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Conservatives  
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the taxpayer

# InTouch

February 5 2010

*with Great Yarmouth*



More than 1200 sign up in support of Great Yarmouth revamp

# STATION CAMPAIGN STEAMS AHEAD!



We need YOUR  
support!  
Sign the petition  
on page 2

## What you think

The "Fix our Station" campaign has been overwhelmed with people signing the petition and giving their support to the campaign. Here are some of the views you have expressed.

"I am pleased to see your campaign to have something done about Great Yarmouth Station, which I consider to be a disgrace. A place where it is embarrassing for me to meet relatives or friends, as well as being a very poor welcome for tourists who come here for a well earned holiday."  
Mr R Smith, Great Yarmouth

"We moved from Bedfordshire in 2006 and have been embarrassed by our friends and family with their adverse comments about their impressions of this station!"  
Mr J Adam, Hopton-on-Sea

"We are regular visitors to Yarmouth and the station is a disgrace! Please fix it to create a good first impression to the town. Good luck with your campaign."  
Visitors from Adelaide, South Australia

Since Brandon Lewis launched the "Fix Great Yarmouth Station" campaign, it has received widespread support from across the area. Chairman of the Conservative Party, Eric Pickles MP, joined him at the launch during a visit to the Great Yarmouth constituency.

In his distinctive no-nonsense way, Eric was damningly honest about his views on the station, "This station does nothing to welcome visitors, it is a disgrace. We do not want to see coastal towns forgotten about because they are at the end of the line; we want them placed high on the agenda."

The campaign received a massive boost when just a week after it was launched, over 1200 people had joined the Facebook group highlighting the sorry state of the town's station. Clearly delighted by the response Brandon said, "National Express East Anglia are embarrassed by the publicity generated and have agreed to meet to discuss the problem. I will give them a long list of improvements that residents are demanding."

"I am angry that every other station between here and Norwich are pleasant and welcoming. Why has Great Yarmouth Station been neglected and allowed to decay?"



Eric Pickles MP (third from the right) joins campaigners to launch the Fix Our Station campaign. More than 1200 have already joined the campaign for a station revamp.



Inside: Beach clean-up • Tax on views • Fire alarm

## Bridge revamp is vital

Although urgent improvements to the railway station are identified as a priority, this should only be a starting point to regenerating the whole area, according to community campaigner, Brandon Lewis. That's why he is backing a bid by the local Fairshare Panel to the Heritage Lottery Fund to help restore the run down Vauxhall Bridge.

"The bridge provides a vital pedestrian link from the station, across the river to the town. I am pleased that Norfolk Conservatives have already pledged £300,000 towards restoring the bridge but it's going to cost many times that to complete this work," Brandon commented.

"We have seen how other areas of Great Yarmouth have been transformed in recent years. I am sure with determination and a lot of hard work we can make a difference to the station area as well."

Sneaky snoopers have collected data from around 11 million homes



Houses like these in Gorleston would pay extra tax for having a view.

### There's a new Labour tax on its way to your door!

An army of council tax snoopers are spying on hard-pressed homeowners to determine whether they should pay extra tax on their home for "value significant" features.

This will mean that homes with patio gardens, double glazed windows, balconies, conservatories and even greenhouses will

receive higher Council Tax bills. The taxation doesn't just stay in your own home though. If you live in a quiet street, near a local bus stop, or maybe have views of the sea then yet again, the taxman will be waiting to raise your bill.

Local campaigner Brandon Lewis is angered by the latest Labour led tax plan; "Gordon Brown and the Labour government have an unwavering and obsessive attraction

to penalising hardworking families across the country. People having saved and then invested in their family home will be hit by another wave of taxes."

So far, the sneaky snoopers have collected data from around 11 million homes.

Could your home be on this list already?

Experts suggest the plan could mean a whopping £430 extra on an average Council Tax bill.

