

Leigh Park Matters

Keeping Residents up-to-date with Issues in Leigh Park

Autumn 2023

Leigh Park Labour Party



Welcome to our Autumn update on news and issues around Leigh Park.

Local Election Success

In May there were no elections in the Leigh Park wards, and so your local candidate, **Jason Horton**, was busy helping in the other wards. Five wards changed hands from Conservative. Labour won St Faith's with Gillian Harris taking more than half the vote, and Hayling East with Mark Coates taking 64.4% of the vote.



The Liberal Democrats took Hayling West and Bedhampton and the Green Party took Emsworth. Every ward saw an increase in votes away from the Tories. Havant Labour plan to build on this success in the coming year because in 2024 all 36 seats are up for re-election as the boundaries are changing.

search "election results" at www.havant.gov.uk

Amazon Warehouse in New Lane

The controversial new Amazon warehouse has raised concerns regarding noise and light pollution for those nearby and an increase in traffic that affects the whole of West Leigh and Havant. Amazon has committed to keeping noise levels down and we hope they will. We also hope that they'll provide much needed jobs for local people.

A community liaison committee has been set up with residents, Amazon representatives and includes Labour councillors, Phil Munday and Gillian Harris, so you can contact us with your concerns - phil.munday@havant.gov.uk, gillian.harris@havant.gov.uk or jason.horton@havantlabour.org.uk

Reservoir and Water Recycling

When the reservoir at Havant Thicket was first proposed, it was to be filled from natural springs. Southern Water now propose to fill it with treated wastewater.

Jason says *'We should all be concerned about this proposal. We need Southern Water to be more open to public scrutiny. Southern Water is now bypassing the Local Authority planning process where the application would be scrutinised by local councillors and instead going straight to the government to approve the scheme. This is not good enough.'*

There was a recent news story about a girl drowning in a reservoir in Merseyside. With Havant Thicket reservoir right next to Warren Park what measures will Portsmouth Water and HBC put in place to keep people safe around the 5km perimeter? Jason will campaign for improved safety around the reservoir.

Last year Jason helped clear ragwort from Memory Wood in Warren Park with *Havant Thicket for Nature*. Ragwort was choking the young saplings and we cleared enough to fill several skips. We aim to preserve as much of the natural environment as possible. Access to green spaces is really important to the physical and mental health of local residents.



Litter Picking and Fly Tipping



I have been running *Havant Community Litter Pickers* for three years now, volunteering at weekends to keep our local areas clean. In that time we have collected over a thousand bags of litter, which, at £40 a bag, has saved the council over £40,000. There aren't enough bins in the local area and many

green spaces are used for fly tipping. It took more than a decade after West Leigh lost the bottle bank at the old Fox pub to finally get a replacement at St Alban's Church and even now it is not emptied often enough. Glass bottles are one of the most frequently picked up items during our litter picks.

We should have kerbside collection of glass recycling as in neighbouring authorities. East Hants started this in 2011. Why is Havant so far behind?

We also need community skips in areas where there is regular fly tipping. Gosport council started a community skip scheme in October last year and collected about 90 tonnes of rubbish over nine weeks at an estimated cost of £120,000. UK wide the cost of clearance to local authorities in 2020/21 was £11.6 million. If elected Jason will push for a similar scheme in Havant.

Most fly tipping is household waste. If you hire someone to take your rubbish to the dump please check that they're licensed. Legitimate businesses will be happy to show you their licence.

You can report fly tipping at the council: www.havant.gov.uk/flytip. You should report abandoned shopping trolleys to the supermarket it came from.

Boundary Changes

Barncroft, Battins, Warren Park and Bondfields are no more. Instead we have "*Leigh Park Central and West Leigh*" and "*Leigh Park Hermitage*". Each ward will have three councillors instead of two, bringing them into line with the other wards in Havant. We argued against this as it means the total number of councillors for Leigh Park, one of the most deprived areas of Havant Borough, is down from eight to six. It is now even more important to make your vote count. www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/havant



Voter ID

Despite no evidence of voter fraud, the Conservatives introduced voter ID this year which means without acceptable photo ID you will not be able to vote in person in local or general elections. If you don't have any of the accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free *Voter Authority Certificate*. If you need it, apply early and keep it safe so that you won't be denied your right to vote. More information at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id. One way around this is to sign up for a postal vote: www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote

New Members

Labour has historically done well in the Leigh Park wards and we want to build on this year's successes. We're looking for people to deliver leaflets and newsletters like this one, new members to join us, and committed new members to stand for election as councillors.

Jason Horton, Labour candidate for the new Leigh Park Central and West Leigh Ward and former candidate for Bondfields, says, "*I've delivered leaflets, canvassed, and stood for office. The number of people who have never seen a candidate or had any contact with politics is shockingly high. In a town that tends to vote Tory the council have become complacent, expecting to win without doing anything for the community.*"

Housing

Havant needs more social housing. The waiting list is now more than 1500. Amy asks at every council meeting what is being done to reduce this, but sadly does not get a clear reply. We need to make sure that developers build affordable housing, which meets the needs of local residents.

Cost of Living Crisis

Switched On Portsmouth covers Havant and are able to help residents save money on their energy bills and improve energy efficiency. They offer things like free white goods replacements for people on benefits or on low incomes. switchedonportsmouth.co.uk/

Warren Park Issues by Councillor Amy Redsull

Leigh Park is one of the most impoverished areas on the south coast with more than a third of children living in poverty. I know because I studied poverty in depth as part of my undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

There are children living on the same road as I do whose parents are struggling to feed them, struggling to provide clothing and they are having to rely on charity and third sector organisations to provide them with school uniforms and food.

I'm a third-generation Leigh Park resident and to see people who have been born in the same area as me and who come from the same circumstances as me fall on extremely hard times is incredibly heartbreaking.

I regularly challenge Havant Borough Council to be more active in improving services in Leigh Park. Incredibly, the regeneration proposals put forward at a recent full council meeting did not even mention Leigh Park - even more staggering when the Leader of the Council is the current Councillor for Bondfields. Read the article at HampshireLive. news for 31st July 2023 entitled "*One of south-east's 'most impoverished areas' excluded from Hampshire regeneration plans*"



Havant and Leigh Park Libraries

Havant Library in the Meridian Centre was 32 years old this year. In the winter Leigh Park Library and Havant Library are warm spaces for local people to visit. Libraries are one of the few places you can go with no expectation to spend money.

Barclays offer free financial advice in Havant Library on Tuesdays 9:30 to 5pm and Thursdays 9:30 to 1:30pm. You can get an appointment or just drop in.

Check each library's web site for their services and up-to-date information.

search "Havant library" or "Leigh Park library" at www.hants.gov.uk

Library of Things

Havant Library of Things (havantlibraryofthings.org.uk) is based in the old parcel office at Havant Train Station and lends out items that you only need occasionally at a fraction of the cost of buying new – such as tools, sewing machines, urns, and much much more. Jason is investigating having offices at other sites, including Leigh Park Library.



For links referred to here and for more information visit: www.havantlabour.org.uk or follow this QR code. Contact Jason at jason.horton@havantlabour.org.uk and Amy at amy.redsull@havant.gov.uk. We would also like to hear from you if you can help us in any way including distribution of our newsletters.