



# Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter

Issue 23; February 2009

## Welcoming note

Welcome to the February 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 February issue.

## A word from the Chair

### Fiscal Stimulus



At the Star Chamber Committee Room in the House of Commons the ex-bankers apologised for the malaise in the banking sector but did not admit any liability for the decisions made. With Government Ministers also not being liable then who is? The lending policies of HBOS cannot be put down to fiscal instruments in the USA – it was the lending in this country which was imprudent. In the 1970s there was a secondary banking crisis when the likes of Cedar Holdings and London and Continental muscled in on the clearing bank territory and when they found they had a problem the Bank of England arranged for the major banks to bail out the upstarts – a great irony as you lose business to the upstarts and then finish up as their rescuers. In those days there were LDTs (Licensed Deposit Takers) and fully authorised banks. In the 1980s the LDTs were suddenly made full banks (pity as BCCI would never normally have been given authorised status). The demise of Johnson Matthey in the 1980s was sorted out by the Bank of England over a weekend. The intelligence of the Bank of England was so much better than the SFA / FSA as the respect by banks for the supervisors at the Bank of England was very high.

Perhaps the Americans regret the abolition on the Glass-Steagall Act which for sixty years from the 1930s, had kept investment banking and commercial banking apart.

I would suggest that in the UK the Bank of England takes over full responsibility for the supervisors of any authorised bank – be it British or Foreign leaving the FSA to look after the supervision of Investment Funds, Hedge Funds, etc. The levy is such that banks would be grateful for the financial relief and for the more mature approach from Threadneedle Street.

Another aspect that must be considered is that prudent building societies are having to contribute an excessive sum into the "save our banks" kitty.

Last month I made a case for the state pension to be free of tax – this would give many people more money in their pocket and the opportunity to spend it without the fear of losing a job. We are not yet in a situation whereby savers are marched down to the local car dealers and told to buy a new car. Those in work will be extra careful and the pensioners who may have relied on savings to bolster their income have seen yields collapse.

We are now hearing that the new buzz words are "Quantitative Easing" – to enable so called Toxic debt to be taken over by central unit and the instruments purchased by using newly printed money. Does the



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Government really want to destroy pensioners by adding the spectre of increasing the money supply and thereby causing inflation? At the present time we are told that deflation is the enemy: but inflation can destroy economies – and whilst it is great to suddenly find your debt is only worth half in real terms the problem is not solved, only redirected.

Will the next month see Ireland, Greece, Austria and Spain follow Iceland? Let us hope not; the task facing David Cameron and his team in 2010 will be even more horrendous should the Euro collapse.

**Mr Colin Crispin**  
Chairman, Mole Valley Conservative Association

## News from the House of Commons

### Capel Clockhouse site



I welcomed Mr Justice Collins's intention to quash the Surrey County Council planning consent for a waste incinerator at the Clockhouse site at Capel on 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2009.

Capel Action Group along with Capel Parish Council, supported by Mole Valley District Council are to be congratulated on their long-standing fight against this abuse of the countryside.

This is the second time that permission for an incinerator on this land has been quashed by the courts. This long-running saga of planning blight on local residents must now come to an end.

The current outstanding permission on that site requires that it be returned to agricultural land. This is part of the permission given for the original mineral extraction and should have been completed some years ago.

It is now important that Surrey County Council enforces this original outstanding requirement, especially as it will be a sign of good faith that Surrey County Council has finally accepted that the site will no longer be used for a waste incinerator.

**Sir Paul Beresford**  
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley

## Report from Surrey County Council Budget under Inflation



At the last meeting of the full Council - even Liberal opposition members were heard to say that once again the Leader of the Council pulled the rabbit out of the hat as by a miracle of number crunching we brought in the budget under inflation by 2.9%. While our budget proposal spelt out more for highways, fire fighters and Trading Standards, they opposed our budget but then in a wave of confusion, some left the chamber in order not to vote against it whilst others wanted to vote for some bits and not for other bits, no doubt mindful that their Leader Nick Clegg MP had announced liberal policy would be cutting highways spending that day. Needless to say our members voted 100% in favour.



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This did seem like a miracle but under the present economic circumstances my Conservative colleagues knew we would have to keep it as tight as possible without damaging front line services. Even so – there may be some hard choices to make after the election.

