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# Hilperton Update

Spring/Summer 2011



The 'no political spin' newsletter from

## Cllr. Ernie Clark.

Your Independent Wiltshire Councillor.

### *Dear Resident,*

When the change to a unitary authority for Wiltshire was first mooted, I, along with many, many others, was not in favour. It seemed to be a political goal destined to deliver no benefit to residents.

However, two years on, I have to admit that it was probably a good move. Although the cuts that the Conservatives have made have been quite deep, I think that, had we retained the old 'three tier' system, the cuts would have been

even worse.

So, there you have it. Proof that (some) local politicians/ councillors actually make public admissions that they were wrong!

The budget-setting council meeting in February was interesting with a very full agenda. It was certainly the longest I know of in recent times. Starting at 10.30 in the morning it lasted for over twelve and a half hours!

*Ernie Clark.*

## New road signs at Staverton.

You might have noticed a new electronic road sign at the river bridge in Staverton. This is part of an Environment Agency project to improve public awareness at known flood sites.

The Staverton/Holt road was highlighted by the emergency services as a site where drivers often ignore the conventional 'flood' signs and become trapped in deep water. Every time a driver gets stuck, the emergency services have to be diverted from other duties to deal with them.

The signs are activated by the river level, giving a real time response to the flooding. It is hoped that drivers will trust the interactive signs more than the conventional ones and avoid trying to drive through the road when it is flooded.

As the signs are new they will be monitored and their sensitivity may need adjusting.

There will certainly be no excuse for getting stuck in the future!

## Road and pavement repairs.

Wiltshire Council has announced its schedule for work during this financial year.

I'm glad to say that several of the sites which I have brought to the attention of the highways department will receive attention.

Trowbridge Road, part of Wyke Road and Ashton Road will be re-surfaced.

Horse Road, the junction of Church Street/Hill Street/Whaddon Lane and part of Whaddon Lane itself will be patched.

The following pavements will be repaired:- Ashton Rise, Greenhill Gardens, Hackett Place, Kings Gardens, Marshmead, Princess Gardens, Queens Gardens, St. Michael's Close and The Knapp.

I'm afraid that I cannot guarantee the order in which the work will be carried out, but I am led to believe that Trowbridge Road will be dealt with first due to the amount of money that is being spent by repeatedly repairing pot holes and the fact that it is a 'B' road.

**For up to date news on local issues,  
or to register for my e-newsletter, please visit**

**[www.ernieclark.org.uk](http://www.ernieclark.org.uk)**

## **Success at last in the campaign for kerbside collection of plastic and cardboard.**

During the Wiltshire Council election campaign in 2009, one issue was mentioned more than any other; why do cardboard and plastic have to be taken to recycling centres rather than being collected in the same way as glass, tins, paper etc. from our doorsteps? In fact, you might remember that it was one of my main ambitions if elected to see the system introduced throughout the county.

Well, good news at last. The council has finally seen the light and kerbside collections are going to be introduced.

The planned timetable is for new bins to be distributed from September and then the actual collections should start during October/November.

Nearer the time, Wiltshire Council will send out more information or, of course, you can keep up to date with progress by visiting my website!

## **Hilperton might lose the X88 bus service in the cuts.**

I attended a presentation recently outlining cuts in Wiltshire bus services and explaining the rationale behind them. Out of interest, the increased

car parking charges for the county go towards subsidising the county bus services. Cuts are only being made if a service is not commercially viable to the operator (i.e. it loses money) and Wiltshire Council subsidises it.

The threatened service is the X88 Wednesday and Saturday shopper bus. It is classed by the council as a non-essential service (passengers can still travel to Bath by changing at Trowbridge). The planned date of withdrawal is probably September 2011.

However, the service is well used and I, together with other councillors, am fighting hard to save it.

## **Trowbridge or Hilperton?**

Some while ago, Trowbridge Town Council suggested that the boundary between Hilperton and Trowbridge should be re-drawn. The result would have seen several hundred houses 'moved' into Trowbridge. I was totally against the idea and lobbied senior officers at Wiltshire Council.

I'm pleased to say that the idea seems to have met with no support and the council is proposing that no review should be undertaken before the next WC election, in 2013, at the earliest. Even then I doubt if WC would want to commit funds to such a scheme.

**Ernie Clark, your local councillor.**

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## Wiltshire Council precept.

I am sure that when your council tax bills were delivered you looked to see how much more you were going to be expected to pay this year. Hopefully, you noticed that there wasn't any increase and your council tax was pegged at last year's level.

## How to report road defects.

Hilperton residents can report potholes and other road and highways problems using CLARENCE. This is a national service, based in Edinburgh, which routes callers to the right authority based on their telephone (STD) code.

This works fine for landline numbers, but there are two quirks.

Firstly, when calling the system from a landline close to the county boundary, you can end up speaking to a neighbouring authority e.g. Dorset. Secondly, when calling from a mobile phone you end up speaking to somebody based in Edinburgh who will give you a different number to call (01225 777234).

The council is looking at ways to improve this service, but in the meantime there are two different contact numbers for CLARENCE.

From a Wiltshire landline number, call 0800 232323. From all other numbers, including mobiles, call 01225 777234. Or, of course, you can avoid the difficulties by emailing [clarence@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:clarence@wiltshire.gov.uk)

## How to contact me

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