

Crow Opinion**Better times in store for town**

THINGS seem to be looking up for Royston town centre.

Nineteen new outlets in the last 18 months, and more set to open, is good news in these difficult economic times.

And a happy town centre manager Geraint Burnell says the town looks as healthy as he can remember.

A couple of years ago there were 20 vacant shops in the town – eight in Angel Pavement alone – and empty stores can give a small town a depressed air.

Mr Burnell says it is difficult to pinpoint reasons for the upturn, but there is little doubt that much of it is due to hard work behind the scenes.

Ways have been sought of attracting more visitors to the town centre, and free parking earlier in the day in car parks is likely to have been a contributing factor.

People are only too happy to shop locally, particularly with the high price of fuel, provided they can obtain what they need.

Let's hope all this new retail activity signals the start of a brighter future for the town centre.

HAVE YOUR SAY@

www.roystoncrow24.co.uk

Royston Crow
3, Angel Pavement,
Royston, Herts SG8 9AS
01763 244977

Fax: 01763 245152
Subscriptions: 01707 327551
Leaflets: Elena Goakes
01438 866072

Distribution: 01438 866130
news@royston-crow.co.uk
sport@royston-crow.co.uk
sales@royston-crow.co.uk

Editor **DARREN ISTED**
darren.isted@archant.co.uk

Reporter **JOE TYLER**
joe.tyler@archant.co.uk

Sports Editor **LIAM OSBORNE**
liam.osborne@archant.co.uk

Photographer **DANIEL WILSON**
dan.wilson@archant.co.uk

Digital Development Manager
SAM NEWBY-RICCI
sam.newbyricci@archant.co.uk

For your advertising
LAVINIA EDWARDS

01438 866079
lavinia.edwards@archant.co.uk

DOM NOTARANGELO
01438 866096
geoff.foster@archant.co.uk

PICTURE REPRINT SERVICE

myphotos24

Seen your photo in the paper or on this website? Now you can order your own copy via our new photo ordering site, www.myphotos24.co.uk. You can order your photo as a digital image, as a reprint or on a variety of novelty gifts. To find your image in www.myphotos24.co.uk just take note of the reference number listed with your photo and type that into the search box. Alternatively you can browse through all the photos from a specific week.

Royston Crow:
July to Dec 2010
14,299 (92% free)



TO enquire about permission to copy cuttings from this publication for internal management and information purposes, please contact the Newspaper Licensing Agency (NLA), Wellington Gate, 7 & 9 Church Road, Tunbridge Wells TN1 1NL. Telephone: 01892-525273, e-mail: copy@nla.co.uk

This newspaper submits to the nationally agreed Code of Practice and the jurisdiction of the Press Complaints Commission.

**Postbag**

You can e-mail YOUR views to postbag@royston-crow.co.uk

The Crow
3, Angel Pavement
Royston SG8 9AS
FAX 01763 245152

Everyone knows it's necessary

I WAS disappointed, but not surprised, to read Labour spokesman Mr Bell's deficit denying letter (*Postbag, March 31*).

It was also sad that he had obviously not understood the Budget, which was all about encouraging growth with lower company taxes, more apprenticeships, enterprise zones, and a reduction in fuel duty.

To say that the UK budget deficit had been "just about eliminated" before the financial crisis is just plain wrong.

The Public Sector Net Borrowing in 2007/8 was £33 billion, up from £30.9 billion the year before.

Mr Bell's attitude is typical of the Labour approach which got this country into such a financial mess.

By borrowing huge amounts when the economy was growing, they failed to fix the roof when the sun was shining, which is why Britain went into recession with one of the worst deficits, and they left office leaving the largest deficit in the G20 – worse than Ireland's and Greece's.

They doubled the National Debt and left higher unemployment, including higher youth unemployment than when they came to power in 1997.

As well as borrowing, they sold Britain's gold reserves at a record low, took £100 billion with their pensions' tax raid, entered into PFI agreements, which were poor value for the taxpayer.

Mr Blair even gave up our £7billion EU rebate in exchange for nothing.

Now Mr Bell complains about necessary savings in public spending, yet Labour was committed at the last election to make big cuts in public spending and has never laid out its own plans.

Labour claimed to have ended "boom and bust", then presided over the worst recession since the 1930s.

They said they would not increase taxes, then doubled the tax rate for the poorest by scrapping the 10p rate.

Every significant economic organisation from the Bank of England to the OECD supports the Government's deficit reduction programme.

Only the Shadow Chancellor is swimming against the tide.

No Government would want to make public spending reductions for the sake of it, but we are all in this together – everyone knows it's necessary.

If it's hurting, it's Labour's fault. The Government has steered us away from the brink and is promoting growth.

