

# My North Town progress

## Dear Resident

I'm Paul Strong and I'm Leadbitter's Site Manager for My North Town. You will be seeing me around the estate throughout the course of this important redevelopment and I hope to meet you shortly at our next event. For this newsletter I have been asked to give you an update on what has been going on behind the hoardings and our progress on the initial preparation work of this project. This work often takes longer than expected but it is a very important stage of a project of this scale.

I am pleased to tell you that the architects' and engineers' drawings are now at an advanced stage ready for construction. An important change in our plans is that we are pleased to announce that all of Phase 1 will now be traditional construction homes rather than timber frames as we had originally proposed. All homes will also be built with an enhanced level of insulation under the Code for Sustainable Homes (Level 4). Energy costs should be reduced as we are planning to use solar energy technology.



With Phase 1C now being built at the same time as Phase 1A, First Wessex had to ensure that all the residents there were rehoused. The staff team of Julie Ruffle, Tina Wilkinson, Kevin Hitchcock and Jacko have all been busy to ensure this went smoothly and according to plan. The last resident moved out at the end of January and we have now started to hoard up this area for our surveys.

We have already completed surveys on Phase 1A including ecological, gas, electric, water,

telephone, drainage, bats and road condition surveys. The asbestos surveys began at the beginning of February and will take a few weeks. Information has also been submitted to Rushmoor Borough Council to discharge our pre-commencement planning conditions so that demolition can begin. We estimate that we will be able to start demolition in early May.

We will be sending you shortly our own Leadbitter newsletter to update you on our progress and we will also invite you along to various community events we have planned including the "Demolition Event" itself.

I look forward to meeting you personally very soon.

**Thank you for your continued support.**

Yours faithfully

Paul Strong

## Further Progress

### Traffic Plan

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) for Phases 1A and 1C has been submitted to Rushmoor Borough Council. The council has come back with a couple of comments

which we are currently addressing. The TMP submitted shows all construction traffic entering the works off Eastern Road to keep traffic away from the residential areas.



1 Eastern Road

This will be where the Leadbitter site office is to be based for the lifetime of the project. This location was chosen to minimise disruption to residents.

### Security

Out of hours security patrols continue in the inner area of the hoarding in Phase 1A. The police report suggests a significant drop in call outs to the area. Site security is currently under review by Leadbitter. They will ensure the new homes are monitored during construction. A turnstile entry / exit system for the construction workforce will be used to control the movement of people on the site. The garage blocks in Queen Street continue to become vacant as part of the progress and First Wessex is ensuring that they are secured.



We welcome Kevin Hitchcock as Development Manager to the First Wessex team for My North Town. Kevin has over 32 years' experience working in the affordable housing sector including 17 years with a local authority and 15 years working for a number of housing associations based in the South West and South East of England. He has managed a wide range of developments including some regeneration schemes in Southampton and Bournemouth.

## Summary Timetable for My North Town



Start work on site for :		Phase 3	Spring 2014
Phase 1A	Autumn 2010	Phase 4	Winter 2014
Phase 1b	Spring 2012	Phase 5	Winter 2015
Phase 1c	Winter 2010/11	Phase 6	Winter 2016
Phase 2	Spring 2013		

## Street Naming Survey Results

The response from residents to our street naming survey was disappointing and there was a very small turn out to our drop-in events at The Base. We have put this down to the cold weather and the fact that everyone was busy around Christmas. We would like to thank those who did return the

surveys and so far the top three themes are Flowers (46%), Colours (34%) and Herbs and Spices (30%). We will continue the street naming survey at a later date to ensure we get the views of as many as possible residents on the estate.

First Wessex offered an incentive to return the survey and recently

drew out three winners from the returns. Each will receive £25 high street voucher. The winners are:

- Tania Elsby
- Sarah Gilbert
- Mrs Jones

## Jim White – An Ambassador for North Town



**It is with deepest regret that we let residents know that Jim White, former Chair of the Residents' Consultative Group and former Mayor of Rushmoor Borough Council has passed away in hospital after a short illness on 18 January 2011.**

Jim White resided at Alma House from 2005 until his death. He was a staunch supporter for local residents and a keen advocate of My North Town regeneration scheme.