## Fix Our Station Petition

**"We the undersigned demand that National Express East Anglia make urgent improvements to Great Yarmouth Train Station. We are angered that it has been neglected leaving it in a poor condition with sub-standard facilities. We want a bright, welcoming station instead of the eyesore that we currently experience."**

Name .....	Name .....
.....	.....
Address .....	Address .....
.....	.....
.....	.....
Email .....	Email .....
.....	.....
Signature .....	Signature .....
Date.....	Date.....

**Please return this petition form to Fix Our Station Campaign, Suite 20, Great Yarmouth Business Park, Great Yarmouth, NR31 0ER**



## Town bids for purple flag

**Prospective Conservative MP, Brandon Lewis, has welcomed news that Great Yarmouth plans to apply for prestigious purple flag status that would recognise the town as being a place for a "good night out."**

The scheme is similar to the Blue and Green flags awarded to good beaches and parks.

It requires the town to show that its nightlife is a benefit to both visitors and residents. It encourages councils to attract a wide-range of people to the town centre so they can enjoy a night out in a safe and welcoming environment. With active involvement from local police, other winners have seen a marked fall in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Brandon said: "Many people are worried that our town centres are seen as no-go areas at night. Different groups working together would change this. I want to see more people coming in to our town centre in the evenings, behaving responsibly and having a great time."

**KeepInTouch**

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# Lazy Labour MPs vote for extra long holiday

## InBrief

After the scandal and controversy that surrounded the MP's expenses revelations last year you would think our elected representatives in Westminster would be on their best behaviour as the General Election looms.

Not so for many of the Labour MPs in the House of Commons who voted themselves an extra long half-term break this February.

This is in addition to one of the longest Christmas holidays for our politicians in modern times. Both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats voted against the sneaky plans for a whopping twelve-day holiday.

When hard-pressed families are struggling to recover from the deepest recession since the Second World War it seems incredible that Labour MP's think it right to jet-off overseas to top up their tans.



### ■ Shaky start to year for house prices

Labour's recession seems to have hit homeowners in Great Yarmouth particularly hard, new figures from leading estate agents Rightmove have revealed.

Their authoritative house price index shows that prices in East Anglia have plummeted by a massive 8.4% in January compared to the level a year ago. This contrasts with a slight upward trend of 0.4% nationally.



The report suggests that householders in the East are not confident of a strong recovery to the economy over the next year and is reflected in the asking prices of houses on the market.

Brandon Lewis commenting on the report said, "This paints a pretty bleak picture of the economy in the Great Yarmouth area. House prices are dropping and vital government jobs lost in the town. That's not a good start to the year."

### ■ Ex-Mirror man to vote Conservative

The former Editor of the Daily Mirror, and lifelong Labour supporter, Mike Molloy, has said that he will vote Conservative for the first time at the forthcoming general election.

He says: "When New Labour came to power, I was confident they would change Britain for the better.

"Well, we all know how wrong I was... the experiment with New Labour has ended in catastrophe and this Government has wasted money like no other in history.

"So I shall vote Conservative for the first time in my life."

### ■ A new green deal

Conservatives plan to give every household the right to have home energy improvements of up to £6,500 in what has been described as a new "Green Deal" for Britain.

The programme would be targeted at those most in need of cutting their fuel bills and to heat their homes more efficiently.

The plans would help millions of families to benefit from improvements – creating jobs and tackling fuel poverty in their areas. It would save money, save energy and save our environment.

# Great Yarmouth beach set for spring clean



Brandon Lewis will lead a team of volunteers in a clean up of Great Yarmouth's beach area later this month. The event is part of the "Big Tidy Up" backed by environmental group Keep Britain Tidy.

Brandon urges others to join him, "The seafront is so important for the prosperity of our town.

"I will be highlighting that we all have a role in making sure the beach is kept clean.

"The message is clear – visitor or resident – take your litter home and keep our beaches clean for everyone to enjoy."

