



Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter

Issue 48; May 2011

Welcoming Note

Welcome to the May 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 May issue.

A word from the Chair

Campaigning in Mole Valley



Having hit the ground running on the 1st April 2011 as your newly elected Chairman alongside my new team of officers, I suppose I should be content that the May 5th Local Elections left the Conservative Group at Mole Valley District Council with the same numbers as before. But I am actually disappointed when all around us in the County other Conservative Groups did so well against a nationally dissolving Liberal Democrat opposition.

This leaves me questioning our campaign methods, and how we might up our game. How do we manage our resources? What is our strategy? How can we encourage new members to join our party locally and how do we raise more funds to fund our campaigns all year round without always asking the same people to do all the work.

I would like to visit as many branch meetings as I can over the next few months to understand better how we can help to promote the party on the ground; and I know my colleagues on the officer team will want to do the same. I hope then to bring a refreshed strategy for winning campaigns to our Executive for their approval for delivering such a plan.

Our aim as a Conservative Association is to increase membership, to raise money and to WIN elections. This formula can be achieved if we work smarter.

Over 60 % of our members currently have email addresses and we want to capitalise on this to help us be more efficient in communicating with you; saving our resources for campaigning to win seats in Mole Valley and reducing office admin time to save money.

We know that some of our members are not connected to the internet and we will continue to send out mail by post for members who prefer us to do this. However, I would like to point out that postage has now risen so that a first class stamp costs 46p and a second class is 36p per letter and that



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this along with the time it takes to print and stuff can seriously damage the time we have to concentrate on local and national elections.

If you have an email address please can you confirm it with the office by emailing us directly at mvca@btconnect.com, putting 'Please use this email address' in the subject line and adding your name, address, and telephone numbers including mobile telephone in the body of the email.

I am always pleased to hear from members about other ways we can use your membership fees in a more efficient and resourceful way, so please contact me or the office if you have any other ideas.

Mobile: 07817745843

Councillor Helyn Clack
Chairman, Mole Valley Conservative Association
May 2011

News from the House of Commons Private Members Bill



As I have mentioned before in the newsletter, last year I was fortunate enough to secure a Private Members Bill through the ballot procedure in the House and I proposed a Bill titled, the 'Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Bill'. This Bill has now made it through its Second Reading and I am currently amassing members for its Committee and we should hopefully meet soon after the current recess.

I am currently nineteenth on the list of Private Members Bill's waiting for a Committee meeting slot, however with a bit of luck I hope to jump the queue as my Committee membership is almost complete. Once it has made it through the Committee Stage it will return to the House of Commons for its report stage and Third Reading. Going by past experience, I would usually attach my Private Members Bills to larger Government Bills as amendments; however there are no suitable Bills at the moment for my Bill so it will hopefully go through on its own.

The Committee stage is where detailed examination of the Bill takes places and it is able to take evidence from experts and interest groups from outside Parliament. The membership of the committee has to reflect the current make-up of the House, for example there will be seven Conservative, six Labour, one Liberal Democrat and one other member. I will hopefully be getting in a number of experts and interested parties such as the NSPCC and evidence from current and retired Policemen/women who have been directly involved with the current legislation and its difficulties. As Chair I will select amendments for discussion and only members of the committee can vote on amendments during committee stage.



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Although the original passing of the legislation was a momentous moment in the progress of confronting and working against the domestic violence of children and vulnerable adults, it did not go far enough. The 2004 Act certainly increased the protection of victims by creating an entirely new homicide offence of “causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult”, however children that are caused serious injury or cases where a cause of death is not established, are still left unprotected. Now that we know the original legislation and its limitations, this Private Members Bill provides the opportunity to set about extending the legislation to include serious injury so the protection of victims is further improved. This Bill offers a chance to finally close the gap in the law so that cruel and violent parents or carers face charges which reflect the serious nature of their offences.

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley

Report from Surrey County Council



We now have agreement amongst the Conservative County Group that any on-street parking charges will be decided at the Surrey Local Area Committees. Ours will hear the case for Mole Valley in the autumn and any implementation of the policy in the district will take place in the following spring. It was with relief that the cabinet has at last agreed this publicly after the Deputy Leader made a statement to endorse this decision-making by

local area committees.

The new round of select committees has begun at County Hall and I find myself sitting on the new Health Select Committee and Adult Social Care Select Committee.

The first meeting of the Health SC took place last week and we were able to quiz the Director of Public Health on plans for savings and efficiencies in some parts of the NHS budget in Surrey. I hope we will also attend the Select Committee at the House of Commons as the new Health Bill develops.

