

How you vote in our area

Con 52%

Lib Dem 39%

Votes cast in the 2003 elections

Only the Lib Dems can beat the Conservatives in our area.

Can't win here



Lab 6%

Also in this issue



Schools funding crisis hits Surrey



Axe the tax

SAVE OUR POST OFFICES

Labour's Post Office closure programme must be stopped say campaigners

Report by John Faulkner

Local Lib Dems are stepping up their campaign to save local Post Offices. Under Government plans, thousands of Post Offices are under threat.

A recent closure in Ash Vale, coupled with a threatened closure announcement in October of the Mytchett Post Office have added weight to the campaign led by Lib Dem campaigner Rosalyn Harper.

Local residents are up in arms at Labour's plans for the Post Office. The plans announced recently involve the closure of 3,000 Post Offices and the sack for 40,000 staff.

Rosalyn Harper said, "Despite Tony Blair's promises to improve the Post Office network, Labour are doing huge damage to the Post Office and to its customers. The closures must stop."

Campaign to save our Post Offices

Liberal Democrats both locally and nationally are leading the fight to save our Post Offices. Thousands of people have already signed a petition calling for action to save our Post Offices.

Lib Dem Councillor Mike Drew said, "After years of Post Office closures under the Conservatives, things have



Lib Dem campaigner Ros Harper and Cllr Cindy Ferguson listen to a resident's view on the closure of Mytchett Post Office

actually got worse under Labour. In the last three years, Labour have closed over 1100 Post Offices."

"Many local residents are already complaining about missed and late deliveries. Following the closure of a Post Office in Ash Vale we now have the threat to Mytchett Post Office. When will the closures stop?"

Cllr Duncan Clark added, "The closure of local Post Offices will mean

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Support our campaign

Save our Post Offices

We the undersigned call on the Royal Mail and the Government to stop the closures of Post Offices in our area.

Name/s .....Phone .....

Address .....Email .....

The Liberal Democrats would like to use the information above to contact you from time to time to keep you informed of campaigns we may think of interest to you. Please write to us if you do not wish to be contacted in this way.

Return to: Surrey Heath Lib Dems, FREEPOST G1 3420, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 5BR

SAVE OUR POST OFFICES.....SAVE OUR POST OFFICES.....

## OBSERVER COMMENT

### Going back in time

The Conservative Party has turned back the clock and picked one of the most unpopular members of John Major's Government as its new leader.

**They must think that people have very short memories.**

Local people will remember Mr Howard's role in privatising the railways, introducing the poll tax and letting violent crime soar.

**No wonder the polls are already showing Tory support dropping even further.**

## Real Opposition

While the Conservatives fight amongst themselves, it has been the Lib Dems that have been leading the opposition to Labour.

**And how our country needs a strong opposition.**

Nearly seven years after Tony Blair took power, it is becoming more and more clear that he and his Government have failed to deliver on their promises. Crime is still rising, patients face long waiting lists and it is clear that the people were not told the truth about the reasons for war with Iraq.

**Thank goodness that someone is speaking up for the British people - well done Charles Kennedy!**

## Contact Your Local Lib Dem Team



Rosalyn Harper and the local Lib Dems work hard all year round for local people - not just at election time.

If you need our assistance please contact us using the details below.

[www.surreyheathlibdems.org.uk](http://www.surreyheathlibdems.org.uk)

Tel 01276 473172

Surrey Heath Lib Dems

FREEPOST GI 3420,

Camberley, Surrey, GU16 5BR

# Schools Funding CRISIS



● Local MEP Chris Huhne visiting a South East school to highlight the Lib Dem commitment to fund schools properly

**The Government has still not done enough to stop serious problems with school budgets continuing next year, according to local MEP Chris Huhne.**

Commenting on the Guardian's survey of the school balances, which found that many Surrey schools were setting deficit budgets to deal with cash shortages, Mr Huhne said that Labour needed to do more. The survey found that schools avoided making an unusual number of staff redundant by running up deficits. But those deficits will simply mean deeper cuts in future years unless

the Government or the council comes up with more cash.

The Government have announced a rise in spending for the coming two years, but it will be barely enough to cover future rises in costs. The underlying deficits remain and that means cuts one way or another.

