



Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter

Issue 47; April 2011

Welcoming Note

Welcome to the April issue of the Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter.

To unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact us through the website 'Contact us' page with a subject line of 'unsubscribe'.

Our aim is to provide you with a monthly update on the work of the Conservative Association and your elected representatives. We would value your feedback or comments.

We hope you enjoy reading the April issue.

A word from the Chair

Activists in Mole Valley Conservatives campaign against the AV referendum



The Association office team is in full election mode as we head towards May 5th for both District Elections and the Alternative Vote referendum. Organising and printing literature, letters to residents and posters for our candidates, campaign managers and all our activists is now the major part of the daily routine at South Street as we pick up speed to get out our voters.

It feels that the row developing into a full blown conflict around the coalition of the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives in Government is reflected locally with spurious tales from the opposition here; except of course there is no coalition locally. The Conservatives in Mole Valley have always primarily fought against Liberal Democrats with other political parties including Labour much further down the scale.

So will AV affect us here in Mole Valley if it goes through? Well Sir Paul Beresford's vote has regularly been over 50% of the Mole Valley electorate and the Liberal Democrats have always urged people to vote tactically i.e. to get people to vote Liberal Democrat instead of Labour and still have not managed to get anywhere. Is it likely then they will give up this strategy of tactical voting if we get AV? No, I don't think so, or they will see their vote go even further down. It seems all rather a waste of money.

And in any case, why would we want to change from our democratic direction? In this country, we decided many years ago, that if you win you win and if you lose – well change your policies because if the people won't vote for you must have got it wrong! I believe that is how policy and politics is progressed and that we should continue to support the mother of all parliaments and its voting system.

So vote No to AV in the referendum on the 5th May and keep the First-Past-The-Post system that we have.



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I have always said I was against twin hatters; this is when a Councillor stands as both District and County member. However, I have changed my mind. It seems to me that if you want to get something done in a place where the Councillor does not want you to get anything done, you have to take it on and get it sorted. So I am joining my other District Council colleagues in this May's election and standing as a candidate in Beare Green ward. I have given up trying to work with the incumbent because I can no longer bear the negativity – so good luck to all our candidates including me!

Councillor Helyn Clack
Chairman, Mole Valley Conservative Association
April 2011

News from the House of Commons Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease – Adjournment Debate



Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease is a fatal neurodegenerative disorder originating from exposure to bovine-spongiform-encephalopathy-like prions. Prion infections cause a spongy degeneration of the brain and ultimately death. There is no cure. The number of asymptomatic individuals with vCJD prion infection is unknown, posing risk to others via blood transfusion, blood products, organ or tissue grafts and contaminated medical instruments.

The emergence of variant CJD and the confirmation that it originates from exposure to BSE has raised a glut of public health concerns affecting endoscopy, surgery, dentistry, organ transplantation, and blood transfusions. About 200 people, most from the UK have been infected, although many more could be. Much of the UK population born before 1996 have potentially been exposed to BSE-contaminated food and the number of people who carry the infection but remain healthy is unknown.

This is an issue that I have been interested in for many years and there are three topics that I will be discussing in my adjournment debate on Thursday 28th April. Firstly, the development of a new blood test for vCJD by Professor Collinge and others at the Medical Research Council Prion Unit. It provides a prototype blood test for diagnosis of vCJD in symptomatic individuals, which could allow development of large-scale screening tests for asymptomatic vCJD prion infection.

A blood test will also enable patients to establish a diagnosis early on – although there is no cure yet - experimental drugs are being developed at the MRC Prion Unit and elsewhere with a view to clinical trials in the next few years and they want to try such treatments at the earliest stage before irreversible brain damage has occurred.

There are two steps that need to be taken now that the blood test has passed the initial study. The first step is to test 5000 American blood donors so they can eliminate the possibility of false-positives and the second is to test it on 50 000 UK donors. Professor Collinge and his team have, however, already



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stumbled into a road block due to lack of funding and I hope that this debate will generate awareness of this important research and keep the ball rolling.

The second topic I will be discussing is the development of the P-Capt filter and its approval. It has been developed by the medical technology company, Macopharma and is a blood filter that removes all infectious prion protein that carry vCJD, therefore eliminating the risk of transmission through infectious prions and ensuring that all blood is safe for transfusion.