I have the undoubted honour of having Surrey Fire and Rescue Service as part of my executive portfolio. A couple of weeks ago I was invited to attend the passing out ceremony of young people who had attended a special programme called the Youth Engagement Scheme (Y.E.S.) to take them from being front line prospective hoodlums to prospective fire-fighters during a tough week's course of team work and self discipline organised by the service. I was very impressed at the sheer ambition of the service in taking on these young people who were shown an alternative way forward away from the downward path to crime and imprisonment, I will be championing this programme as it spreads across the County. Along with my colleagues at the county, it has also received support from the High Sheriff as part of her campaign to focus on prevention to stop young people getting in to trouble.

As part of the Brown government's deep concern over Surrey people's lives we have to now undertake yet another round of inspection known as the CAA, this round will judge how well all the different authorities in the County work together to improve the lives of our residents. Music to our ears Caroline Spellman's has announced the Conservative Green Paper on local government reform; it's a good start to get us away from the current over shackled and over centralised regime. Way-to-go Caroline!

As ever please contact me with your comments and issues on [Helyn.clack@btopenworld.com](mailto:Helyn.clack@btopenworld.com)

**County Councillor Helyn Clack**  
**Member for Dorking Rural**  
**Executive Member for Safer and Stronger Communities**

## Report from Guildford Borough Council

### Budget Meeting



At our budget meeting on 12 February, we confirmed a council tax increase of just 2.48% for 2009/10. The response of the Liberal Democrats on the night was absolutely pitiful. As their budget amendment was so weak, they were not even prepared to subject it to scrutiny before the meeting commenced.

Firstly, when they did reveal their proposals, they wanted to lop £100k from the Public Relations and Marketing budget, without specifying where the money would be cut. This area produces all of the council's publications, which explain the services available and how we are performing as a council, and is also the budget heading for tourism promotion, which is very important to maintain if we are going to counteract the effects of the recession on the Borough's businesses. As part of the budget review, we had already looked closely at this area in order to ensure that it was operating as efficiently and economically as possible and had already made savings. Secondly, they decided that, on the hoof, they would merge the management teams of Guildford and an unspecified neighbouring district or borough council to make alleged savings of £250k per annum. This, of course, assumes that there will be no redundancy payments and hence, the Liberal Democrats must have known of a Surrey local authority with four management vacancies.....! This proposal was also news to our management team, who looked suitably bemused!



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Turning to housing, an unfortunate side effect of the reduction in new private sector housing development is that the Borough is struggling to secure new affordable housing and meet its targets. Normally, a significant amount of affordable housing is obtained through Section 106 agreements for major housing developments in the Borough, where the planners require that one third of the properties must be for rent or shared ownership. Alternatively, Housing Associations will often fund social housing with 'enabling development' of market priced housing. However, activity has dried up in both areas at present. At a time when the demand for social housing is likely to increase, with increasing unemployment and house repossessions, it is likely that the housing waiting list will increase still further as a consequence.

**Cllr Andrew French**  
Deputy Leader, Guildford Borough Council

## Report from Mole Valley District Council

### Conservatives save Citizens Advice Bureau



Mole Valley's Conservative Administration has put forward a helping hand to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Conservative Councillor Ben Tatham, Portfolio Holder for Finance said:-

*"Many people in our community are facing financial troubles. We believe that the Citizens Advice Bureau provides a crucial role in helping those people.*

*Consequently we have decided to ensure that the CAB gets the funding it needs in the coming year, so that it can continue with its excellent work."*

The Conservatives also have further proposals for Mole Valley's forthcoming 2009/ 2010 budget.

- Car parking charges – the charges for Dorking and Leatherhead will be 60 pence per hour for each of the first 5 hours, but the 2 hour charge will be reduced from £1.20 to £1.
- Citizens Advice Bureau – there will be no reduction in Mole Valley's grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau for the coming year.
- Allotments – allotment charges for 2009/2010 are already agreed for the next 12 months. However Mole Valley is considering a modified concession scheme for 2010/2011 which will be extended to those in receipt of benefits.
- Use of Park House, Leatherhead – the new charge for using Park House will be limited to £47 per session.

Councillor Tatham said:-

*"We never stop listening to what our residents are saying. Our car parking charges have remained steady for the last few years, but we recognise that more needs to be done to help our local businesses. These are difficult times, but we've tried to strike a balance between savings and higher charges so that Mole Valley*



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*remains a top quality council. To fund the above changes, we are proposing to increase the Band D Council Tax by a further £2 per year. We will continue to have the second lowest rate of Council Tax in Surrey.”*

**Cllr Malcolm Johnson**  
**Communications Officer, Conservative Group**  
**Mole Valley District Council**



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## News in brief

### Credit Crunch hits Constituents



Sir Paul has received several letters from constituents affected by the credit crunch. Several local businesses have been affected by falls in trade and unemployment is rising. Sadly, our local high streets are losing shops and services.