Councillor Keith Dibble was a close friend, as well as a colleague. He has written a tribute to Jim and this is reproduced opposite:

### Jane Hope, Scheme and Housing Manager for Alma House says

"In the short time that I had the pleasure of working with Jim, he came across as a very warm and caring person with a great sense of humour. I found him to be very considerate to others; he had a great community spirit in supporting First Wessex and other community projects. He will be sadly missed."

**First Wessex is considering ways in which to mark Jim's contribution to the local area and we will discuss ideas with his family in due course.**

### Jim White 1936-2011

Jim White who sadly died recently was my mentor, fellow North Town councillor and good friend for many years. When we first started working together in the early 1980s we shared a dream to improve the quality of life for North Town residents and our objectives included a major refurbishment of the estate. That goal has been continued over the years by North Town councillors Sue Dibble and Frank Rust. Even in 'retirement' Jim continued to support our North Town team. We would like Jim to be remembered and acknowledged in the future and believe consideration should be given to naming the new sheltered accommodation in the My North Town Project 'Jim White House'.

He was born in 1936 in the West End of Aldershot. Jim attended West End School and was a proud 'WEB' – a West End Boy. After leaving school he had a number of jobs, including a brief spell as a coal miner in Staffordshire, before being called to his national service with Royal Hampshire Regiment, with whom he saw service in Malaya in the 1950s.

While he decided not to stay in the army full time, his experiences stayed with him throughout his life, and he became a firm supporter of forces and veterans charities such as his regimental association and the Royal British Legion.

Returning to Aldershot, he became an engineer with the Post Office – later British Telecom – with whom he stayed until his

retirement. While working for the company his union involvement grew until he became a full-time organiser of the CWU. He was a member of the union for over 40 years.

Jim was first voted onto Aldershot Borough Council in the 1960s, and became a Rushmoor councillor when the new borough was set up in 1973. He served on Rushmoor from 1973-76, 1983-90 and 1995-2002; a total of 21 years. In 2000-2001 he served as Mayor of Rushmoor. Jim continued to serve the community, acting as Chairman of the First Wessex Tenants' Consultative Group (TCG) and the My North Town Residents' Consultative Group.

He also served for many years as Steward at the Annual Labour Party Conference and last year was honoured for his many years service to the Labour movement at a special party organised by Labour Leader Ed Miliband at the party conference in Manchester.

Jim was also a distinguished magistrate for 28 years. Sport was another passion of Jim's, he was a life-long supporter of Aldershot Town FC and he also followed Manchester United. He was President of the Rushmoor Gymnastics Academy and a past President of the Aldershot Town Boys Football Club. Jim also was a keen boxing enthusiast having boxed to ABA level during in time in national service. He boxed with the nickname 'Willow the Wisp'!

Jim White was called by many local people "Mr Aldershot" a title he deserved.

**Cllr Keith Dibble, North Town Ward.**

## Update on FAQs

### 1. With the government cutting public spending, will First Wessex have the funding to continue with the project?

First Wessex wants to reassure residents that the regeneration of North Town is a top priority project in our Local Investment Plan. We would not have signed a contract with Leadbitter if we were not sure about having the funds to pay them.

Our funding for North Town will come from a mix of private and public sources as well as the funds we are able to generate from the later phases of the development through sales.

The government's Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) has now announced new arrangements for funding social housing. In April we will be submitting our bid for funding to deliver new homes across Hampshire over the next 4 years. North Town will be a top priority in our HCA bid. Rushmoor Borough Council has already itself provided funding towards My North Town and is supporting our bid to the HCA.

### 2. When will you start demolition of Phase 1a and C?

The go ahead to demolish the empty blocks within Phase 1a and C of North Town has now been given by First Wessex. This is however subject to a gas mains diversion. Leadbitter has placed the order with the utilities company but this could take up to 12 weeks. We are hopeful that the diversion works will not take this long but in the worst case we should be at the point of being able to demolish by mid May.

