

FOCUS



Summer 95

Liberal Democrats Continuing Success

The local elections in May were a tremendous success for the Liberal Democrats. In Merstham, Muriel was re-elected with a sizeable majority. Throughout the Borough a further 2 seats were gained giving the Liberal Democrats 14 Councillors. We now hold influential positions as Chairmen of the Housing, Recreation, Personnel, General Purposes & Property and the Highways committees, as well as this year's Mayor!. In the South East of England we now have 605 Liberal Democrat Councillors, the Conservatives 567, Labour 489, and 128 independents. Around the UK, Liberal Democrats now have over 5000 Councillors and control 54 Councils, more than the Conservatives.

Transport

Transport for all

The County and Borough Councils are now both committed to trying to reduce the number of journeys by car and supporting greater use of public transport and cycling. These transport initiatives will hopefully reduce air pollution, very important for us all, but especially as occurrences of asthma are increasing at an alarming rate.

Liberal Democrat Councillors have successfully fought for funding of a County Cycling Officer and Cycling initiatives. The Borough Council is identifying possible cycle routes. We have also proposed that Bus passes for the elderly and disabled, currently costing £6, are provided free of charge.

M25 Update

Merstham residents are already benefiting from Liberal Democrat Councillors' success in having porous asphalt laid which is much quieter and safer; increased height of the Bund; less intrusive lighting; and eventually more tree planting. Additionally more air-monitoring stations by the M25 are to be installed.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Incinerators

Surrey County Council have been consulting local residents on the 'Draft waste management plan' and a packed meeting was held at Merstham in June. There was tremendous opposition to the inclusion of Copyhold Works and Holmethorpe as possible incinerator sites within the draft. Barry Newsome your County Councillor is seeking to get these two sites removed from the plan before it is finalised in October. This is vitally important as the public inquiry for the EDC waste to energy plant is scheduled between November 28th and December 13th. Barry will be arguing against the proposal, primarily on Green belt, and pollution grounds.

Increased recycling

Liberal Democrat Councillors have put forward plans to the Borough Council for a substantial increase in recycling of household refuse, primarily by collecting recyclable materials from homes; also to encourage the use of home composting for the disposal of kitchen and garden waste. It has been agreed that this important facility will be considered in detail later this year and development of the scheme could reduce the need for incineration!

They need your help!

East Redhill Residents Association (ERRA) has provided the main opposition to the EDC Incinerator plans for the Copyhold Works. So far they have achieved the rejection of planning applications on both the Borough and County Councils, by impressing upon these Councils the overwhelming residential opposition that there is. They now have to face the much more difficult task of making representation to the public inquiry, this is likely to be very costly and they will need to have legal representation. If you think you can help ERRA either financially or in a practical way then please call 01737 215111



Please try to recycle as much of your household waste as you can - remember there are recycling banks for paper (including cardboard), glass, textiles and aluminium cans. Your kitchen scraps will provide great compost for your garden.

For more information on recycling contact either Barry or Jane

Traffic management

The police and local business' have requested the 6'6" width restriction on St Johns Road bridge, Earlswood be removed. The restriction and access only applied to the bridge itself and, therefore, whilst this was a useful measure to stop through HGV traffic, it meant that any HGV wishing access to the Earlswood area was technically breaking the law by crossing the bridge. To counteract the removal of this restriction, Jane is asking for the provision of extra speed and weight restriction signs for St Johns Road, no parking on the bridge and a width restriction except for access when entering the Earlswood area.



★ YOUR COUNCILLORS ACTIONS AND SUCCESSES



Pavements *Resurfacing has been undertaken in Westway Gardens, Huddleston Crescent and part of Bolsover Grove & Chilmark Gardens.

Safety *Security cameras are to be installed around Redhill Town centre in September. *The SAFE initiative aims to help pensioners make their homes more secure.

Traffic calming *Draft Plans for Merstham's Traffic Calming scheme are being prepared prior to full public consultation, involving all residents. *A review of the Earlswood traffic calming scheme will be undertaken in the autumn and Jane will be pressing for the improvements that need to be made to the measures. *Surreys first variable speed limit, outside St Johns School, Pendleton Road has been introduced on an experimental basis; first impressions hail it as a success!

Housing *The refurbishment works in Brook Road, Merstham have been completed. *The next phase of the improvements to the flats in Portland Drive, Merstham is due shortly. *Problems encountered during construction of houses in Elmwood Road/ Westway Gardens have been dealt with. *Details of 11 new homes at Budgen Drive/ The Frenches agreed. *More Council houses are to be fitted with central heating due to extra funding proposed by Muriel. Many tenants will benefit from this facility, particularly the elderly, those with young children and homes with damp problems. *A Leaseholders Association has been formed & the first meeting took place in May.

Roads *Resurfacing of part of London Road South was completed in June. *A 6'6" width restriction will be implemented in Fairhaven Road, to stop HGV's using it as a short cut to the industrial estate.

Grass Cutting *A number of complaints have been resolved and Council staff are considering more 'environmentally-friendly' cutting arrangements in some areas.

Open Spaces *The Borough Council & Crest Homes have reached agreement for the transfer to the Council of six acres of land in the St Annes Drive, Redhill development. The developer will pay for the maintenance costs for the next 10 years and 260 new trees have been planted.

Noisy neighbours *Frank has been pressing the Council to take action on the minority of residents who cause problems for their neighbours. The Government is proposing changes to the law giving Councils stronger powers to deal with such incidents.

Dial-A-Ride *A scheme which will cover Redhill and Merstham is to be set up, involving two 15-seater minibuses, for residents who are unable to use public transport.

Environmental progress.....at last!

Jane has been urging the Council to restart the Environmental Strategy Working Group, which was previously welcomed by local amenity societies. At long last, this essential group will recommence a wide ranging number of initiatives.

The Council launched an Environmental Forum in January and this has been warmly welcomed by residents associations, voluntary and conservation groups. All residents have a part to play in enhancing our local environment, by fewer car journeys, more cycling, home composting of vegetable waste and more recycling.

British Rail Fares *Barry has criticised the Governments announcement that train fares will be controlled after privatisation. Liberal Democrats have long argued that more assistance and encouragement was vital to persuade more people to travel by rail. It is now a case of "too little to late".

Libraries *Redhill Library has better facilities after a new floor was opened in June, including an environmental section.

Dog Bins *2 new bins have been provided at the Crossways garden in South Mertham

CHUNNEL LINK PLAN REVEALED

Central Railway, a private company, is putting forward plans for a £2.1billion scheme taking trains through Merstham & Redhill. We are very concerned at the noise implications and use of overhead power lines. It is yet more pressure on a threatened area.

STOP PRESS

Congratulations! Chris Davies for becoming the newest Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament

The Littleborough and Saddleworth By-Election victory was yet another terrific result for the Liberal Democrat's with a majority of nearly 2,000.

The Liberal Democrat party now has over 100,000 members and we are the only party based on the principle of one member, one vote. Every member has a voice and can get involved at local and national level.

If you are interested in joining the Liberal Democrat party please contact one of us.

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If you have any comments please contact one of us