

SAVE Our Pubs



■ John Penrose is campaigning to save community pubs from closure

John Penrose has launched a campaign to save local pubs after eight have closed down in Weston over the last few years

John explained: "The recession is biting hard and many local businesses are under threat. Sadly, pubs aren't immune from the problems either. Many 'locals' are small, family-run businesses which are not only the social heart of their community but provide important local jobs.

"Not only that, but traditional local pubs create an environment that tends to encourage responsible, social drinking. The Government

are trying to tackle binge drinking by blanket increases in alcohol duty on beer. But I'm worried that this will put pubs under even more pressure and won't necessarily curb binge drinking.

"To get to the root of the problem I believe the Government should be increasing duty on alcopops, super-strength cider and super-strength beer, but reducing it on low-alcohol drinks such as 'session bitters' and weaker ciders at the same time. That way they could target binge drinking without driving even more pubs out of business."

Government criticised over plans for thousands of new houses in Weston

Government Ministers have contradicted each other over plans to build 12,000 new houses in Weston-super-Mare

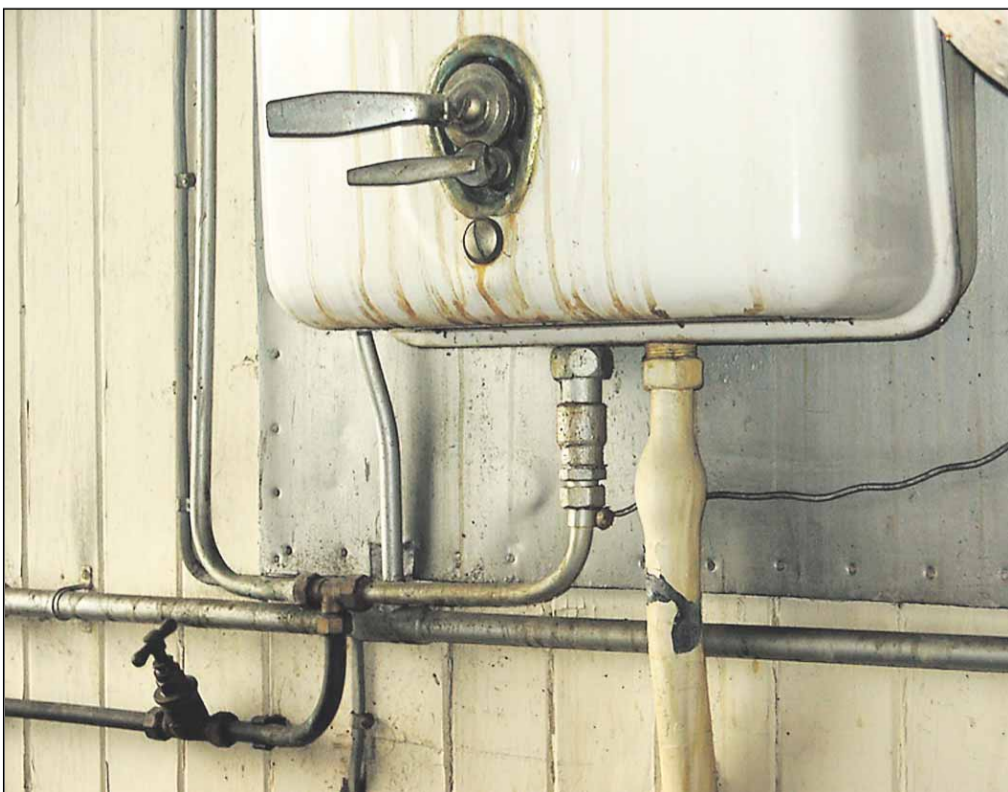
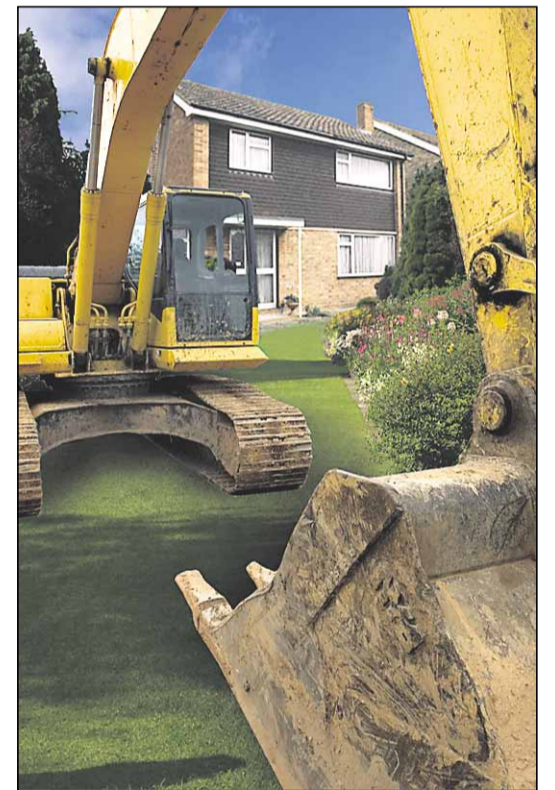
Local MP John Penrose explained: "On the one hand the Minister for the South West, Ben Bradshaw, has said that the Government is going ahead with the plans, but at the same time a different Government Minister is saying that a final decision has not been made.

"The confusion has just made local people even more cynical that they are not being listened to. A huge majority are opposed to these plans because they don't provide the jobs, transport improvements and other public services which all these new homes would need.

"We need communities, not dormitories, and I've called on the Government to think again about these plans."



■ John Penrose has criticised Government Ministers for failing to listen to local people on housing plans



Vulnerable failed during cold snap

MP John Penrose has criticised EAGA, the body which delivers the government's Warm Front fuel poverty programmes, for failing to deliver promised home improvements which would have protected vulnerable local residents from the cold this winter

John explained: "The Warm Front scheme was designed to help the most vulnerable in our society by reducing their energy costs and making sure that those who are frail or ill were kept warm this winter.

"But I think that something has gone seriously wrong. Many frail and elderly

constituents have told me they will have to wait six months for improvements to take place. We'll be well into next summer before some of them get heating and insulation that works. In one resident's case, it's taken over eleven months for EAGA just to acknowledge their application.

"Residents are literally being left out in the cold. That's why I've demanded a meeting with senior managers to explain why it takes so long for improvements to be made and what can be done to speed up the process."

John Penrose MP - Working for you all year round