



Neglected look seen all around our town

A new country you have never visited before. You leave the international airport and from the airport bus on the highway you get the first real glimpse of the country.

Is everywhere neat and tidy or is it careworn and scruffy with weeds growing between the kerbstone like in my picture?

First impressions are important. They shape your attitude to your forthcoming holiday or business meeting. Is it going to be a grand new experience or a 'glad you're not here' postcard?

Sadly my picture is not a third-world country, it is Horsham.

It is not some minor country cul-de-sac, it is at the roundabout where Harwood Road crosses Comptons Lane. Sadly, too, it is not unique. All over our town – 'one of the best places to live in England' – there is the same neglected look.

Our local authorities often forget that they are the trustees for the places we live. We pay them council tax for the 'services' they provide.

One of these is to maintain the infrastructure so that Horsham continues to be a good place to live well into the future.



HDC failed to maintain the Broadbridge Heath leisure centre so it fell into disrepair and then it feigned surprise when it needed vast sums of money spent on it. Now, WSCC is failing us with their care of our roads.

The Government keep the local authorities on a tight rein but it is false

economy when maintenance is neglected. So why are a few weeds important? Because if they are not kept under control it will lead to early breakup of the kerbstone and adjacent roadway.

Then, surprise, sudden expense not budgeted for and an very unwelcoming

environment for visitors (and residents) who bring economic benefits to the town.

The county council plead poverty. Whose fault is that? 'The Government don't give us enough money to maintain our roads (and all the other things we have to do)', pleads county.

A lot of 'services' are contracted out so that money goes to the profits of private companies instead of being ploughed back to the benefit of the council.

Weeds are seen as a minor problem but they are symptomatic of an enterprise (the county council) which is failing.

They should at least keep their parts of the town looking good, to boost the morale of residents and to encourage visitors and, in the long term, reduce future renewal costs.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website www.horshamsociety.org or phone 01403 259038.