Apparently, our new highways contractors May Guerney have in their first month of the new contract already resurfaced over 20 miles of our roads; they have certainly been everywhere in my division, which is very welcome indeed and all down to our excellent Transport Secretary Phillip Hammond MP for giving Surrey money for road expenditure in this year's budget. Invest in Success! For the last few years the Labour Government gradually withdrew all capital funding for Surrey County Council, which meant that the investment needed in our roads was also drastically depleted. The Surrey Conservative Group also voted in favour of investing more capital into our roads; so I expect to see MGs all over our roads like a rash this summer!

County Councillor Helyn Clack
Member for Dorking Rural



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Report from Guildford Borough Council



The day of the election count, 6 May, was a long one, but at its conclusion, Guildford Conservatives had increased our majority from six to twenty – a terrific result and a strong endorsement of our record in office since 2003.

Relatively early in the day, we could see that we had a good result on our hands when Merrow moved from being a tight Conservative marginal in 2007 to solid Conservative in 2011. Thereafter, the good news continued to flow, with the two Lib Dem seats of Burpham and the three seats in Worplesdon falling to the Conservatives. This was followed by a clean sweep in the three seats of Holy Trinity, which had previously been split between two Conservatives and one Lib Dem, and we also took one of the three seats in Onslow. More bad news followed for the Liberal Democrats when they lost two seats to Labour, who gained their first representation in Guildford since 2007. Among the defeated Lib Dems was their Leader, Fiona White, deposed by Labour by seven votes.

Sadly, in the Mole Valley part of the Borough, we were unable to take Effingham from the Lib Dems, but the other eight Mole Valley constituency seats were held by the Conservatives with larger majorities than in 2007.

Guildford Conservatives are determined to make the most of the large majority that we have, which has resulted in a strong influx of new talent to the council, while the Liberal Democrats are thoroughly demoralised.

In a further piece of good news this month, the programme for G-Live, Guildford's new entertainment venue, was released for its autumn season. What is clear is that the venue, which is on budget and scheduled for an on-target opening in September, is creating a real buzz in the entertainment world, with lots of big names wanting to play the venue. You can look round the new venue for free during the weekend of 10th and 11th September, which coincides with Heritage Weekend.

Cllr Andrew French
Deputy Leader, Guildford Borough Council

Report from Mole Valley District Council

In the Mole Valley District Council elections on May 5th there were 14 wards contested. Of these wards eight Conservative councillors were elected and six Liberal Democrat councillors were elected. Mole Valley voted 'no' in the national referendum with a turnout of 53.01%.

And in the Charlwood Parish Council Election, the results were as follows:



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Turnout: 45.6%

Carolyn Evans: 227 (Elected)

Nick Hague: 240 (Elected)

Walter Hill: 162

Martin Needham: 230 (Elected)

Laurence Page: 265 (Elected)

Penny Shoubridge: 293 (Elected)

Charles Yarwood: 344 (Elected)

In other news, MVDC have received nearly 4,500 responses to its consultation on the Dorking Town Area Action Plan, including supermarket provision, which ran from 11 February to 8 April.

Residents were asked to rank the four potential supermarket sites in order of preference; below are the results:

- Waitrose site, South Street – 62%
- Rear of St Martin's Walk – 26%
- Curtis Road/Station Road – 8%
- Vincent Works, Vincent Lane – 4%

A draft plan for Dorking, which will be informed by the recent consultation and other relevant considerations, will be published for consultation in the autumn.

Jack Straw, MVDC's Planning Policy Manager, said "It is clear from the large response we've had to the consultation just how important this is to our residents. The next stage in the preparation of the Area Action Plan will be coming later in the year when I urge residents to put their views across and participate once again".

Feature Article

Localism in Mole Valley



The Localism Bill is currently awaiting its Second Reading set for the 7th June. It is crucial to the stabilisation of this country as decentralisation will be



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given the chance to succeed where centralisation has failed. The result of centralisation has led to a lack of quality services for the public, a breakdown in public trust for democratic institutions and an increasing amount of social problems such as youth unemployment. Centralisation has allowed central government to force its way into areas of public life that were previously managed by local residents and communities.

This Bill will give effect to the Government's commitment to localism by devolving greater freedoms to local authorities and communities. It will introduce a number of measures designed to empower communities:

- current power to hold local referendums on issues of local interest will be enhanced
- council tax referendums when the local authority introduces an excessive council tax will also be introduced
- provide for a community right to challenge, which will allow community groups to challenge the way in which their local authority runs and delivers its services
- Councils will also be required to prepare a list of community assets, which will not be able to be sold until community groups are given the opportunity to prepare a bid for such assets.