## Hampshire Fire and Rescue

Hampshire Fire and Rescue, in partnership with First Wessex, has been conducting a series of training sessions in the empty apartment blocks on the North Town estate. These sessions have been designed to improve the skills and knowledge of Rushmoor's fire crews when responding to 999 calls. There have been three main exercises on each of the days including tactical smoke ventilation and the training of using breathing apparatus.



These sessions are under extreme supervision by professional instructors from Hampshire Fire and Rescue. In the event of a fire, residents are urged to contact the emergency services immediately

by dialling 999. For further information on fire safety you can contact James on **01252 36874** or by email [james.devonshire@firstwessex.org](mailto:james.devonshire@firstwessex.org)

### 3. You said in the last newsletter that residents in phase 1B will have received their Housing Needs Survey in January but you haven't visited me yet?

First Wessex would like thank you for your calls on this and apologise about the delay in contacting you due to prioritising the move of residents in Phase 1C and ongoing work related to the redevelopment. We have now contacted you all by letter to arrange your appointment for your housing needs survey in March and April. If you have not contacted us then please call 0800 358 0459 to make your appointment with the First Wessex team.

### 4. We have heard that First Wessex is planning some external decoration to the North Town estate. Why are you doing this when it is all to be knocked down?

We know some blocks are looking really tired particularly those in Pegagus Avenue and Denmark Square and we think that it is important to continue to up keep the general appearance of the estate during the redevelopment process. First Wessex Property Services will provide more information about their scheduled works planned for the estate in the next newsletter. This will also include details about internal decoration requirements.

## Government Cuts and Housing Benefit Changes

**The government is planning to change local housing allowance rules from April 2011. First Wessex recognises that the impacts of the cuts in benefits such as Housing Benefit and Disability Living Allowance will be worrying and affect many residents.**

The cap on housing benefit will depend on the number of bedrooms in a property as well as other restrictions and reductions. Rushmoor Borough Council will be writing to you to explain how a change is likely to affect your claim and when this change will happen.

Both Rushmoor Borough Council and First Wessex staff will be able

to give you up to date advice on Welfare Benefit and also Debt Advice. We plan to have extra resources available at our forthcoming Re-housing Surgeries so that we can help you plan and answer any concerns you have. It is important that you talk to us and report any changes in your circumstances as soon as possible. Don't worry in silence. We are here to help you.

## Calling all Dog Owners

First Wessex is receiving a high number of calls advising that owners are allowing their dogs to foul around the estate without picking it up and disposing of it properly. Not picking up your dogs mess can result in a £75 fixed penalty notice, and can lead to a £1000 fine if caught on more than one occasion.

Rushmoor Borough Council and First Wessex are monitoring the problem in the area. If you have any queries or concerns or you have witnessed this happen, you can report this to James Devonshire Neighbourhood Manager on **01252 368747**, or Rushmoor's Community Patrol Team on **01252 398398**.

Owners are also advised the dogs should be kept on a lead at all times for theirs and other people's safety.



First Wessex is also concerned to hear about the increases in the number of dogs in upper floor flats as this is not allowed and is against the terms and conditions of the tenancy. We will not make any allowance for them when allocating the new properties and we will take action against residents who persist in keeping a dog under these circumstances.

## Re-Housing Surgeries for My North Town

These drop-in events at the North Town Base are proving to be popular and well attended. They are designed for you to ask any questions you have, for us to clear

up any rumours circulating the estate and for you to highlight any on-going concerns you may have.

First Wessex team will be at The North Town Base every other Thursday from 4-6pm

**We look forward to seeing you there.**



**m** Enquiry Line  
FREEPHONE  
**0800 358 0459**  
[www.mynorthtown.net](http://www.mynorthtown.net)

- 10 and 24 March
- 7 and 21 April
- 5 and 19 May
- 2, 16 and 30 June
- 14 and 28 July
- 11 and 25 August
- 8 and 22 September
- 6 and 20 October
- 3 and 17 November
- 1 and 15 December

## Community Engagement Coordinator and The Cabin

Final interviews have taken place and we are delighted to confirm that Andrea Weeks has been appointed as Leadbitter's Community Engagement Coordinator for the redevelopment of North Town. Andrea will be based at The Community Cabin which will be placed next to the play area in Denmark Square. Andrea has had extensive hands-on experience of redevelopment projects and is committed to ensuring that residents remain at the heart of the My North Town project. Andrea will be part of

the Leadbitter team and will work closely with First Wessex staff and residents throughout the life of the project. Andrea will be involved in community activities such as liaison with schools.

