

ARUNDEL, WALBERTON & BARNHAM LABOUR PARTY

Chair, Michael Ward
Sec, Will Ashton

23rd January 2024

Dear Comrades,

The Barnham sewage tsunami

Members locally have been working to try to reduce the problems that Southern Water have created after decades of failure to maintain the sewage pipes and pumping station. Whilst the company are aware of the disaster they have caused they are unable to provide a comprehensive explanation of the problems nor do they have a coherent plan to improve matters.

One of our members has been negotiating successfully with the sub-contractors to reduce the noise and disruption caused by the fleet of tankers removing overflowing sewage and floodwater in Barnham Lane. A reasonable schedule has been established and the disturbance by nighttime pumping much reduced.

Works in Elm Grove where the sewer is being replaced are linked with the work in Barnham Road and currently estimated to be completed on 29th February

The county council claim to be aware of the impact that these closures are having on the road network in Barnham, Walberton and Eastergate. Where possible the highways department say they are removing other planned works in an attempt to keep traffic flowing. However there is little obvious improvement with further disruption caused by the laying of fibre optic cables and by house builders traffic in Tye Lane. There is little end in sight. However the nighttime closure of the A27 will be a temporary relief to Walberton residents.

The diversion route via Barnham Lane and Eastergate Lane is being constantly monitored by the Highways team and they are raising jobs for any maintenance required as a result. They have promised to fill the holes and fix the damaged shoulders and pavements. We will try to get updates on pothole filling as doubtless we will be asked whilst canvassing. In addition, Eastergate Lane has been added to the winter gritting route.

Meanwhile sewage continues to be discharged into Barnham and Aldingbourne rifes and onto our beaches.

If you or any of your friends and neighbours need help dealing with Southern Water or extra information then please be in contact.

Housing developments

Affordable Housing in Arundel

Arundel Community Land Trust (CLT) has been working with the Norfolk Estate and their housebuilder, Esquire Developments, to ensure a new 90 home development on the edge of Arundel includes truly affordable housing for local people in accordance with Arundel's Neighbourhood Plan. There will be 20 new Social Rent homes allocated under the CLT's Local Lettings Policy which gives priority to people with connections to Arundel through work, living locally, or having a child in one of the primary schools. There will also be seven Shared Ownership homes. Construction work is underway and the new homes are expected to be ready in 2025.

The CLT is now thinking ahead to its next project – there are brownfield sites in Arundel that have been allocated for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan that was passed by local Referendum, but most of this will be for private sale unless the CLT can raise funds and intervene to address the increasingly expensive local housing market which is pricing out local people.

The CLT is a Community Benefit Society, controlled by its Members with a strong Labour presence. If you live in Arundel or one of the surrounding villages and are not yet a CLT member please do think about joining to help make the CLT a truly community based organisation. More information can be found on ACLT's website <https://www.arundelclt.org/Get-Involved/>

Also..

Planned housing development on the Travis Perkins site near Arundel station

This planning application for the 27 flats on the former Travis Perkins site adjacent to the station is now on the Arun planning portal.

The application is showing as a development of 27 homes, 'affordable housing to be considered'.

It is really worth challenging the lack of affordable housing in the application. The 2020 Arundel Housing Needs survey showed the needs of single people and couples without children. The offer on the development Arundel CLT is involved in will only scratch the surface of this dire shortage as the affordable homes on that development are geared towards families. There has been really high interest in Shared Ownership for the project which labour members are involved in. Such proposals are easier financially for developers and housing associations, so that a similar scheme might be a good compromise to demand.

We are lobbying Arun councillors about this. Members in Lyminster and Warningcamp in particular are asked to do so. Already 38 more flats are on the way at the old Gas Works

site by Ford roundabout, it is really important to start pressing Arun to push developers towards more community friendly, affordable homes for local people. Closing date for comments is 8 Feb. Reference is LY/12/23L

We say that this application relating to the former goods yard and shed at Arundel station is an area which was until recently occupied by a builders-merchants 'company. It has now been acquired by a developer who has submitted the proposal for 27 flats. This brownfield site with its excellent links to public transport and reasonable access to local amenities is just what needed for social housing. Although close to the A27 it is a sequestered, safe for children to play and with easy access to open countryside.

It is disappointing to find that no affordable housing is proposed.

There is a particular shortage of affordable housing in Arundel. The Arundel Housing Needs Survey highlights the requirement for smaller 1- and 2-bedroom homes for local families who are excluded from available housing by high prices and rents. Increasing numbers of second homes and holiday lets have added to this difficult problem.