One of the key benefits that I can see from this Bill is that it will lift the burden of bureaucracy off the shoulders of local government, frontline public service professionals and voluntary and community groups. For too long, those under the thumb of central command have been more preoccupied with jumping through hoops to achieve targets and process reports. This means that costs have skyrocketed and local priorities have fallen off the drawing board.

Power will now be filtered down into the hands of those who have more understanding of local issues and needs. I hope it will empower local residents so that they may hold their local representatives to account if they disagree with their actions and decisions. This will enable residents and representatives to have a balanced control over how their community is shaped and improved. It is a once in a life time opportunity for communities to be able to seize control over their areas whether it is taking over a struggling Post Office or corner shop, or becoming more involved in the planning of new houses in your village or blocking expansion. This is the moment to help shape your community.

This Bill allows for the return of common sense for example if a Council is unable to run a service efficiently and productively, local voluntary and community bodies, charities, parish councils and public sector employees delivering that service can apply to take over the running of that local authority service.

Under the current planning system there is a lack of opportunity for residents to influence the nature of local development because of the last Government's excessive top-down control and the absence of any formal powers for them to directly shape the plan-making process. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a genuine sense of disempowerment and a resistance to the notion of development, irrespective of its potential benefits.



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Through the introduction of neighbourhood plans, communities will be centre-stage in the reformed planning system as they know their areas better than anyone and should benefit from development. They will give local communities greater flexibility and the freedom to bring forward more development than set out in the local authority plan.

It is, of course, important that this plan-making process is as inclusive as possible, but I don't believe it's necessary to dictate how local groups set about engaging with their community. There are already requirements for consultation and, because good community engagement will be essential if proposals are to be successful, local communities may want to hold public meetings to discuss any contentious issues. The neighbourhood plan would need to pass an independent examination, which might include a hearing for oral evidence. Once the document passes this examination, it would then be put to a local referendum. If 50% of those who vote are in favour, then the local planning authority must adopt the plan. Albeit commendably light touch, I am confident that this process is rigorous enough to ensure that all local residents have a meaningful say on the content of their local neighbourhood plan.

Local communities will also have the new Right-to-Build powers, enabling them to deliver small-scale development without the need for a separate planning application. By following a simplified neighbourhood planning process, these powers will enable communities to respond quickly to changing development needs. Rather than implementing a centrally-driven and prescriptive approach to neighbourhood planning, the Coalition Government has decided to give communities as much discretion over their new plans as possible. However the Community Right to Build won't be used to expand the size of communities by more than 10% over a 10 year period.

Surrey County Council have already taken steps to increase local residents control over their area by developing a revised [Highway Adoption Policy](#) for Roads and Streets, which will give new freedom for residents to adopt their own roads and make them private if they so wish. The Council have also joined forces with Surrey's public service providers, to invite suggestions on the delivery of different, but better services. This is a unique opportunity for residents to tell us their priorities, suggest ideas for where savings could be made and discuss how they could get involved in keeping Surrey special.

Mole Valley District Council, Guildford Council and Surrey County Council have already embarked on a number of ambitious projects to further improve local services available for local people. These projects are part of the wider Surrey Strategic Partnership and will investigate how both councils can best work together with fewer resources, reduce duplication of effort and crucially deliver services that local people in Mole Valley want and need. There are already a number of projects underway, with some focussing on services and others focussed on the way the two councils work together. Such projects include looking at how services for young people are provided; looking at how they can co-ordinate funding received as part of planning applications to ensure it is spent in the most useful and effective way; and aiming to ensure that the Mole Valley Community Partnership is as effective as possible in bringing together work from both councils for the benefit of Mole Valley.



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This Bill will be beneficial to the constituency of Mole Valley as due to its largely rural nature and in the absence of the strictures of centralised top-down planning, local communities and the local council will have more power, and therefore be more democratically accountable to residents.

Localism is also attractive to Mole Valley because it is such a varied constituency, from hamlets to villages, to market towns and with constituents ranging from farmers to City highflyer commuters. More bespoke local government through the general presumption of competence can only be a good thing. It will allow communities to protect that irreplaceable element of their local character that makes the area such a desirable place to belong to, localism empowers preservation.

It is also appealing because local councillors are residents too. They are not a detached political class. They are activists and get involved because they want to improve their neighbourhood and frequently find themselves discouraged and hindered by the red tape handcuffs of Whitehall with endless targets and centralised decisions.