Towns such as Leatherhead and Dorking act as “dormitory towns” for those working in London so the many redundancies in the City are likely to have a great impact on Mole Valley residents.

Some constituents have written to Sir Paul to explain how they are struggling to re-mortgage and risk losing their homes, whilst rising Council Tax bills will add to financial woes.

With the recession continuing to hit individuals and businesses, it will be some time before we can assess how Mole Valley weathers the storm.

### Displacement activity



This week, Sir Paul enjoyed reading some stories sent to him by Policy Exchange, the independent think tank, and thought you might like to read this snippet:

“Westminster’s favourite new parlour game – “Labour leadership election” – really got going this week.

The economy may be crumbling, and Iran might be about to build a nuclear bomb, but the real question is whether to back a Harman-Cruddas “dream team”, or Yvette Cooper’s “stop Harman” platform...

Bizarre as the same may appear to anyone outside SW1, bloodletting for a leadership election really does seem to be beginning, and Downing Street is being sucked into the game. The Spectator reported this week that. “According to one key adviser, Brown does not

believe reports that Harman is jockeying for position – not because he believes she is devoted to his cause, but because “he just thinks it’s preposterous anyone could even consider Harriet could lead anything”. By the end of the week things were so bad that Hazel Blears felt she had to warn her cabinet colleagues to “get a grip”

As a new poll showed the Tories 20 points ahead, frayed nerves appeared to be taking their toll. The normally unflappable Peter Mandelson got into a frappuchino- fight with the Chairman of Starbucks, who had suggested in a discussion with him that the UK was in an economic “spiral”. Lord Mandelson was left railing at guests at a cocktail reception: “Why should I have this guy running down the country? Who the f--- is he? How the hell are they [Starbucks] doing?”

Perhaps the highlight of Westminster’s nervous breakdown this week was the leaked suggestion of a joint Gordon Brown / Barack Obama rally at Wembley. Suffice to say that that particular gig will not be happening.”

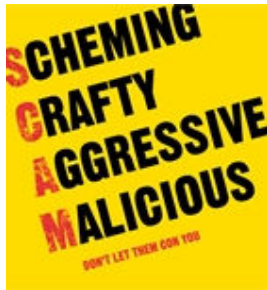


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## Feature Article

If it looks too good to be true...



Over recent months Sir Paul has received an alarming number of letters from constituents regarding money-making scams they have sadly fallen victim of. Scammers can approach unsuspecting people via the telephone, post or, more frequently, the internet. The Office of Fair Trading has recognised the increase in scammers and launched a Scams Awareness Month (SAM) in February to raise awareness of the issue. The OFT pinpointed the scams which seem to be most prevalent:

- Letters from so-called psychics claiming to predict the future who will make predictions for a fee.
- Pyramid selling and free gift schemes People are often approached by web adverts or from a friend who has been taken in.
- Lotteries, sweepstakes and competitions where people are told they have won something - without even having entered – and asked to send an administration fee for a prize which never arrives.
- Foreign money offers and advance fee scams where a letter, email, fax or newspaper ad may offer a huge sum of money in return for your help to get money out of a foreign country, which involves handing the scammers all of your bank details.
- Work-from-home opportunities advertised in local newspapers, emails and even on lamp posts. They make exaggerated claims about potential earnings but require money upfront to pay for materials or to reveal their secret. They take your money but you don't earn a penny.
- Through online dating agencies where you meet the partner of your dreams, who happens to live overseas. They then ask you to pay up to help them fly over to meet you in the UK but he or she then disappears.
- Golden investment opportunities where you will be offered the chance to invest in high value items with the promise they will rocket in value. However these offers are often over-priced and very high risk and as these investments are unlikely to be backed by the Financial Services Authority you may lose money.
- Miracle Health Cures advertised in pamphlets or websites exaggerate claims of the products' effectiveness. Always consult your doctor or pharmacist before buying by mail order or over the web.
- Phishing for your identity via an email or pop-up message which claims to be from an organisation that you may deal with, such as a bank. The message may ask you to validate



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your account information and direct you to a very convincing copy of a genuine site. If you enter your personal and confidential information into this bogus site, the operators can commit crimes in your name.

Scammers are becoming increasingly cunning about how to convince victims to part with their money. One recent case involved a constituent who invested with a stockbroker online who claimed to be part of a genuine stock broking firm but sadly it transpired that he was using their name bogusly as a trustworthy cover. The unfortunate constituent lost money and is unlikely to see it again. The OFT's advice is worth heeding: "Stop, think and be sceptical".