Mark Hoban's
Westminster Report
Winter 2002

MP: 'LET'S BEAT CRIME TOGETHER

Mark Hoban MP is fully behind the 'Don't Be A Victim' campaign, which advises how to stay safe.
(photo courtesy of the Southern Daily Echo)

Mark Hoban was on patrol with local police to understand policing problems in Fareham. This was prompted by the number of complaints by local people about anti-social behaviour by a small number of teenagers.

Mark said "I feel that the police are doing as much as they can do to resolve this problem with the very limited numbers of police officers that they have. Police resources are stretched, but they have been working with Fareham Borough Council and local shopkeepers to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour.

The police do respond to the concerns of local people and I would urge you to contact them when there is a problem. The police can only tackle a problem if they know about it. Action taken includes offenders being banned from certain areas under harassment orders, improving street lighting to discourage people from hanging around in alleyways and increased security in shops."

Mark went on to say that "Whilst the action that the police take tackles the short term problem, the local community needs to look at its long term causes and solutions. We cannot simply leave the job to the police; everyone in the community has a role in tackling the causes. We need to ask ourselves some questions: Is there enough for young people to do locally? Are parents taking responsibility for their children's behaviour? Are all young people aware of their obligations towards their neighbours and their environment? Whilst we need to have more police and tougher penalties, it is better to tackle the causes of crime than simply its aftermath."

One of the things I enjoy doing as your MP is visiting local voluntary groups and in this edition of the Westminster Report you will read about some of these visits.

I am a great supporter of local groups because they provide an invaluable service to the local community. Each group has its own focus of activity, whether it is providing help for the elderly, children or the environment. They also give people a chance to put something back into the local community by fundraising or helping others.

Often, voluntary groups take on a need that Government has not identified or cannot meet. They can try new solutions to problems without being caught up in red tape and paperwork. They can galvanise people into action by raising the profile of a particular problem through writing to me or collecting signatures for a petition, or encouraging one of the local newspapers to write about it. In short, charities have the flexibility and creativity to do something for the local community that we cannot do by acting individually or by leaving it to Government.

But there is another benefit that charities bring to our communities. Working with charities is one way in which we are reminded of our obligations towards others and we become more aware of our communities, its members and the environment. As we become more aware of our bonds with each other, our respect for others increases. It is because we have forgotten these bonds that I think so called 'petty crime' has increased. The more people who feel that they have a stake in what goes on the other side of their front door, the more likely it is that we will have a rich, vibrant and peaceful community.

So come on – why don't you and your family find something that you can do to support a charity locally.

Mark Hoban

Mark Hoban MP visits local fire fighters

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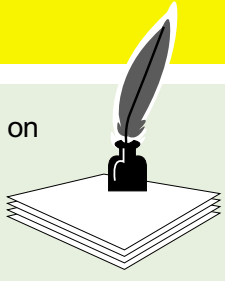
Let your MP know what YOU think about education.

SEE BACK PAGE

Mark Hoban wants to know your views on education so that he can better represent you in Parliament. Please take a few minutes to complete our residents' questionnaire.



Produced by Mark Hoban MP, 14 East Street, Fareham PO16 0BN & printed by Northcliffe Newspapers, Heron Road, Exeter, Devon EX27NF

news in brief

Mark and Fiona Hoban recently attended a very successful Harvest Supper in Brookfield School - organised by the Churches Together in Western Wards. The event was held in aid of the Southern Africa Famine Appeal. Pupils from the school performed a selection of music. After the concert, Mark said "I was very impressed by the performance given by the pupils. The quality of the music at Brookfield is very high and I would encourage local residents to go and hear them perform the next time there is an opportunity."

Following an intervention by Mark Hoban, improved signs warning about the low bridge in Redlands Lane will be erected near the Redlands pub. This comes after complaints from local residents and Elliotts Builders Merchants about articulated lorries reaching the low bridge and having to reverse back up the road into Chamberlain Grove; causing damage to pavements and putting pedestrians lives at risk.