Although the National Blood Service has taken several actions to try and minimise this risk, such as removing white cells from blood, a process known as Leucodepletion or leucoreduction and spending millions and millions of pounds on importing blood serum from the US, it is uncertain how effective these measures are at reducing risk, or indeed whether they are really justified should the real number of infected people turn out to be extremely small.

ProMetic and MacoPharma have strongly recommended that the Department of Health implement the CE marked P-Capt prion reduction filter as a matter of urgency to safeguard the UK blood supply. It has been proven safe, effective and is ready to use, with over 350 patients having been transfused with P-Capt filtered blood with no adverse effects.

The filter has been CE marked since 2006 so it has passed EU-wide safety and efficacy testing as required for it to be legally used in the UK. In terms of the financial costs of this filter, full implementation to filter all donated blood would cost around a pound per person in England. A small price to pay considering the devastating consequences if we let this problem continue to escalate. Despite the fact that some people's genetic make-up may protect them from this disease, at least 89% of the population may be susceptible to vCJD.

My third issue deals with the fact that there are three cold sterilisation solutions for use on surgical and dental instruments that have been developed yet none of these have made it into a hospital setting. The reason for this is the Government has not given hospitals or commercial partners the incentive to use and invest in these products. If the hospitals were under pressure and the cleaner was provided at a commercially viable cost then the cost would be lower because they would have a huge market to sell it to.

As we have seen recently in the news, there have been two separate incidents, one at Queen's Hospital in Essex, another in Wales, in which patients have been told they have been put at risk of contracting CJD through surgery. Details have not been released about the case in Wales, however with the Essex incident, the mother of a patient who had an operation in the same operating theatre as those who have been contacted, had developed an inherited form of CJD. That patient has since been tested and found to be carrying a gene that meant she too could go on to develop the disease.

Although the risk of the individuals concerned actually developing the disease are very small, it is of course extremely distressing for them and in the interest of the public's health safety, they will not be allowed to donate blood, organs or tissue. Professor Collinge believes that such incidents are not



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uncommon and that the risk to patients from contaminated surgical instruments was believed to be small but is not yet quantified.

All three of these issues that I will raise are crucial to the prevention of the spread of vCJD and hopefully a chance to find a cure to this horrific disease.

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley

Report from Surrey County Council



I am pleased to report that the leader of the County Council has agreed that the 'on street parking policy' must be flexible and that there is no one size fits all policy solution. He has also confirmed that he is listening to local people on the issues around the policy and will respond to these consultations with local solutions.

Dr Povey said to a recent meeting with the Federation of Small Businesses 'we recognise, and acknowledge, the need for constant customer churn, but also that the removal of yellow lines in some cases will help many small businesses. We are committed to the default position of the first one half hour free parking concession in most areas and this will not change for the duration of my Administration.'

The County Council will go into its third year of the administration on May 11th, still battling with huge financial decisions in reining back the last Labour Government's appalling record of central control and high spending. The Conservative controlled Council has pledged to ensure that value for money for residents tax payers is a high priority, whilst maintaining essential services and protecting vulnerable people.

The new civic year will see a new Chairman of the Council and some changes in the way that the committees are run, including the scrutiny role of the Council's departments. It will also start to adopt the changes set out in the Health Bill by setting up a 'health and wellbeing board', which will in time replace the current PCT in Surrey.

Change is perennial in local government, I admire our Council officers and staff for their huge endeavours to carry it through; it is never easy.

County Councillor Helyn Clack
Member for Dorking Rural



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Report from Mole Valley District Council

Respect for Residents

In a Letter to the Editor to both the Dorking and Surrey Advertisers James Friend explains the facts regarding Liberal election literature:

‘In the past few weeks, a number of Mole Valley residents have contacted me confused by some Liberal election literature.

I believe that the majority of residents know the facts behind our key local issues and I urge all my local Liberal counterparts to respect our residents and only print what is actually true.

Fundamentally, I would hope that all councillors believe in open and transparent democracy and it is not surprising that local people question who to trust when a minority of councillors do not state the facts. Let me be clear, this does not seem to be a problem affecting all Liberals, only some who either do not understand what is actually happening in Mole Valley or who cannot bring themselves just to print the facts.