### Huhne Condemns Labour Failure

"It is extraordinary that the Government has got its spending into such a mess when Mr Blair himself said that his priority was 'education, education and

education," said Mr Huhne. "Planned improvements in numbers of teachers and classroom assistants and the introduction of the new 14 to 19 curriculum are bound to be delayed as schools revert back to larger classes and a more restrictive curriculum."

"The schools cash crisis is another example, along with the botched introduction of family tax credit, of the Government failing to devote the attention to detail that is necessary to make its policies work," said Mr Huhne.

Chris Huhne feature is supported by the European Liberal Democrat and Reformers Group



## £700 per person for a return bus fare to Farnborough?

Local Councillor Meurig Williams has slammed Conservative run Surrey Heath Borough Council for running a minibus service to Farnborough costing £700 per person return.

During the summer, the Council advertised a minibus service to take young people from Camberley and the villages to the Farnborough Skate Park. At a recent Council meeting it was revealed that only two young people used the service, at a cost to the Council of £1400.

Cllr Meurig Williams said, "This was a predictable failure which the Conservative Council seems determined not to learn from. If you are going to provide a service like this, it is probably a good idea to ask the opinion of the people that are going to use it."

"This money should never have been spent to export young people to facilities outside our area. We need our own facilities locally."



● Cllr Meurig Williams asks - "How many normal bus tickets would £1400 have bought?"

# Axe the Council Tax say Lib Dems

Report by John Faulkner

**Lib Dem campaigners are fighting to axe the unfair Council Tax.** Local residents have seen their bills rocket in recent years.

Local campaigner Rosalyn Harper said, "Since Labour came to power, Council Tax bills have risen by 70%. The rises are hurting everyone, especially the less well off."

Lib Dem Councillors have presented a motion to the Council asking the Council to join calls for the unfair Council Tax to be replaced.

However this motion was voted down by the Conservatives who brought in the Council Tax to replace their disastrous Poll Tax.

Lib Dem Leader, Councillor David Whitcroft said, "The Council Tax takes no account of ability to pay and places a disproportionately high burden on residents with low incomes, such as pensioners."

"We want to see the Council Tax replaced with a local tax based on income. This will mean that no one will pay more than they can afford."



● Local Lib Dem campaigners are fighting to axe the Council Tax. They want to replace it with a fairer system.

## Skate Park - Your views wanted

**Lib Dem Councillors want to hear your views on a consultation paper on local skateboarding provision.**

The paper produced by Lib Dems on Surrey Heath Council has slammed provision for skateboarding and associated sports in our area.

The paper calls for the establishment of a central flagship Skate Park, at least comparable in size to Farnborough. In addition, it calls for upgraded facilities

at Mytchett, and new facilities in Heatherside and at Lightwater.

Lib Dem Councillor Alan Whittart, said, "This is not a temporary fad. It is an activity that has a history of over 25 years. Skateboarding is widely recognised now as mainstream and most public authorities acknowledge the need to provide facilities in this area."

Alan Whittart added, "We need better skateboarding facilities, as well as other youth facilities."



● Cllr Bob Smith and Lib Dem campaigners want to see better skateboard and youth facilities in our area.

## Post Offices Battle 3 leaders in 3 years for Conservatives



● Only the local Lib Dems are fighting to save local Post Offices from closure.

Continued from Page 1

more and more residents will face longer and often difficult journeys to collect pensions, benefits or use other services."

"We need to protect local Post Offices in our villages - they are the hub of our community and provide a vital public service".

Residents are being urged to sign the petition to keep our Post Offices open.

### POST OFFICE FACTS

- 4000 Post Offices closed by the last Tory Government
- Over a thousand more closed by Labour
- Thousands more set to be closed under Tony Blair's new plans

Latest opinion polls show that the appointment of Michael Howard as the 3rd Tory leader in just 3 years has not halted their decline.

Since taking over from Iain Duncan Smith, the Tories have fallen further behind Labour. Many senior Conservatives, including Mr Howard himself, could lose their seats to the Lib Dems at the next General Election.

Local Lib Dem Campaigner Rosalyn Harper commented, "It is not just that Mr Duncan Smith was personally unpopular. It is the extreme right wing policies that Mr Howard remains committed to that most people do not like."

### Past Record

Mr Howard has a shameful past record as a senior member of John Major's disastrous Government.