Mark supported the recent campaign by the Echo to highlight simple steps that people can take to reduce the risk of being attacked. Mark said "People need to be aware of the actions they can take to keep themselves safe. Simple precautions, such as going home with a friend or getting a taxi home after a night out, could make all the difference."

Mark Hoban has been keeping in touch with local business leaders on matters that affect them. As well as visiting offices and factories in Fareham, Mark heard the concerns of members of the Southampton and Fareham Chamber of Commerce at a meeting in their headquarters in Southampton.

Mark Hoban was appointed to the Conservative front bench in July as a whip. Following on from his business experience, Mark is the whip to the Shadow Trade and Industry team. Mark was amongst the first MPs who were elected in 2001 to join the front bench. Mark said "I am delighted that my hard work in Westminster has been recognised in this way. I am sure that this is a reflection of the way I have spoken up on behalf of local people in the House of Commons."

Mark recently visited the Thursday Lunch Club in Portchester. This was set up over 40 years ago by Mrs Doris Arliss MBE to provide a hearty meal and company to elderly people in Portchester. Local voluntary groups come in to cook the lunch. Mark commented "This is a great way to make sure that older people, many of whom live by themselves, get a good lunch and the opportunity for a chat. I congratulate Doris on the work that she has done over the years to provide this service."

MP visits Fareham firefighters

Mark Hoban visited Fareham fire station to find out more about what they do.

As well as speaking to officers about fire prevention, such as the installation of smoke detectors, Mark saw for himself how they tackle problems such as getting someone out of a car involved in an accident.

Mark said "I was impressed by how little time it took for the firemen to cut someone free from a car. They did this quickly without compromising their own safety or that of the passenger."

As part of his briefing, Mark was told about the growing problem of fires being started maliciously. Often, these involve parkland or rubbish bins being set on fire. As the firemen pointed out, this diverts resources from genuine incidents putting other people's lives at risk.

When asked what were the two main things he had learnt from his visit, Mark said "Firstly, to save lives, people should ensure that smoke detectors are correctly fitted and working properly. Secondly, children might think lighting fires is simply a prank, but their actions can put lives at risk."

Below: Mark is shown a rescue exercise where a fireman gets someone involved in a crash out of their car.

Mark supports local mums in fight to keep Blackbrook Maternity Home

Mark Hoban met staff and mums at the Blackbrook Maternity Home when he visited it in September. Mark received a large number of letters from parents about the home when it was temporarily closed earlier this year.

Blackbrook provides ante-natal care, babies can be born there and mothers can also spend some time there once their baby has been born.

Mark said "When Blackbrook was closed I had a lot of letters and e-mails calling for it to be re-opened. These were often from local people who had first hand experience of the quality of care offered there. I have now seen this for myself. I think we need to keep Blackbrook open so that mothers can receive the personal care it is renowned for in Fareham."

Mark Hoban has raised Blackbrook with local health authorities and is continuing to keep the situation under review. If you have had good treatment from Blackbrook, please write to Mark at 14 East Street Fareham so we can keep you in touch with the current status of Blackbrook.

Hoban: 'Educating children about politics should be a priority'

Mark Hoban has taken to the web and the small screen to tell children about politics.

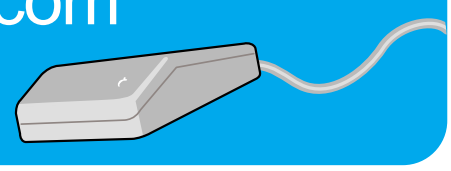
In response to changes in the National Curriculum, Mark Hoban has updated his website: www.markhoban.com to include more detailed material on Parliament to help local pupils. Topics on the website include how laws are passed, the role of MPs and elections. Mark is also featured in a video called "Our Parliament" which has been produced as a teaching aide to explain parliament to children.

When asked why he has done this, Mark said "In the last election turnout fell, partly, I think, because we have failed to communicate why politics is important to local people. We need to reverse this trend. Today's pupils are tomorrow's electors and we need to explain why democracy and politics are important. To reverse this decline, educating our children about politics should be a priority for all politicians."