Currently 38 new flats for private sale are being made ready for purchase on the Old Gas Works site in Arundel and there are many other construction sites in the district where expensive housing is being built. Local people need affordable housing to rent or buy. We are told that Arun Housing are likely to raise the lack of affordable housing in their comments on the application. Arundel Town Council are opposed to it on the basis that plans do not comply with the district council policy on affordable housing.

Retaining and preserving the Grade II listed former goods shed on the site must be a priority. The protection of our heritage together with the current needs of our homeless require that the developers and Arun District Council do a great deal better for local people.

Consultation on the application closes on 8 February. I am told to expect it to come before the Planning Committee later in the spring. We ask that our Labour Group colleagues ensure that any development approved for this site includes a major proportion of social or otherwise affordable housing and retains the goods shed for community use.

General election

We have promised support to East Worthing and Shoreham Constituency plus Worthing West with local election canvassing. Please try to keep some free time in March and April. We expect to hear shortly about our candidate. A hustings will be arranged and if we have a choice we will arrange a postal vote for current ASD CLP members.

Extending the franchise

Congratulations to our branch member Hannah Cleallsmith who is now elected the constituency youth officer. One of her projects is to follow up on the branch initiative to enhance understanding of and participation in the democratic process amongst young people. Following a positive response from Chichester

College group to our branch initiative she will be liaising with that college before she goes to university.

Barnham and Eastergate Parish Council

There are two vacancies for members who would like to be co-opted onto the council. It is an opportunity for anyone who wants to make a difference locally. The council has been in a poor state for years and more labour members are needed to get it working properly. Young members are particularly welcome and training and support will be given.

Henfield ward councillor vacancy

This bye election for Horsham District Council has been called for leap year day - Thursday 29th February. We will focus our scarce resources in getting Fiona Ayres, our candidate, elected. She has come very close on the last couple of occasions, increasing the Labour vote each time. Please help with canvassing.

Campaign sessions are planned during February. Paul Richards our Labour candidate for Police and Crime Commissioner will be canvassing and leafleting throughout the constituency. Please be ready to support Fiona and Paul.

Refugees and support for the residents of Chichester Park Hotel

As agreed at the last AWB branch meeting a letter has been sent on your behalf to the leaders of West Sussex County Council, Chichester District Council and the Mayor of Chichester calling for more obvious expressions of support for those in their care seeking asylum. Thanks to Roger Pask for his skilful drafting. A reply and acknowledgment has been received from the leader of the district council.

Donation of clothes and equipment have been arriving: volunteers are needed to help run the newly established children's play area at the hotel. A member generously donated tickets to The Jungle Book (with free ice cream vouchers) enabling a large family group to go to Chichester Festival Theatre.



Littlehampton development

Labour councillors have been prominent in pressing for improvements to the seafront. If you have any comments or

seafront



contributions please contact me and they will be passed on via the Arun Labour Local Government Committee.

Arundel says 'No' to Council-run Air BNB

And now – a good news story. The plans for Arun Council to knock down a row of Council-owned lock up garages on River Road, Arundel, and replace them with a large, Council-owned Air BNB has been STOPPED in its tracks.

Before the 2023 Arun Council elections, long-serving Labour Leader Mike Northeast was the only councillor to oppose this plan. Now we have eight Labour members on Arun. They work with other groups on the Council to run the authority. One of the Labour members, Roger Nash, chairs the Economy Committee – which met in November and cancelled the Air BNB project.

Gaza ceasefire and youth vote

The branch resolutions which you passed have moved from the constituency to Labour Party Head Office adding to pressure on the shadow cabinet and the policy committee for urgent implementation. Slowly their positions are changing. A further Gaza resolution taking account of the International Court of Justice interim ruling is being amended and will be sent out. Please provide further any resolutions for the next branch meeting as soon as possible so that they can be circulated in advance.

Next meeting - Barnham Community Hall 13th February at 7.30pm

Members' presentation: Emma Tristram, Michael Ward. Roads update and planning discussion with particular reference to the Arundel bypass.

Resolutions to CLP etc as submitted by members or

1. Reform of local government funding.
2. Freedom to protest and demonstrate.
3. Restore the social security safety net.

Election of branch officers.

Worthing district elections.

Sussex police commissioner election.

Parliamentary candidate update.

Reports from CLP and ALGC

We are hoping for a speaker from ASLEF and to make arrangements to join the picket line at Barnham on the next strike day.

Will Ashton (sec)

Published and distributed on behalf of Arundel, Walberton and Barnham Labour Party by W.Ashton of Toro, Lake Lane, Barnham. PO22 0JB.

If you don't want to receive these communications from the branch, please contact me and we will stop.