We hope that The Cabin will become a resident "drop-in" location with a residents' lounge and display of materials, plans, etc. First Wessex staff, Jacko and Julie Ruffle will both be based there so residents will be able to ask any questions about re-housing and maintenance as required.



### Help tomorrow take shape: Take part in the next census!

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) carries out a census to find out more about the people who live in England and Wales and about the make-up of local neighbourhoods. They will be sending questionnaires to around 25 million households at the end of March 2011, asking about work, health, national identity, citizenship, ethnic background, education, second homes, language, marital status and so on. The answers will be turned into statistics used to build a picture of today's society.

The information from the census will be used to understand people's needs and make sure that communities get the services they need for their local area. So, you can really make a difference - it's really important to take part! All you will need to do is answer a few very easy questions about you and the people you live with on census day. You can do it by post or online.

Any information you give will be kept confidential and will only be used to produce statistics. The ONS will not share your personal information with any other organisation.

For more information, visit [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk)

### Are you on Rushmoor Borough Council's Housing Register?

**If you're already on Rushmoor Borough Council's Housing Register you will have received a letter telling you about the proposed changes to the way accommodation off the estate is allocated. You will also have been asked to fill out a questionnaire giving your views on the changes.**

First Wessex will give more information to residents in our next newsletter on how any agreed changes may affect residents who are on the housing register or thinking about joining. Please note these changes only affect residents wanting to move off the estate. If you wish to remain on the estate then there is no need to join the housing register.

In the meantime, to view the draft policy please visit [www.rushmoor.gov.uk](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk) or telephone the housing options team on 01252 398634 for more information. If you would like to speak in person to a member of Rushmoor Borough Council's housing team then please do call in at our regular re-housing surgeries - dates listed on page 5 of this newsletter.