As part of making politics accessible to children, Mark is hosting a visit by pupils from Portchester Community School to the House of Commons. "I welcome visits by local schools to Westminster because it provides a good way to tell them about how Parliament works."

Hoban on-line

www.markhoban.com



LOOKING AFTER YOUR HEALTH

MP's fight for better local healthcare goes on ...

Mark has met GPs in Sarisbury, Whiteley, Portchester and Titchfield as part of a series of visits to understand health issues facing local people.

Mark also met local dentists, senior management from the Queen Alexandra Hospital, the Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust and care home owners. In addition, Mark receives many letters from constituents about health issues, ranging from digital hearing aids to hospital waiting times.

On GPs, Mark said: "GPs and their teams are at the front line of the health service. They have raised a wide range of issues with me – from bus services to the role of practice nurses and from the structure of the NHS to decision making on the availability of drugs. One of the concerns that GPs expressed to me was the number of government targets they have to meet. They felt that these got in the way of doctor/patient relationships. I share GPs concerns and I think that we should trust them to get on with their jobs. If we cannot trust those who have spent many years training to be doctors then who can we trust to make decisions about our health?"

When asked about the concerns that local people have about the number of care home beds that are available, Mark said "I know it worries a lot of people that we have lost over 100 beds in Fareham recently due to the closure of homes. In part, these closures have been triggered by the new standards for care homes which the Government wanted, but owners could not afford. If you add to that the red tape that the Government has imposed on all small businesses, the burdens on care home owners became too great and many of them found that the only way they could secure their own future was to sell up."

He went on to say "As a consequence of these closures, not only are people finding it increasingly difficult to find a bed when they can no longer look after themselves in their own home, but more and more people are in hospital awaiting discharge because there are no beds available to give them the care they need when they leave."

Mark commented "There are many health issues affecting local people. It is an important aspect of my job to understand these and speak up for people both in parliament and with the local health service."

Local tennis club sponsorship opens way for young hopefuls

Above: Mark with the coach and young members of the Warsash Tennis Club.

Right: Mark with Karen Downie, Sponsorship Secretary of Warsash Tennis Club, and Stan and Cllr Mary Nadolski of Recommend Windows and Services.

Mark visited Warsash Tennis Club for the presentation of cheques from Sportsmatch and Recommend Windows and Services.

The sponsorship of Warsash Tennis Club by local business 'Recommend Windows and Services' has been recognised by an award under the Government Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme for Sport, "Sportsmatch", which is administered in England by the Institute of Sports Sponsorship.

Mark said "Warsash Tennis Club is thriving because of the hard work of the volunteers who run it and the coach, Colin Murphy. The sponsorship will help coaching activities not just at the club, but also in five local schools. I hope that, thanks to the sponsorship, tomorrow's Tim Henman will come from Warsash."

MP visits KIDS!

Mark and Fiona Hoban visited the KIDS centre at Salterns Lane (pictured right) to see the Saturday Club, which has recently been saved by a campaign led by local parents.

The club, which is for children with special educational needs, was under threat following a downturn in support for the KIDS charity. Parents decided that it was too valuable to lose and set about raising the funds to keep it going.

KIDS has received support from local businesses as well as local people. On the day Mark and Fiona went, Asda in Newgate Lane presented KIDS with a giant teddy bear as a raffle prize. HMS Collingwood donated the use of their theatre for a variety show where Mark Mudie presented the FunerALL Monty.

Following the visit, Mark said "The parents have done a tremendous job and have tapped a deep well of support for the work of the Saturday Club. Children at the club clearly enjoy being there and I am pleased that it has been saved. Good causes can still secure support from the local community. I know how much the parents appreciate the help and support they have received."

Supporting local charities

Mark Hoban recently spent an afternoon at Fareham's Help the Aged shop (pictured above) in West Street. Mark was there to support Make a Difference Day (MADD), which aims to promote volunteering.

Whilst there, Mark spent some time at the till serving customers, as well as judging a 'MADD hatters' competition. There are four employees at the shop and fifteen volunteers, many of whom had made hats for the competition.

