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## Labour Raise Home-Help Charges for Older People

The terrible cost of having a Labour-controlled council in Lambeth is now becoming apparent. In its budget proposals, Lambeth aims to:

- Increase home-care charges from £7.55 an hour to £17.50 an hour.
- Increase council tax by just under 5% (while pensions rise by much less).
- Increase leisure charges (for gyms and pools) by 25%.
- Increase Parking Permits from £60 a year to £115.
- Increase estate parking charges to £25.

Suzanne comments, "The increase in home-help costs are staggering, and show how Labour has lost touch with its roots. These fees are now higher than Lambeth pays its contractors, and so the council is actually profiting from residents' being housebound or ill."

The council tax rise is also a heavy blow. Andrew says, "For many pensioners, the council tax is their biggest monthly expense. Labour councils constantly raise taxes by more than the inflation rate, and that is bad news for pensioners and others."

### Can We Help You Reduce Your Council Tax?

**Don't let Lambeth Labour get away with your money. There are many discounts and allowances available to help people with their council tax. If you live alone, or have a low income, or are disabled, help might be available. This is especially true for the elderly.**

**For a confidential chat, write to:**

**Gipsy Hill Fair Tax Campaign  
FREEPOST SE5180  
London SE27 9BP**

**and include your address, phone number and email address if available.**

## Save Your Library From Cuts



*Suzanne and Graham have been working hard to secure more funding for the Library.*

## Cross-Border Talks – But Cash is Running Out

**Both Lambeth and Croydon Councils have frozen the Upper Norwood Library budget again this year, and reserves are critically low. The Library faces a major cutback in services.**

Gipsy Hill Councillors Suzanne Poole and Graham Pycock have challenged both Council Leaders to agree a rescue package of an extra £25,000 each. Graham reports, "The Lambeth response has been to play party politics, and Croydon has pleaded poverty, when what is needed is long-term, cross-border cooperation. However, Gipsy Hill councillors have won the argument for a new Partnership Agreement between the boroughs, including our proposed formula for setting future funding." Cross-borough talks are starting at officer level, but time is running out.

Suzanne says, "We have taken legal advice and will use the 1964 Libraries Act if we have to. Both councils must fund the library to the same level as the direct libraries. In the last 20 years, the only significant increase in funding (£55,000) was won by Gipsy Hill councillors from the 2002 to 2006 Lib Dem/Conservative administration in Lambeth. We will demand more support for the library at the 28 February full Council Meeting."

(See [www.conservatives.lambeth.com](http://www.conservatives.lambeth.com) for updates.)

***The Conservatives are Growing, Nationally and in Gipsy Hill***



## Gipsy Road Unit for Kids Out of School

Lambeth's Planning Committee has agreed to the new Pupil Referral Unit, which educates children excluded from other schools, being moved to the Gipsy Road school site. Local residents from Benton's Lane Estate, together with Councillor Graham Pycock, objected to the plans. "We won important concessions," says Graham, "on security and anti-social behaviour issues. The Committee agreed to impose detailed conditions covering noise, community use and a School Management Plan. We were reassured by the Headteacher that this purpose-built unit would be much better managed than the previous one.

Graham remains concerned about traffic and parking. The number of parking places for staff is inadequate and added pressure will come from the temporary Elmgreen School when it is sited next door. As a result of a follow-up meeting Graham has had with Transport officers, a plan will be produced for Elder Road and Gipsy Road. This will include some "double yellows" to reduce congestion, repaired and reinforced pavements to support parking in certain places and speed tables in Gipsy Road to safeguard pupils.

## Youth Loses Out Over Vale Street Depot



*Gipsy Hill Conservatives are against a truck depot and in favour of a games area.*

**The Vale Street depot was to have been used for a youngsters' games area. But Labour-controlled Lambeth now wants to move a dustcart depot from East Brixton onto Vale Street ("temporarily"). Sadly, the local Labour MP seems to accept the dustcarts.**

This is a ridiculous plan, as Vale Street is in the middle of a residential area and is surrounded by tight corners and many traffic weight restrictions. Your Conservative Gipsy Hill councillors are opposing these plans vigorously, and are grateful to the scores of residents who have sent their objections to the Town Hall at our suggestion. The next stage is likely to be a decision by the Planning Committee. (See [www.conservatives.lambeth.com](http://www.conservatives.lambeth.com) for updates).

## Emmanuel Church Youth Club

The Emmanuel Church Youth Club, Clive Road has re-started and will be held every week on Tuesday and Thursday evenings (contact church for details). Four youth workers will supervise the youngsters. This is thanks to the good work of Canon Anshah and his team, who have been supported by Suzanne. Work is underway to see if youth clubs can be established elsewhere in Gipsy Hill.

## Down Your Way

### Gipsy Hill

A senior citizen on a council estate off Gipsy Hill lived on the second floor in a flat that was too large. Andrew was able to help secure her a ground floor flat on the same estate.

### Berry Lane

A resident informed Graham that the streetlights were out. Graham contacted the council immediately, and the lights were fixed (though not as quickly as Graham wanted!)

### Dunbar/Dunelm

A streetlight that is important for pedestrian safety, where Dunbar Street meets Dunelm Drive, went out. Andrew spoke to the council and had it fixed.

### Charters Close

Thanks to Gipsy Hill councillors' campaigning, the road has been re-surfaced, the guttering is to be improved and the lighting is to be fixed.

### Norwood High Street

Andrew did a walkabout with residents. Already, a dangerous sign has been removed and on-pavement parking is being tackled. Much more needs to be done to revive this area – and we will work to bring this about.

### Elder Road

Graham met with council officers about the poor state of pavements. Improvement work is underway. Our next goal is to relieve the parking stress on Sundays.

### Clive Road

Double-yellow lines were incorrectly placed at the junction of Clive Road and Park Hall Road. Suzanne made successful representations to have them removed.

### Central Hill

We are pressing the council to stop the fly tippers, and to stop having estate lights burning 24-hours a day.

### Camden Hill Road

We have secured agreement for more trees, and will push the council to plant them this planting season.