



Barry Edwards

Community activist and campaigner

Newsletter Spring 2017

Cross Street: enough Talking, time for Action!

Over the past few months I've been talking to lots of people who live in the West Oswestry ward. You told me you were sad about the state of the empty shops in Cross Street. Some businesses like Baby Bird Café and Designs In Mind have tried very hard to improve the street but Shropshire Council hasn't done its bit. That's why I formed a campaign group to improve Cross Street and I'd welcome your involvement. Send me an email if you want to know more or join our facebook campaign www.facebook.com/groups/Crossstreetcampaign.



Barry's campaign in Cross Street

Because of public pressure there has been yet another meeting of Shropshire and Oswestry Councillors to discuss what can be done. These meetings have gone on for 5 years whilst shop fronts have deteriorated and some have become dangerous. Oswestry South Councillor, Duncan Kerr, and myself have called for Shropshire Council to use its powers under the Town and

Country Planning Act to compel owners to tidy up these buildings and get them let. Shropshire Council is already doing this in Much Wenlock, so why not in Oswestry as well? It might cost a little but the Council has just found £8M for a road west of Shrewsbury so it's time that Oswestry got a fair deal!

Council Tax – Pay more, get less

Shropshire Council is putting its Council Tax up by 3.9% in April, that's more than inflation and will be very hard for those of us on low incomes. What's worse is that they are asking us to pay more but are giving us less. The Council Leader admitted last week that the previous policy of the Conservative group on the Council had been a mistake. Unfortunately, it is us the residents who are having to pay for their mistakes. To add insult to injury Councillors from the Conservative, Labour, and Lib Dem groups all rejected a very modest proposal from Oswestry Green Party Councillor Duncan Kerr to save over £100,000 a year by cutting their own allowances by just 10%; which would still give them more than their counterparts in Telford and Herefordshire.



(Election date May 4th. Deadline to register APRIL 14th)



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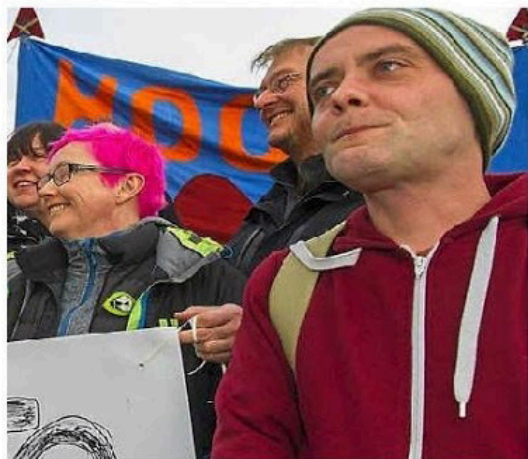
Register to vote here: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Standing up for Oswestry in Shirehall

Times aren't very easy now and though we hope they will improve it seems that the Council will continue to be short of money. It is very important that we have a powerful independent-minded voice who can stand up for Oswestry when decisions are being made in the Shirehall. Two years ago, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council both came from Oswestry, but they

have both decided to stand down from leadership roles.

Let's make sure we are represented by strong campaigners in the future who won't give up on our great town.



Oswestry Defend Our NHS

I am currently co-chairing a group that are fighting the cuts being made to the NHS. *Oswestry Defend Our NHS* is affiliated to the highly successful Shropshire campaign led by Gill George. We meet on the first Tuesday of every month at the Bailey Head pub in Oswestry at 7pm.

The meetings are open to everyone who shares a concern for the future of the health services in and around Oswestry, so come along and get involved in protecting our health services.

Cardboard recycling: A result!

After four long years Veolia, contractors for Shropshire Council, have finally relented and re-introduced a cardboard recycling service. It's great news for all residents, but a real pity that the Council has taken so long to respond to the public protest about the withdrawal of this service. I wonder how much paper has been dumped as a consequence. We mustn't allow contractors to cut costs like this again.



A little bit about me

Over the past year and a half, I have been campaigning on some of the local issues that face our town and people. For those who don't know me I grew up in Oswestry and went to University in Birmingham and, after several years working as a musician, I returned to my home town and now run the Hermon Chapel Arts Centre on Chapel St. At Hermon we run live gigs, talks and other events on a regular basis. For more information on some of the great events coming up over the year visit www.hermonchapel.com

Please feel free to contact me at anytime and thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter.

Ways to contact Barry: email bazmatronics@gmail.com or phone 07794 546 433 or write to me at Hermon Chapel, Chapel Street, Oswestry SY11 1LF

Barry works for you all year round!