## The North Town Base Community Centre Calendar - March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> Rushmoor Healthy Living Weekly Walks 11.00-12.00 (walk) 12.00-1.00pm Maple View Children's Centre Smoking Cessation 3.00-5.00 Scrapbook Group 7.00-9.00pm	<b>2</b> Over 50s Club 10.00-12.30 Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advice 1.00-3.30 Rushmoor Healthy Living Energy Efficiency Advice and Health Trainers 1.00-3.30 Cheeky Monkeys Youth and Play Session Age 5-13 4.00-8.00pm	<b>3</b> North Town Job Club 10.00-12.00 Reach Out Employment Project 2.00-4.00 FW Surgeries 4.00-6.00	<b>4</b> Maple View Children's Centre 9.00-5.00	<b>5</b> Cat Protection League 1st Saturday of every month
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Clothing Exchange 10.00-12.00 (term time) Job club 12.00-2.00pm	<b>8</b> Rushmoor Healthy Living Weekly Walks 11.00-12.00 (walk) 12.00-1.00pm Maple View Children's Centre Smoking Cessation 3.00-5.00 Scrapbook Group 7.00-9.00pm	<b>9</b> Over 50s Club 10.00-12.30 Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advice 1.00-3.30 Rushmoor Healthy Living Energy Efficiency Advice and Health Trainers 1.00-3.30 Cheeky Monkeys Youth and Play Session Age 5-13 4.00-8.00pm	<b>10</b> North Town Job Club 10.00-12.00 Reach Out Employment Project 2.00-4.00 FW Surgeries 4.00-6.00 My North Town Re-Housing Surgeries 4.00-6.00	<b>11</b> Maple View Children's Centre 9.00-5.00 Paul Green Rushmoor 3.15-4.15pm	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Clothing Exchange 10.00-12.00 (term time) Job club 12.00-2.00pm	<b>15</b> Rushmoor Healthy Living Weekly Walks 11.00-12.00 (walk) 12.00-1.00pm Maple View Children's Centre Smoking Cessation 3.00-5.00 Scrapbook Group 7.00-9.00pm	<b>16</b> Over 50s Club 10.00-12.30 Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advice 1.00-3.30 Rushmoor Healthy Living Energy Efficiency Advice and Health Trainers 1.00-3.30 Cheeky Monkeys Youth and Play Session Age 5-13 4.00-8.00pm	<b>17</b> North Town Job Club 10.00-12.00 Reach Out Employment Project 2.00-4.00 FW Surgeries 4.00-6.00	<b>18</b> Maple View Children's Centre 9.00-5.00	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Clothing Exchange 10.00-12.00 (term time) Job club 12.00-2.00pm	<b>22</b> Rushmoor Healthy Living Weekly Walks 11.00-12.00 (walk) 12.00-1.00pm Maple View Children's Centre Smoking Cessation 3.00-5.00 Scrapbook Group 7.00-9.00pm	<b>23</b> Over 50s Club 10.00-12.30 Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advice 1.00-3.30 Rushmoor Healthy Living Energy Efficiency Advice and Health Trainers 1.00-3.30 Cheeky Monkeys Youth and Play Session Age 5-13 4.00-8.00pm	<b>24</b> North Town Job Club 10.00-12.00 Reach Out Employment Project 2.00-4.00 FW Surgeries 4.00-6.00 My North Town Re-housing Surgeries 4.00-6.00	<b>25</b> Maple View Children's Centre 9.00-5.00	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Clothing Exchange 10.00-12.00 (term time) Job club 12.00-2.00pm	<b>29</b> Rushmoor Healthy Living Weekly Walks 11.00-12.00 (walk) 12.00-1.00pm Maple View Children's Centre Smoking Cessation 3.00-5.00 Scrapbook Group 7.00-9.00pm	<b>30</b> Over 50s Club 10.00-12.30 Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advice 1.00-3.30 Rushmoor Healthy Living Energy Efficiency Advice and Health Trainers 1.00-3.30 Cheeky Monkeys Youth and Play Session Age 5-13 4.00-8.00pm	<b>31</b>		

### Contact your local councillors



Residents with queries on My North Town can also contact their ward councillors:

**Cllr Sue Dibble**

Tel: 01252 329831 or Email: sue.dibble@rushmoor.gov.uk

**Cllr Frank Rust**

Tel: 01252 314376 or Email: frank.rust@rushmoor.gov.uk

**Cllr Keith Dibble**

Tel: 01252 329831 or Email: keith.dibble@rushmoor.gov.uk

# Maple Vue Children's Centre Activities



## Forthcoming events:

For families with at least one child under 5 years.

**Finkley Down Farm**

Wednesday 13 April 9am – 4.30pm

Adults £6.50, Child aged 2 and over £4.50, Child under 2 years £2.50

**Let's Cook Half Term Easter Special**

Monday 11 April 12.30-2.30pm

£1.00 per child

Contact the Children's Centre for more details on these events and their weekly activities.

**Telephone 01252 316963**

**www.hants.gov.uk/maple-vue**

**email: maplevuecc@hants.gov.uk**

## My North Town Residents' Consultative Group NEEDS YOU!

The next meeting of this important group will be held in April. Any resident interested in joining the group is very welcome. Please contact Sandra Feenan on 01252 368737 for more information. You can also drop into one of our re-housing

surgeries to find out more about what is involved. We will take your details and send you a personal invite to the next meeting for you to see the group in action and decide for yourself if you want to become a member.

If you would like this information translated into any other language or made available in large print, Braille or audio format please contact our Enquiry Line:

**Enquiry Line**  
**FREEPHONE**  
**0800 358 0459**  
[www.mynorthtown.net](http://www.mynorthtown.net)

My North Town is a regeneration project delivered by **First Wessex Housing Association**



In partnership with **Rushmoor Borough Council**



# NORTH TOWN

Neighbourhood Renewal