig-zag path to Durlston Bay could be closed for no good reason. Then I found out that people were being 'economical with the truth' when debating the matter at council meetings. The more I discovered, the harder I fought, and so we won and now the path will remain open for all to enjoy. Later, I was appalled to learn of the plan to replace our wooden groynes with stone, a choice made with little consultation. I helped raise the issue and now we are to get the more attractive and practical wooden groynes. More recently, I set up the independent public forum on <www.swanageview.co.uk> to provide a badly needed platform for people to exchange information."

"I have called Swanage home since early childhood, and moved here permanently about fifteen years ago. I want to do all I can to make Swanage a better place to live, work or visit. Please get in touch if you have any particular issues you would like to raise."

Mike Hadley 427277
mail@mikehadley.net



Improving democracy?

At the Parish Assembly in June, the town council did not allow a proposal to be debated. They later agreed this was wrong and at the reconvened assembly on 19 September John Wootton (seconded by Mike Hadley) again proposed a motion calling for more council meetings to be held in the evenings. This would extend the democratic process by enabling more people to see what goes on, and allow more working people to consider standing for the council.

Thirty-one people voted in favour of the proposal, with one vote against. As Hilary O'Donovan noted: "the Tory members of the council didn't even vote, presumably considering themselves above the democratic process." The council has now debated the matter and, despite the overwhelming public endorsement, has for the present rejected the proposal to hold all main meetings in the evenings.

PHOTO QUIZ EVENING

Meet the Lib. Dems. at a fun evening, on Saturday 10th December, at 7.30pm. 81 Ulwell Road, Swanage. Non members welcome. Local based photo quiz etc. Light supper. £5 each.

Phone Sarah Wootton: 01929 421433.