■ Anyone wanting to join the clean up team can meet outside the Britannia Pier at 10am on Saturday 20th February, or phone 01493 650505 for further details.



**KeepInTouch**

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## InBrief



## Brandon brought to book

**The BookTrust is an independent UK-wide charity dedicated to encouraging people of all ages and cultures to enjoy books.**

**Brandon Lewis recently met with the charity to lend his support and learn more about how they operate.**

**Brandon Lewis said: "With two young children myself, I support the excellent work of BookTrust.**

**"Like many other families, we have received books for our children via the great Bookstart initiative.**

**"It is so important for children to have their own books, as well as being able to borrow books from the local library and school.**

**"Often Bookstart provide these early books to children who would otherwise not experience the joy of books at home.**

**"Reading is a vital skill everybody should be able to enjoy and BookTrust work hard to try and achieve this."**

## Be a life saver

**During the winter months blood donations dip, as donors are unable to reach donation clinics due to bad weather or because they are suffering from flu.**

**This puts an enormous strain on our blood stock levels.**

**That's why Brandon Lewis took the lead and encouraged his campaign team to join him at a recent donor session in Martham.**

**Brandon urged others to do the same, "By giving up an hour of your time you can save lives."**

# FIRE ALARM!

## Your home at risk from Labour cuts

**A firestorm of cuts looks set to sweep through our local community as new laws planned by the Labour Government threaten our fire and rescue teams in Gorleston and Martham.**

The new laws currently being debated at Westminster could force fire chiefs to downgrade fire stations and engines in "middle income" areas as they are forced to shift these vital resources to areas where there are social and economic problems.

Brandon Lewis has already taken action to highlight the danger.

He said: "I have written to the Norfolk County Councillor responsible for overseeing the Fire & Rescue service and the Commander of the Fire Authority to seek assurances from them that they won't put our lives and property at risk."

"We all pay for our fire service through the council tax, yet Labour wants to cut cover putting our houses and businesses at risk.



"Yet again, hard-pressed families and pensioners are paying for the cost of Labour mistakes. No one sector of our community is more entitled to the full

service that a fire authority can provide than another. Those resources should not be shifted in favour of the minority."

"We should never play silly

games with our public services when people's lives and properties are at risk. We want a Fire Service for all putting fairness before Labour's petty class war.

## Brandon backs community 'right to buy'



Post Offices could be saved from closure under community "right to buy".

**New research has revealed that under Labour, 5,400 post offices, 200 libraries and 3,500 pubs have been lost across England.**

In Great Yarmouth, new figures show that twelve post offices were closed in the last decade.

Under new Conservative plans, far-reaching new powers could be given to people to protect community assets from closure and take over the running of public buildings and community assets.

Brandon Lewis has given his backing to the new 'Community Right to Buy' that would allow not-for-profit community groups across the Great

Yarmouth constituency to take over the running of struggling local facilities, from post offices to pubs to parks.

Brandon said, "Under Labour, local neighbourhoods have lost too many essential local services and facilities. Gordon Brown's Government has closed post offices and driven local pubs into the ground. People feel powerless to stop their communities losing access to vital services and facilities. So the Conservatives will give bold new powers to people to protect and improve vital community assets and preserve the social fabric of our neighbourhoods."

### Crackdown on high-rate lenders

**Lenders that charge annual interest rates of over 1000% are to face a crackdown if a Conservative Government is elected.**

**The greedy lenders exploit vulnerable families who have found it even more difficult to access affordable credit through High Street banks during the recession.**

**Brandon Lewis expressed concern that already struggling families face a spiral of debt by using so called "Payday lenders". "When official interest rates are so low it is disgusting that some lenders are charging exorbitant interest rates. A Conservative government will set up a Consumer Protection Agency for the financial services sector, which will look into such cases."**

**Tell Brandon your views at [www.brandonlewis.org](http://www.brandonlewis.org)**