I could list many examples but I will restrict myself to just three; Curtis Road Depot has **not** been sold for a supermarket development - residents have been given an open, fair and transparent consultation covering all the options and with more than 4,300 people taking part have clearly favoured town centre shopping; District Council Conservatives **opposed** the move of the Dorking Library without proper consultation not least of which because of the loss of income to the district council and therefore pressure on local council tax levels; Conservatives at both district and county level have **opposed** a blanket introduction of on street parking charges and now have a promise from the county council that any charging scheme can be designed locally to encourage appropriate turnover of these spaces to support local traders.

I know local residents know the truth when they see it, please would all Liberal councillors stick to the facts and respect our residents.’

Cllr James Friend
Leader of Mole Valley District Council Conservatives

Feature Article

Election Call



On the 5th May, the electorate will head to the polls and vote not only for their local Parish, District and County Councillors but they will also have the opportunity to express their views on the Alternative Vote System in the referendum. Local elections are an incredibly important cog in the wheel of our



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democratic system and it is essential that we get out as many people as we can to vote in order to give our Conservative candidates as big a mandate to govern as possible.

It is very important that we keep control over Guildford Borough Council and regain control of Mole Valley District Council so that we can continue to press ahead with the current programme and necessary reforms that will benefit residents. Only a third of Mole Valley Council seats are up for election this May

The other side of Election Day is the Alternative Vote Referendum when voters will have the chance to ensure the country sticks to its current first-past-the-post voting system for electing MPs by saying "no" to the Alternative Vote proposal. I have been out and about in the constituency alongside campaigners in Mole Valley seeking support for our Conservative Councillors and for a **NO** to AV in the referendum. There are a number of reasons to vote **NO** to the alternative but the most important reason is that contrary to the claim of the AV supporters it is a most unfair system

AV is a system where if you voted for a fringe party such as BNP or the Pirate Party of Surrey, your votes would, if the lead candidate did not get 50% or more, be counted more times than people who voted for the mainstream parties. I personally do not think that is fair! If we were to end up with AV we would find ourselves in the position of having Coalition Governments as a norm. This would mean that as the third party the UK would expect the Liberal Party to always be part of Government. Whatever the vote you get Clegg! As we have at the moment, voters will end up with a government that absolutely no one voted for.

Baroness Warsi, Party Chairman, has also been on the campaign trail to raise awareness of the 'No to AV' campaign. As she put it "our democracy is built on a fair and simple principle: each person has one vote, and the candidate with the most votes wins. AV turns this principle on its head. Not only do some people end up having more votes counted than others, but under AV, the candidate who comes second often wins. Just imagine if we applied this to our sports competitions. In the boxing ring, the guy's who's knocked out is declared the winner. In the Grand National, the horse that comes second wins. In the London Marathon, it's not the guy who crosses the finish line first who gets the gold medal, it's the runner who came second or even third. It's crazy. We wouldn't stand for this in a boxing ring or at the London Marathon, so why on earth should we stand for it in our politics?"

The 'No to AV' campaign has brought many Tory Labour opponents together over their combined disagreement with the introduction of AV. One of the most unlikely is between David Cameron and Labour former Home Secretary, John Reid, who shared a platform to warn how changing the way Britain elects its MPs, would end the historic principle of "one person, one vote".

David Cameron has already expressed his fears of AV and said that he felt in his "gut" that AV was wrong. "Politics shouldn't be some mind-bending exercise. It's about what you feel in your gut, about the values you hold dear and the beliefs you instinctively have." John Reid criticized the 'Yes to AV' campaign, which has the support of his party's leader, Ed Miliband, for trying to "change the



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rules of the game” to make up for bad electoral results. “The answer for losing parties is to work harder to win the confidence of the voters, not to introduce a system that tries to change losers into winners by some magical complicated mathematical formula.

Cameron believes that “the biggest danger right now is that Britain sleepwalks into this second-rate system, waking up on May 6th with a voting system that damages our democracy permanently. We must not let that happen. So get out there and fight, and get out there and win.”

As a reminder here are the reasons why you should vote ‘No’ to AV:

- AV is unfair: With our current system, everyone gets one vote. But under AV, supporters of extreme parties like the BNP would be more likely to get their votes counted more times, meaning their votes are worth more than yours.
- AV is unclear: Under AV, the candidate who finishes third can be declared the winner thanks to an unclear, complicated voting process. It’s like someone coming third in a running race winning the gold medal.
- AV is unpopular: Just three countries in the world – Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Australia – use AV, compared to almost half the world’s electors who use our current system. In a poll 86% of Australians want to return to First Past The Post (our system)
- AV is expensive: Calculating the results is a long, complicated process, which could cost the taxpayer millions.