MICHAEL PATERSON Chairman of Conservative Political Forum, NE Herts Conservatives

We're not a dormitory town

AS a long-standing Royston resident, I was surprised that your correspondent L Gilhart (*Postbag, March 31*) described Royston as a 'dormitory town'.

This is not so. Royston has many significant employers and a good mixed economy.

All Our Yesterdays

THIS chap looks like he's enjoying a proud moment, but why was he rewarded?

Our Crow photographer snapped him with this trophy in about 1981, but does anyone know what special skills or event prompted the award?

If you do, contact us at news@royston-crow.co.uk or write to Nostalgia, *The Crow*, 3 Angel Pavement, Royston, SG8 9AS.

Johnson Matthey employs 1500 people and we are lucky to have a range of high tech, engineering and other businesses, as well as the racing stables and public sector employers such as the hospital.

The town centre has a good supermarket, a market, a hardware store, a number of clothes shops, a butcher and a baker, newspaper offices, and many cafes and pubs.

In fact there are very few voids. Other towns look on Royston as a good example.

I support the Business Improvement District and I think it has worked.

Free parking after 3pm has been very helpful.

There has been a big improvement in Royston over the last three years, and I would invite your correspondent to take another look round.

NAME and ADDRESS SUPPLIED

So why were toilets locked?

WITH regard to the letter from Cllr Peter Burt (*No option but to close the toilets – Postbag, March 31*), I must thank you for the (unintended?) hilarity.

I am sure I cannot have been the only person to see the exquisite irony of this letter following on only a few pages from a large picture of Mr T Hutt wearing a placard bearing the words "REOPEN THE TOILETS NOW".

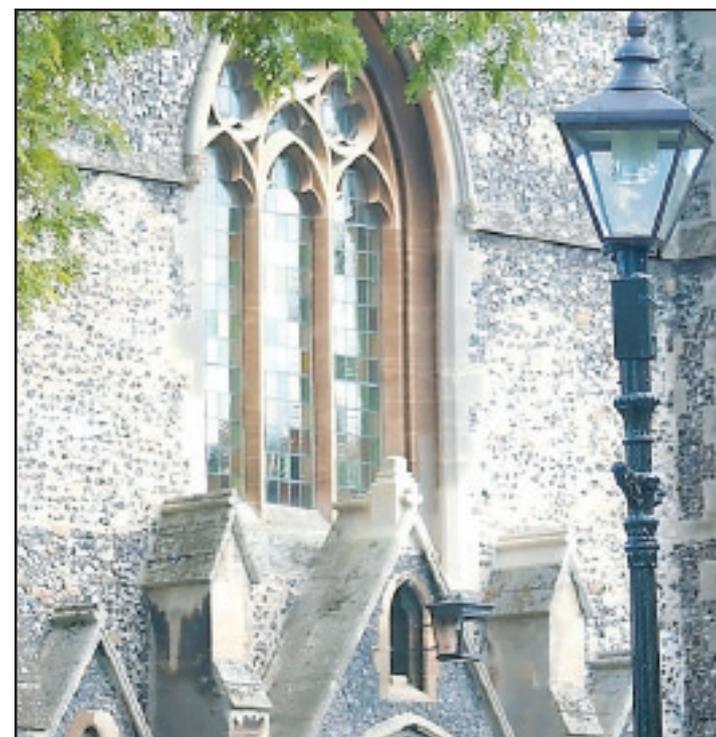
I would love to hear from Mr Hutt as to why he felt the need to lock the toilets in the first place.

IAN VINCE
Hunters Way
Royston

Remembering the earthquake

COURTESY of the *Royston Crow*, I have viewed the winning entrant of the sculpture competition for the new Fish Hill development, due to be started in September.

It is of considerable merit and

It's a mystery

THIS picture, from the one on Page 2, shows the rather more familiar form of Royston parish church.

should be used in the scheme.

However, for unfortunate reasons, events have played their part.

In future history the year 2011 will be remembered for the trauma of the Japanese people following the earthquake and nuclear accident at Fukushima.

The zeitgeist may require the commemoration of this event in Royston. Its economic effects will impinge on Royston for five years.

I have researched the geology of the area and granite or gabbro is the indigenous rock.

I believe we should commemorate the victims of the tragedy within the Fish Hill development, by incorporating a slab, possibly through a cultural link with the North Japanese area.

I am sure the community leaders responsible for the project will concur.

CARLO ZAMBONINI
Royston

More important issues at hand

SUGGESTIONS have been made about who should be honoured with a statue at the long-awaited Royston railway underpass, and I am sure that all of them are worthy of consideration.

I know that this is a country-wide project, and it is good to recognise the achievements of those who have worked hard for their communities.

But the main point is that the underpass is on its way.

And at the risk of appearing a killjoy, there are many other more important issues to concern ourselves with at the moment.

MARK MARTIN Melbourn