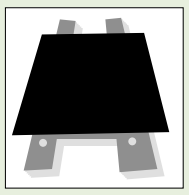
Asked why he supported MADD, Mark said "Charities make a vital contribution to our communities, providing services for some of the most vulnerable in society. But they can only function with our support. I want more people to join the volunteers in the Help the Aged shops or to take part in the many other charitable activities that go on across the constituency. MADD provides a focus for encouraging people to do a little more for their communities."

Mark was asked if it encouraged him to do charitable work, in reply he said "I see part of my role as an MP as encouraging local charities and working with them to promote the valuable work that they do. I enjoy visiting local voluntary groups and finding out about their work. I often turn to these groups for help if there is a particular need a constituent has that a charity can meet."

Call Mark on: 01329 233573 or email him on: mail@markhoban.com

Mark Hoban MP's EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Education Survey



Over the past few months, I have visited virtually all the schools in Fareham. I have formed my own views on the issues facing them and I would welcome your comments. Thank you.

1. Which of these is the most important issue?
1 ☐ Law and order 2 ☐ Schools 3 ☐ Hospitals
4 ☐ Roads 5 ☐ Other (please specify) _____

2. Do you think that the problems over re-grading A Levels has affected confidence in exam standards?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

3. Do you think better vocational education in schools would reduce truancy?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

4. Do you think that children who want to pursue vocational education should be able to combine subjects from schools, a college like Fareham College or another specialist training school or college?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

5. Do you think that there should be more specialist schools in Fareham?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

6. In which of the following areas do you think Fareham needs a specialist school?
1 ☐ Arts 2 ☐ Sports 3 ☐ Science
4 ☐ Languages 5 ☐ Engineering 6 ☐ Information Technology

7. Do you think that there should be legally enforceable contracts between parents and pupils and schools concerning areas such as attendance and behaviour?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

8. Do you think that children who are in failing schools should be given the opportunity to be taught at either another state school or independent school?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

9. Do you think that the Government should give classroom teachers more freedom and reduce red tape in the classroom?
1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

10. Are you involved in education as ...
1 ☐ a parent 2 ☐ a pupil 3 ☐ a teacher/lecturer
4 ☐ a learning support assistant 5 ☐ other support staff 6 ☐ other role
7 ☐ none

11. If you work in a school or are a parent or pupil, which school or college?

12. What is the most important local issue?

Title: ☐ Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel no:

Email:

Please return to: Mark Hoban MP, 14 East Street, Fareham PO16 0BN

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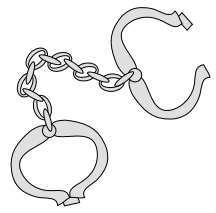
What you said last time ... on crime

Crime survey feedback



Nearly 200 people responded to the Crime Survey in the last issue of the Westminster Report.

It was very clear from the survey that **people want to see more police on the beat** and that this should be a high priority, particularly as they felt it would reduce crime. High profile policing has been linked with significant reductions in crime in places like New York.

There was also concensus on drugs with the vast majority of respondents agreeing that **head teachers should have the right to expel children who deal in drugs** in schools. Furthermore, 88% of respondents want the police to prosecute people for possessing even small amounts of cannabis.

85% of respondents believed that there was a **link between truancy and crime** and 84% believed that it was right to fine and **imprison the parents of persistent truants**. Truancy is a growing problem nationally and there has been a 40% increase in Hampshire since 1997.

When asked about the solution to the anti-social behaviour of some teenagers, **33% believed that troublemakers should be tagged**, whilst 30% thought that they should be banned from certain areas. Mark said "I do get a large number of letters from constituents about the behaviour of a small number of teenagers and it is a genuine concern. I know that the police do take this seriously and they will respond to your concerns. But this is not just a matter for the police; parents must also take responsibility for their children's behaviour."

In addition to the surveys in the Westminster Report, Mark also has a regular on-line survey on his website www.markhoban.com.

Mark Hoban MP

Member of Parliament for Fareham

If you would like to contact Mark about an issue or ask him to visit a local group, you can contact him on: 01329 233573.

If you need more help or advice, contact Mark at:

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