While he was Home



● Ditched - IDS's new policies failed to attract new supporters

Secretary, violent crime soared while the number of Police Officers were cut. He backed rail privatisation and it was his Government that allowed interest rates to rocket to 15%.

Mr Howard is never likely to be forgiven for playing a major role in introducing the poll tax.

### What the papers say

"Labour strategists admit privately they have underestimated the threat from the Lib Dems."

Financial Times

"Lib Dems now the party of opposition, says poll"

The Independent

"Mr Howard became the No1 Tory hate-figure by pushing through the poll tax"

Daily Mirror

"Tory MPs [are].. anxiously eyeing the steady advance of the Lib Dems in their own seats."

Daily Express

# Lib Dems are the effective opposition

## Lib Dems gain ground on Labour as Tories falter

Report by Bob Somper

**Lib Dems have been boosted by opinion polls showing record levels of support.**

One poll in the News of the World showed that half of the country think that the Lib Dems are the real opposition. The same poll put all three parties almost level in terms of support.

The Lib Dems have gone from strength to strength in the last year. Record local election results last May included a strong result in Surrey Heath, as well as gains across the country.

This was followed by the successful Brent East by-election. The Lib Dems came from third place to inflict a huge defeat on Tony Blair and Labour. The Tories finished in a poor third place.

Local Lib Dem campaigner Rosalyn Harper said, "We are gaining ground on both Labour and the Conservatives nationally. Locally, it is clear that we are heading for an exciting finish at the next General Election between the Lib Dems and the Conservatives."

### Tory leader set to lose his seat

The deeply divided Conservatives have continued to decline and things could be about to become worse.

A sensational poll in the Sunday Express shows that new leader Michael Howard is set to lose his Parliamentary seat to the Lib Dems.

Rosalyn Harper commented, "It is clear that the Lib Dems are now the effective opposition to Labour."



## Local Lib Dems' Success

Local campaigners led by Rosalyn Harper played a vital role in the amazing Brent East by-election win. A similar swing in Surrey Heath would mean a Lib Dem victory here at the next General Election.

Rosalyn Harper said, "Surrey Heath campaigners are proud to have played their part in the Brent East win. The result shows that the Lib

Dems can win anywhere and that disaffected Labour voters are switching to the Lib Dems. This bodes well for our campaign in the Surrey Heath Constituency."

In last May's local elections, the Lib Dems closed the gap on the Conservatives in Surrey Heath to just 12% of the vote. A close finish is predicted for the next General election, expected in 2005.



Local campaigner Rosalyn Harper with new Lib Dem MP Sarah Teather

● New MP Sarah Teather and Charles Kennedy - The Lib Dems recently inflicted Tony Blair's first major election defeat in the recent Brent East by-election.

Advertisement

## 50/50 AUCTION

Saturday 24 April 2004  
Chobham Village Hall

Viewing from 11 am

Sale from 1.30 pm

**Admission free**

**Refreshments/light lunch served**

Why not turn those bits and pieces in your loft or spare room into cash? A picture, a chair or a table lamp? A lawnmower, some books or that old vase?

### SELL UNWANTED ITEMS

Let us auction anything you don't need and we'll split the proceeds with you. For higher value items, we'll give you back more than half the proceeds.

### COME ON THE DAY AND BID

We expect a wide range of attractive lots, some maybe selling for as little as a pound, others might fetch £100 or more. Come and maybe find that item you've been looking for - or a nice surprise.

## Help our campaign

Rosalyn Harper and the Lib Dem team work hard all year round for our area. If you would like to help our campaign, please complete and return this form.

Your name-

Your address-

Postcode-

Email-

I will vote Lib Dem at the next election

I would like to vote by post in future

I can display a poster at election time

I can deliver leaflets in my area

I can make a donation to the Lib Dem campaign

£50  £25  £10  £5

Please make cheques payable to the Liberal Democrats. A donation of £5 or more entitles you to become a member of the Lib Dems. Please tick here if you do not wish to be enrolled

Please return this form to: Surrey Heath Lib Dems, FREEPOST GI 3420, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 5BR

Join the winning team

The Liberal Democrats would like to use the information above to contact you from time to time to keep you informed of campaigns we may think of interest to you. Please write to us if you do not wish to be contacted in this way.