



## CASH CRISIS AT COUNTY HALL

### BUT YOU PAY THE COST

The Conservative-run County Council has hit a cash crisis, which unless drastic action is taken will result in the Council being £20 million in debt by 2010.

In the five years the Tories have run the Council, they have increased your Council Tax by over £300 (the County element of the tax is now an average £1,000) despite the fact that Government Grants have increased from £195 million to £290 million a year.

Whilst income has soared, spending has got totally out of control. Staffing costs alone have increased from £86 million to £131 million a year, up 52%.

To get their budgets to balance Conservatives propose cutting services and increasing charges which will hit the blind, the deaf, the elderly infirm and those using day centres for the aged. Some charges at Youth Centres will increase by a staggering 350% and thirteen libraries are under threat of closure in a year's time.

To keep these libraries open the Conservatives have raided the 'Book Fund', used to buy new books, which means all library users have less choice.

"Conservatives promise 'good housekeeping' at election times, but this cash crisis proves they have failed to keep their promises" says Local County Councillor David Budd. "It is Dorset residents, particularly the vulnerable and those in need, who are paying the price of the Tories mis-management of the County's finances" added the Liberal Democrat Councillor.



Cllrs David Budd, Beryl Ezzard and Keith Green are concerned that vulnerable local residents are being hit hardest by the Tories cash crisis

## Recycling: Local Councillor calls for Government to pull its weight.

Local residents deserve to be praised for their efforts to recycle after recycling rates in Purbeck doubled under the Recycle for Purbeck Scheme. Your efforts have not been matched nationally however, as recently published figures show the UK has one of the lowest recycling levels in Europe.

"While local residents have been doing their best to recycle more household waste, it seems the government, despite all its words, has done little to implement its green policy." said Cllr Keith Green.

"We would like to recycle more waste, such as plastic and cardboard, but the cost should not be added onto your Council Tax. I am calling for the Government to help the Council by providing more funds for recycling schemes." said Cllr Green.



Cllr Keith Green (above) feels local residents efforts should be matched by the Government



# LOCAL COUNCILLORS GREEN ACTION

Last Month, the Liberal Democrats launched a national campaign, the GREEN TAX SWITCH, setting out what we would do to fight global warming.

While the Conservative leader has racked up air miles (and tonnes of carbon emissions) travelling to Norway, South Africa and India in the past few months, the Liberal Democrats offered action, not just words. Our new tax policy means that ordinary families would pay £1000 less on average in income tax, whilst polluters pay more in Green Taxes to make up for this tax cut.

Locally, Cllrs Beryl Ezzard and Keith Green are leading by example by encouraging cycling as a way of both helping congestion and cutting down on emissions from car usage.

"A bypass for Sandford may be a long time coming, so I am supporting public transport measures; such as the proposed Park & Ride at Holton Heath. When the Swanage Railway joins up with Wareham, this will enable commuters and tourists to reduce pollution and congestion on the A351 to let the train take the strain." says Beryl.



**Cllr's Beryl Ezzard and Keith Green cycling on the A351 Sandford Road**

Annette Brooke MP is also doing her bit by campaigning to reduce the use of plastic bags. Annette is only using sustainable, re-useable bags and has set up a campaign website to highlight the pollution and litter caused by plastic carrier bags. You can visit the campaign website at [www.campaigns.libdems.org/rrr](http://www.campaigns.libdems.org/rrr)

## CONTACT YOUR FOCUS TEAM

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## 2100 houses for Purbeck?

A recent draft plan by the South West Regional Assembly has called for 105 new homes to be built every year for 20 years in Purbeck. Clearly a significant proportion of this allocation needs to be affordable housing for young people.

It could have been much worse, with the Assembly originally suggesting 600 more houses in total than we are now allocated.

Councillors Keith Green and Beryl Ezzard worked with group leader David Budd in lobbying to keep Purbeck's allocation as low as possible. Although there is massive pressure for house building across the region, we believe Purbeck District should be protected where possible. Purbeck has many areas of natural beauty including the recently designated Jurassic Coast, but the existing transport infrastructure cannot cope with current traffic let alone that caused by large new housing developments here and in the surrounding areas.'



**Purbeck should be protected from over-development**



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