

Labour Rose

Church Ward-Reading East

Autumn 2018

COUNCILLORS FIGHT UNI'S AGGRESSIVE EXPANSION PLANS

Church Ward Councillors Paul Woodward, Ashley Pearce and Ruth McEwan alongside Matt Rodda MP will stand with local residents to fight Reading University's appeal against the St. Patricks Hall planning decision. Reading Council's planning application committee turned down the proposals in February for over 800 rooms due to the excessive height & student numbers, impacts on parking in nearby roads & the locally listed Pearsons Court. Whilst it is understood that the University needs to expand, and Reading wants a thriving University which was made clear at last year's planning application, this should not be at the expense of local residents.

The St. Patricks Hall site is predominantly a residential area and the increase in student numbers would be an over development that would exacerbate traffic and parking problems. Added to this is the potential for anti-social behaviour and negative impacts on the locally listed Pearsons Court. The University should continue to engage with local residents regarding the impacts the University is having on the local community, notably parking and noise. If the University is sincere and serious in its desire to work with the local community and Council, it should work with both parties on a new, more suitable proposal for everyone.

Proof

Schools face continued budget cuts

Schools in Reading continue to face cuts in their budgets as the Conservative Government continues to underfund our schools. Cllr Ashley Pearce recently became lead Cllr for education in Reading and has visited various schools across Reading to discuss budget pressures and staff shortages. Matt Rodda, MP for Reading East also recently said in Parliament "Government cuts, relentless changes to the curriculum and examinations and the significant rise in pupil numbers have all put tremendous pressure on our schools.

Taken together, this is close to a perfect storm. Is it any wonder, then, that teachers are leaving the profession and recruitment is becoming so much harder?". Ashley recently proposed a motion at Full Council meeting asking Damian Hinds, Conservative Education Minister in Parliament to reverse the cuts that schools across Reading continue to face. These cuts will see Reading pupils lose £281 per head whilst seeing class sizes rise. Pupils only get one chance at an education and Labour believe that everyone deserves properly funded schools to do so.



Ashley visiting his old school
Geoffrey Field infants.

New Community Hub up & running

The new South Reading Community Hub officially opened recently, containing a library, children's centre, Sure Start Whitley Day Nursery, community meeting spaces, a community café & social club. The project also allowed a new pathway to be created to provide a pedestrian link from The Well Church behind the centre, where extra car parking has also been agreed for regular user groups.

The Hub incorporates a variety of regular groups and activities, a more visible children's centre with a new dedicated outdoor play area, upgraded

kitchen, better toilet facilities, and a new office for shared use by Council staff and partners. Despite the severe funding cuts the Council is facing, we are finding creative ways to work with partners and invest in South Reading.



Councillors Woodward, McEwan & Pearce with MP Matt Rodda and Reading West candidate Rachel Eden at the new hub.

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News and events from Church Ward

Councillors have been busy over the past few months. At the beginning of Summer thousands of copies of the updated South Reading calendar were delivered across the ward. Councillors met residents at the Northcourt Avenue street party as well as at the South Reading Churches' fun day. Despite continued Government cuts, Councillors are improving the area where possible with facilities at Rabson's Rec being updated and speed calming measures soon to be introduced by Reading Girl's School and The Ridgeway Primary School.

If you wish to speak to your Councillors they are available from 10.30am-12pm at the Whitley Cafe on the first Saturday of every month.



Matt Rodda MP, Cllr Pearce & Cllr McEwan at the South Reading Churches fun day.



Labour celebrates 70 year of the NHS

Reading Labour Party recently celebrated the NHS' 70th birthday by sending a happy birthday card. It was a Labour Government that created a health service free at the point of use, and more recently, they were the last Government to properly fund the service. But our health service is in danger. Here in South Reading life expectancy is over ten years lower than other parts of Reading and this area receives some of the lowest healthcare funding in the country. This is unacceptable.

Labour will declare war on health inequality and take action to halt the fall in life expectancy and narrow the shocking inequality gap in health. A Labour government will reverse the decline in the share of national income going into the NHS after falling under eight years of Conservative government. Cllr Paul Woodward said "The NHS is Britain's greatest institution and deserves to be properly funded. The NHS will only be safe under a Labour Government".