This Government intends that these new powers will actively encourage innovation and a sense of responsibility within communities, which the Government sees as particularly important at a time of cuts to budgets. I hope that Mole Valley and Guildford Councils will take up this challenge with enthusiasm and determination to find ways to improve our communities that we live in.

Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley



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National news in brief

Getting police back on streets

Theresa May unveiled a new package of policies that will cut police red tape, saving 2.5million man hours of time.

The new measures include:

- Piloting extended police discretion over charging decisions
- Reviewing police performance development
- Better risk management
- Reduced bureaucracy around domestic violence cases
- Reduce crime recording categories
- Postal charging
- Reduced ACPO guidance

New plans for dealing with under-performing teachers

Michael Gove has announced plans for significant reductions in the bureaucracy that controls how schools manage teacher performance and deal with poorly performing teachers.

He said, "Heads and teachers also want a simpler and faster system to deal with teachers who are struggling. Far too long schools have been trapped in complex red tape. Schools must be given responsibility to deal with this fairly and quickly.

Improving efficiency of British railways

A new report entitled 'Realising the Potential of GB Rail' by Sir Roy McNulty has set out his recommendations for improved efficiency and value for money in the rail industry.

The Government will now consider which recommendations to take forward and on what

timescales, and is developing a wider package of rail reform to secure a sustainable railway at lower cost that delivers a better deal both to the taxpayer and to the fare payer.

Building a bigger, stronger society

The Prime Minister has spoken of the need to build a bigger, stronger society in a speech. He emphasised that while dealing with the economic mess is the Government's most urgent priority, another long-term challenge of great importance is "creating a country which feels like a community."

In order to help make this happen, the PM outlined plans to modernise public services, as well as create a culture of responsibility in the country as a whole.

The Giving White Paper includes commitments to create a £10million Social Action Fund, establish a new honours committee and the pledge by all Ministers to partake in a one day volunteering challenge.

Voters have given a clear & resounding answer

David Cameron said the British public have given the most clear and resounding answer to keep first past the post.

Moving forward, he stressed that the Coalition will continue to provide "a good, strong, decisive government in the long term national interest of this country." And he added, "That's what we've been for this last year, and that's what we're going to be for the rest of this Parliament."

David Cameron said the Coalition has vital issues ahead on welfare reform, improving schools and dealing with Labour's terrible economic legacy.



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Local news in brief

Surrey School pupils receive positive ratings from Ofsted

Figures released by the Department of Education show that of 396 Surrey schools visited by Ofsted inspectors in 2010, 253 (89.1%) of them were ranked either 'good' or 'outstanding'.

Peter Martin, SCC's cabinet member for schools and learning, said that Surrey "was very proud of the track record that we have. By and large the behaviour across our schools is pretty good."

New name for support network

A support network that provides support for the voluntary community and faith sectors, previously known as Surrey CVS has been renamed Surrey Voluntary Action Network (SVAN).

SVAN have recently signed a funding contract with SCC worth £409,409 to help build and support the voluntary sector and increase activity within Surrey.

Anger over AV campaign

Tensions have been running high between the 'Yes' and 'No' campaign camps in the run-up to the referendum. The vote is the first of its kind since 1975 and will decide whether the electorate wish to keep the current electoral system of first-past-the-post or switch to the Alternative Vote system.

MVDC leader James Friend wrote in response to Lib Dem literature which had been "confusing" voters on key issues, "I urge my local Liberal Democrat counterparts to respect our residents and only print what is actually true. I urge people to vote no. How can a

system where someone who comes second, third or fourth but still wins really be fairer?"

Charity secures funding for new flats for destitute pensioners

Sydney Simmons Homes, an Almshouse charity for elderly people, has secured funding to replace five outdated bungalows on Dene Road, with eight new flats for destitute older people at discount rents.

The Homes and Communities Agency and MVDC have helped fund the project, which will take a few people off the council's housing list.

The work is due to be completed in May next year and MP for Ashted Chris Grayling will lay a foundation stone on May 13th. To offer help or money contact Mr Cadge at Leaside, Dene Road, Ashted, KT21 1EE, or email jandpcadge@ntlworld.com

Villagers concern as home plans are submitted again

Developer Taylor Wimpey has submitted new development plans for homes in Westcott, which have been met with the same opposition as previous ones.

The chairman of Westcott Meadow Action Group, said that despite the new application being for fewer homes, it would be equally damaging.

Taylor Wimpey disagrees, arguing public consultation events had allowed people to express their views, which had then been considered in putting together the new application. They say that they have worked with the council to ensure traffic, ecology and flooding issues were resolved.