

NEWS ROUND-UP



The Tower Arts Centre.

What about saving OUR arts centre?

CAMPAIGNERS for the Tower Arts Centre in Winchester are angry the county council has chosen to save another threatened centre.

The council has announced funding for another three years for the Ashcroft Arts Centre in Fareham, only weeks after delaying a strong public campaign to transfer the Tower to Kings' School.

The Tower will become a part of the school in April.

Tower campaigner Alistair Marsden said: "This is great news for the Ashcroft but it does raise very serious questions about the way the Tower was handled."

"The two decisions are clearly contradictory. The Tower received less subsidy from the county, more financial support from the district and had a real possibility of a strategic partnership with the University."

"This goes a long way to confirming my suspicions that the decision regarding the Tower was made a long time ago and that the subsequent consultation was a sham. It's time for a proper investigation of the facts behind the decision."

■ **Lost to view?** See story right about the Tower Arts Centre and other endangered aspects of Hampshire.

Baftas for our 'graftas'...

IT IS more a case of the Grafta's than the Bafta's for one of Britain's newest award schemes.

The Clean Britain Awards have just been launched by the British Cleaning Council (BCC).

The awards will recognise the work done by the numerous authorities, organisations and volunteers that already work to keep Britain clean.

Organisers also hope that by recognising good work done in open areas used by the community, they can instil a sense of civic pride.

Inspection criteria for the awards includes how much litter, cigarette butts, chewing gum, unauthorised graffiti and dog fouling there is in an area. It is also hoped the awards will provide a good incentive to clean the capital in time for the Olympic games in 2012.

Tuesday's spotlight:

A new photographic exhibition highlights some of

Lost to view?



RURAL IDYLL: St Mary's Church at Twyford - one of the Hampshire views photographed by Christopher Newberry

Hampshire's fragile beauty on film

Andrew Napier reports



THEY are photographs of views of Hampshire that may soon be under threat. Ironically the venue for the show is a Winchester arts centre which itself has a far from certain future.

Twyford-based freelance photographer Christopher Newberry has captured the landscapes around Winchester and his home village. He hopes the exhibition, *Vistas of a Crowded Land*, will remind people of the dangers these landscapes face through development.

Each photo is accompanied by an Ordnance Survey map pinpointing its exact location. Sound recordings will accompany the show to highlight the problem of worsening noise pollution from traffic and aircraft noise.

Mr Newberry said: "I wanted to show the lovely landscape. We have some fantastic views and yet many people don't get to see local landscape photographs."

"We are in danger of losing this countryside, the way the Winchester district is growing. It is planned to grow by 25 per cent over the next 20 years, so there will be more cars, more traffic, more noise encroaching."

The exhibition comes at a topical time. Winchester City Council recently launched a public consultation over its local development framework up to 2026.

An estimated 12,000 homes are pencilled in for the Winchester district alone which stretches from Micheldever in the north to Southwick near Portsmouth.

Local people are drawing up the battle lines to fight proposals for a new estate at Barton Farm on the northern edge of Winchester. Mr Newberry's show features photographs from that area.

Another battleground will be around Micheldever Station where landowners Eagle Star hope to build a new "eco-town" on farmland.

A series of workshops this month has seen widespread public interest with around 800 people attending the meetings to give their views.

Mr Newberry is keen to highlight the less obvious threats from other forms of development. Increasing traffic on the roads is making it harder to find genuine peace and quiet. Earlier this week, the *Daily Echo* revealed plans to have more vehicles, on the M3 and M27 by allowing drivers to use the hard shoulder.

The growth of Southampton Airport will see more planes taking off and landing, further eroding rural tranquillity. The show will be the last one by a professional photographer before the Tower Arts Centre is transferred to Kings' School when such exhibitions will probably cease.

Mr Newberry, of Newton Road, said: "I'm really cheesed off about its transfer, it's really bad. The Tower is a wonderful place."

Ten per cent of the exhibition's profits from sales will go to the Patrick House Workshops in Southampton, part of Two Saints Housing Association, which provides accommodation and training for single homeless people.

■ *Vistas of a Crowded Land* is at the Tower Arts Centre, Kings Road, until Friday, February 8.



See tomorrow's *Daily Echo* for our weekly series tackling important green issues

Echo picture by Joanna Mann. Order no: 6147025

our most beautiful landscapes which could be threatened by development



WATER FEATURE: The River Itchen photographed near Compton Lock.



TRANQUIL: Swans on the River Itchen.



AUTUMN GOLD: Church Lane.



PANORAMA: Twyford Village from Shawford Down.

Have your say

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COMMENT ONLINE www.dailyecho.co.uk

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NEWS ROUND-UP

Man admits harassing his partner

A SOUTHAMPTON man bombarded his wife with telephone calls after their marriage collapsed - in breach of a bail condition.

Darren Whitcher and his wife had been together for 15 years and married in 2002, but their rocky relationship broke down in September.

Prosecutor Richard Withey said Whitcher was arrested the following month for alleged criminal damage and assaulting her and, under a police bail condition, was told not to contact her.

However, within days he rang her, saying he wanted to meet. After he became "wound up", she put the phone down on him.

Pleas

It prompted a series of calls from Whitcher in which he pleaded to meet her, telling her once, "if I can't have you, nobody can".

Eventually she contacted the police and he was arrested. Mr Withey said when Whitcher appeared in court on the assault and damage charges, his wife retracted her statement and the case against him was dropped.

Whitcher, of Pat Bear Close, Redbridge, admitted harassment.

After hearing the couple might be reconciled, Judge Christopher Leigh QC gave him six months supervision and a 40 hours community work order.

He was also told to pay £100 costs.

Drugs courier's wedding hopes dashed see page 11

Pensions poverty fears

A SOUTHAMPTON university study of pension systems in different European countries has found millions could face poverty in years to come.

Dr Paul Bridgen and Dr Traute Meyer, together with a team of researchers from six European countries, have warned that governments must act now to avert the crisis.

Dr Bridgen said: "We are not making specific recommendations because the most appropriate solution will vary across the continent with the different existing pension systems. "Political leaders have to start this very important debate now: they need to shift their attention from financial to social sustainability."