

Crow Opinion**Hold tight as bus subsidies cancelled**

CUTS in services start to bite as people in *Crow* country fear they may lose some of the bus services many regard as a lifeline.

Certain services linking Royston with surrounding villages in south Cambridgeshire are to have their county council subsidies removed as part of a £2.7million programme of cuts.

Cuts in many areas are now becoming a way of life. But not everyone has a car, and people are concerned that if operators do feel compelled to remove services, those worst hit will be elderly or disabled people, and families who cannot afford to travel any other way.

The level of concern is shown by the fact that more than 1,000 people have signed a petition calling on Cambridgeshire County Council to protect the bus services.

Everyone knows that money is in short supply, and economies have to be made.

But when cuts such as these may result in leaving some people stranded, it is a situation that should concern everyone – whether they use buses or not.

HAVE YOUR SAY@

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**Postbag**

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

Spin is just a logical fallacy

MICHAEL Paterson's letter (*Postbag*, April 7) was full of Tory spin. He labels me as a "deficit denier", but we all know that Labour planned to halve the deficit in four years, whereas the Tory-led government wants to go faster.

Cutting expenditure too fast reduces growth, and thus income. The Office of Budget Responsibility cut growth forecasts after George Osborne's 2010 budget, again after his autumn spending review, and now after his 2011 budget. The OECD also cut their forecast. This is a curious effect for a "budget for growth".

Corporation tax was reduced, as Mr Paterson says, but investment allowances have been cut. Apprenticeships were increased by 12,500, but youth unemployment rose by 30,000 just in the last quarter.

Enterprise zones have £20m of funding, but this is less than the cut in regional growth funds. Fuel duty was cut by less than the VAT increase.

Mr Paterson says that Labour failed to "fix the roof when the sun was shining" (more spin). Labour quite literally did fix roofs, having inherited many schools with leaking ones. Public sector debt inherited from the Tories was 41.9 per cent of GDP and this was reduced to 35.7 per cent in 2007, lower than in France and Germany.

Now, it will peak at around 75 per cent – similar to Germany and lower than France.

Labour presided over the worst global recession since the 1930s. The spin that they therefore got "this country into such a financial mess" is just a logical fallacy. Unemployment and borrowing rose globally. And Labour left office with an economy resuming growth and with unemployment falling.

Until the financial crisis there was on average a very small budget surplus under Labour.

Mr Paterson is right that there was a deficit, mainly for investment, just before the crisis. If this was so bad, why was it Tory policy at the time to continue with Labour's spending plans?

Finally, Mr Paterson asserts that no government would want to make public spending cuts for the sake of it.

I thought that this government actually wanted to reduce the size of the state. Can he assure us that this is not so?

DAVID BELL
Parliamentary spokesman
North East Herts Labour Party

Don't blame the last government

IN Credit Crunch Mythology, it was all New Labour and Gordon Brown's fault.

What Michael Paterson, chairman of Conservative Political Forum should appreciate is that it's hurting, partly to do with the personal level of debt recovery, which is almost that of Italy, without the sunshine or Chianti.

The admittedly noble aim of recovering the debt in the first year

All Our Yesterdays

THESE young martial artists have been among the awards, but to which club in the area do they belong? 1981 looks to

have been a very successful year for them, but can you put a name to a face, or help us figure out exactly where they are in Crow country?

If you have any ideas, email us at news@royston-crow.co.uk or write to Nostalgia, The Crow, 3 Angel Pavement, Royston, SG8 9AS.

means the personal debt recovery is something like three times that of France, and 40 per cent more than Germany.

It is disingenuous to lay the blame with the previous government, because in fact, the level of debt reduced from 44 per cent to 36 per cent as a proportion of GDP.

All the finance ministers were at the symposium when the late Professor Tobin was urging globalised taxation through the IMF in 2003. Not one of them signed up for it.

The fact of the matter is that the influence of globalised corporations, particularly in banking, finance, and media, is the political challenge of the age, not Michael Paterson's blame culture.

There is a great deal of nonsense spoken about the sale of gold reserves. It may not have been wise to say "We've put an end to boom and bust", but in a boom it is wise to sell gold. *The Financial Times* continually posted photographs of veteran cars on its front page to indicate that they appreciate in value more than gold, during the longest period of prosperity in British economic history.

The value of gold speculatively increases in a recession, otherwise holding reserves in a boom is unnecessary and possibly profligate, in a global economy.

The reserves of the world's gold is now with the Brazil, Russia, India, and China predominantly. I suggest Mr. Paterson check his economics!

CARLO ZAMBONINI
Royston

Name will live on for years

WITH the Goodes Court development in Baldock Road, I was very pleased to see the name Goodes will live on for years to come.

I was given to believe Edwin J Goode, a successful engineer and agricultural contracting business, moved from Elmdon to Royston in 1921.

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Getting a line on George

THE picture from your archives (*All Our Yesterdays*, April 7) shows George Bailey who lived at Parkside, near Buntingford.

George was a telephone engineer, and had been so for most of his life, looking after exchanges and customers' lines around the local area, hence the Post Office – 1981 was pre BT – van in the background).

I believe I am correct in saying that he was 60 in 1981 so the award he is holding could have something to do with his length of service, or possibly a RoSPA award for 30 or 40 years of accident free driving.

George was also a well respected member of a local horticultural group, possibly Cottered.

DEN BAVISTER, via e mail

Why increase leisure costs?

I'VE just read that the leisure centre will be increasing prices for swimming from £3 to £3.60 for members, and £4.20 to £4.60 for non-members, making the leisure centre one of the most expensive in Herts.

After we have waited 10 years for our leisure centre, what justification do they have in increasing these costs? Is it down to non-usage by locals? If so, ask the reason why.

The staff are often rude and the strictness shown when the inflatables are out is often regimental, with children being far from allowed to enjoy themselves.

For my family to swim up and down like goldfish in a bowl, a family of four will now pay £18.40.

For a little extra you can go to Aqua Splash at Jarman Park.

Was it worth all the wait? I think not.

D DELLAR
Bassingbourn

JOHN SMITH

It's a mystery

YOU'LL find the subject of our Page 2 mystery picture on the wall of Royston Catholic Church in Melbourn Road.