

InTouch



Update from Great Yarmouth Conservatives



Team takes to the streets

Brandon Lewis, the Conservative Party candidate for Great Yarmouth, is pictured with the camp[aign team who visited on January 27. The team.....

Lewis looks to set up Conservative coastal network

Brandon Lewis is looking to work with other Conservatives based in seaside constituencies to champion the cause of Britain's coast.

He was extremely disappointed that Gorleston will have to wait until at least 2010 for repair work to rebuild its crumbling sea wall.

But he has already met with Laura Sandys, the Conservative candidate for South Thanet, to discuss important issues that face coastal towns.

Brandon said: "The idea of forging a link with someone so far away may seem a strange one, but in reality it makes very good sense."

"I am hoping to meet with my other colleagues in coastal towns. I hope that by working together we will have a greater voice and influence in Parliament to help get things done which could make a real difference for residents."

Reports say Defra will not be in a position to go ahead with the estimated £8million repair work until 2010 at the earliest.

He believes Gorleston should not be made to wait so long for vital repair work to be carried out after a series of cracks were spotted in the wall which support the promenade.

Let Brandon know your views
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Brandon: Greater incentives would help boost recycling

Brandon Lewis wants the Government to improve recycling support to Norfolk.

Even though the local authority currently boasts some of the best recycling rates in the region, Mr Lewis is confident the amount recycled would be even better if there were greater incentives and rewards.

Recycling credits from Government could earn counties like Norfolk more money to use for services for residents.

Brandon said: "Money like this could make a really big difference for local authorities and help them improve their recycling rate tremendously. And this difference could make a real impact to the environment; it is something that needs to be looked at."

According to figures from the Department of Environment and Rural Affairs, Norfolk is the fourth best county in the country, narrowly behind leading county Nottinghamshire. Mr Lewis eagerly wants to see Norfolk topping the table.

One of the key ways for the figure to be pushed up is through the recycling of garden waste. Norfolk County Council has recently sold nearly 30,000 compost bins to residents.

Mr Lewis said: "Collecting garden waste and



making compost is an excellent method of recycling and something which is very straight forward and easy to do.

"The best thing is it really can make a huge difference to the environment at a very small expense to the household, it is certainly something I would promote and encourage."

Mr Lewis says the biggest problem at the moment with recycling figures and funding is that local authorities are currently only receiving Recycling Credits from the Government for the household and green waste which is recycled in their area by domestic households. They currently receive nothing for the

amount of waste recycled by businesses and Mr Lewis believes this is a missed opportunity.

He said: "Everyone recognises the importance of recycling in this country to help protect our environment for this generation and for those in the future."

"We are rapidly running out of landfill space so the importance of recycling is high and we need to do everything we can to recycle as much as we can and local authorities need as much support as possible to achieve this. And much of this support comes from central Government."

What do you think about incentives for recycling?

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New hotel and restaurant to benefit local business

The residents of Gorleston and Great Yarmouth are set to benefit with the development of a new Travelodge Hotel and Toby Inn and Restaurant at Beacon Park.

This is the first custom built hotel and pub to be built in the borough for many years and sees the continued successful development in this beautiful landscaped setting. Building work is due to start in April and will be followed later in the year with a Neighbourhood Centre which will include a convenience store and other facilities for residents and workers alike.

Barry Stone, Deputy Leader of the Borough Council, commented, "This will be a great boost to the facilities and amenities available in this area as well as an incentive to the business community who can



Brandon with Barry Stone, Deputy Leader of Great Yarmouth Council.

now rely on quality business style accommodation"

Residents in Great Yarmouth will soon be seeing the results of the improvements to Marine Parade, phase two, which is due

to be completed by Easter. Phase three should then commence in September with the improvements and benefits that this will bring to the thriving tourist industry.

Lewis concern over young victims of crime

Brandon Lewis is greatly concerned that young people are becoming an increasing target for criminals. In Norfolk 11 to 16-year-old victims made up nearly a fifth of all those who were robbed.

While this number is down on East of England regions Bedfordshire (38%) and Hertfordshire (32%) Mr Lewis says the number is still way too high.

"These are dreadful statistics which reveal a worrying trend in our society," said Brandon.

Norfolk's figure for 17 to 22 year old victims was also lower than Beds and Herts but its total for 23 to 29 years olds was the highest in the East of England.

These figures could be even higher in reality as Government research shows only eight out of 10 robberies are reported.

The figures showed 82,344 robberies were carried out on people aged 11 to 16 last year, the equivalent of nearly 600 robberies for every school day.

What's your view on crime?
Are you a victim?

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The statistics also showed that an alarming amount of the robberies were carried out by people just as young with 40 per cent of all offenders being aged between 11 and 16 years old.

Mr Lewis added: "Not only are these victims of crime getting younger but so are the criminals. This is a disturbing trend.

"For some young people the chance of having their mobile phones and iPods stolen and seeing their friends mugged is becoming a part of day to day life.

"The Government cannot be complacent about this. It is a problem that needs immediate and careful attention.

"Better schooling and education would mean our young people would have a better chance of good employment and would not have to resort to stealing."

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Brandon turns up the heat on rising costs of living

As colder weather moved into Norfolk, Brandon Lewis added his voice to those calls for action to tackle the rising costs of living under the current Government.

This issue has been heightened recently thanks to rising gas costs that many have labelled a "rip off".

Conservative leader David Cameron recently highlighted the escalating rise in living costs under Labour and called for an official Office of Fair Trading probe into the prices being charged for domestic gas despite recent falls in wholesale prices.

Brandon said: "For vulnerable groups, such as pensioners, who spend relatively more on council tax and energy bills, the cost of living is rising even faster.

"Inflation is running higher than average pay rises, and real take-home pay is falling. Conservatives are standing up for working people and pensioners to keep the cost of living down and the quality of life up.

"People are finding it harder to make ends meet. When it comes to items not controlled by the Government but where they could make a difference, such as utility bills, they do nothing."

Lewis: Yarmouth schools will not be left behind

Brandon Lewis has welcomed news that the Department For Education And Skills had brought in Tim Byles, former chief executive of Norfolk County Council, to take control of the Partnership for Schools.

Mr Lewis believes the Government has severely let down students by not fulfilling its pledge to pump £45 billion into a schools rebuilding programme.

It has been reported that Mr Byles is currently talking to ministers about abandoning the building targets and hopes to announce news ones this year.

Brandon said: "It is comforting to know that someone with strong links to Norfolk will be in charge of sorting this mess out. But I am hopeful Mr Byles will be able to address this problem not just in the county but all the way across the country.

"He has a massive job ahead of him and I wish him all the very best with his task.

"I hope that at some stage I

may be able to assist him."

He said: "I will be keeping an extra close eye on the schools in Great Yarmouth to ensure they are not left behind.

"We have some fantastic schools in Great Yarmouth with excellent teaching staff and they deserve and need the full support of the Government so they can not only continue their work but enhance it."

Labour launched its scheme in 2004 promising to spend £3 billion a year rebuilding or refurbishing every secondary school in the country over the next 15 years and pledged that the first 100 building contracts would be signed in 2006 and the first 100 new schools would open this year.

However according to Conservative Party figures, only five building contracts have been signed so far and the Government now only expects to open 12 new schools by the end of 2007. In 2008 it was planned to open 200 schools but now only 56 are expected.