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley



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National news in brief

More doctors and nurses, fewer managers

The latest official figures show that since the 2010 General Election, there are 2,500 more doctors, 200 more nurses and 3,500 fewer managers working in the NHS.

Andrew Lansley said "Labour's box-ticking bureaucracy was not only a waste of money – it was bad for patient care. We are changing all that and giving power back to doctors and nurses so that patients can get the best possible treatment".

Between 1999 and 2009, the number of managers in the NHS almost doubled from 23,387 managers to 42,509, with manager numbers increasing at six times the rate of nurses.

Good not mass immigration

David Cameron believes Britain needs "good immigration, not mass immigration". He underlined the need for Britain to "select and attract the world's brightest to our shores".

During the election campaign, the Conservatives made a clear commitment to the British people that we would aim to reduce net migration to the levels we saw in the 1980s and 1990s. Now we are in government, we are on track to meet that aim.

Private sector employment numbers up

New figures show a rise of 143,000 people in employment, driven largely by growth in the private sector. The number of unemployed young people not in full time education also fell over the quarter.

The employment growth indicates that the private sector will be able to create more jobs than the OBR predicts will be lost in the public sector. Employment minister Chris Grayling said the figures were another welcome step in the right direction but that there was still work to do.

Regional jobs and growth boost

Former Cabinet minister Lord Heseltine has visited the North West to unveil plans to invest £450 million in businesses across England.

Under the first round of the Regional Growth Fund, fifty bids by companies and partnerships to promote economic growth and create jobs will be given financial support.

Ministers said 27,000 jobs will be directly created or safeguarded, with tens of thousands of others supported in associated industries. The rest of the fund will be allocated following a second round of bids.

Government launch internship scheme

The Government have launched a cross-Whitehall internship scheme, which is part of a set of measures that will also include a new 'compact' with businesses, under which leading firms will promise to open up internships and work experience to youngsters of all backgrounds.

Access agreements ensuring that all pupils have an equal chance to get to the best universities are another part of the strategy to help create a level playing field in which success is based on what you know, not who you know.



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Local news in brief

Parking petition reaches magic number

The online petition against the pay-and-display parking meters has reached 20,000 signatures, which means the issue will now be openly debated by SCC at the earliest possible opportunity.

Cllr Caroline Salmon, creator of the petition, has chosen to bring the petition to the annual meeting of SCC on May 10th. She will have 5 minutes to present the petition to Cllr Ian Lake, who will then be given a five-minute right of reply before it is opened up to Full Council.

Full Council will debate the matter and consider making a recommendation to cabinet, who have the final say on the issue.

Bus pass renewal change

SCC has taken over the management of requests and renewals for concessionary bus passes from the County's district and borough councils last Friday.

It is now possible to simply walk into one of 23 libraries, including Dorking and Leatherhead, to apply or renew passes. Visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/freebuspass or call 03456 009 009.

Council will fund parkour lessons for young people

An urban sport involving the scaling of railings, walls and other street obstacles is coming to Dorking with the backing of the MVDC. The Discover Parkour sessions will be held on the 13th April at St John's Community School in Dorking.

Led by qualified coaches the session will run from 10am to noon for seven to 11 year olds and from 1pm to 3pm for those aged 12 to 16 years. Tickets are £5 per person and can be booked via Dorking Halls on 01306 991717 or by emailing boxoffice@molevalley.gov.uk

Road contract to save money

SCC has awarded a contract to paint road markings to Wilson and Scott which the council believes will save £200,000.

The contract will involve painting all of Surrey's road markings including yellow lines, pedestrian crossings and lane markers for the next six years.

Councillor Ian Lake has said "value for money is at the heart of everything we do, which is why we were determined to make sure we got the very best deal for Surrey residents. Safety will be increased because the terms of the contract mean road markings will be painted more regularly than before."

Road safety improvement

Surrey Police and SCC have released statistics that show there were 32 road deaths in 2010 compared with 41 in 2009, while the number of people seriously injured fell from 530 in 2009 to 488 in 2010.

This means that the overall number of people killed or seriously injured fell 9% from the previous year.

SCC said: "We launched Drive SMART with Surrey Policy 18 months ago to tackle antisocial driving and improve road safety. During that time county council road safety experts along with policy officers and firefighters have worked hard to persuade people to drive more safely".