

# focus

Local Lib Dems Reporting Back



Councillor Jonathan Lees

## Jonathan says "Thank You!"

Councillor Jonathan Lees wishes to thank all local residents who voted in May's historic General Election.

There was a good turn out, as together we began to rebuild trust in British democracy.

Those of you who voted for me, helped establish the Liberal Democrats as the clear challengers in this constituency.

Together we increased the Lib Dem vote by over 4000, reduced the Tory majority and pushed Labour into a very poor third place.

## Looking Ahead – 2010 to 2015

People have mostly been surprised by the way our political leaders have reacted to the verdict handed them by the British people on 6<sup>th</sup> May – but once recovered from their surprise, a good deal of support is evident for the positive steps taken to provide stable government through the Liberal Democrat - Conservative coalition agreement.

For the sake of the economy and the future well-being of the country, we all have to hope that this bold initiative will be given a real chance to succeed.

In addition, the Coalition agreement offers a great many advantages in its own right. Only those policies that the majority of people agree with can be implemented – no extremism.

As Liberal Democrats we are pleased to see so many of our constructive ideas in the agreed programme of the new government, whilst at the same time Conservative supporters are also pleased to see so many of their manifesto commitments included.

This does NOT mean that our parties are merging – far from it. We have fundamental differences. But from now until 2015 we have agreed to work together to govern and to tackle Britain's severe economic problems.

Meanwhile, despite a few departures, the growth in net Lib Dem membership which surged prior to the election has continued apace. We face the future with confidence.

**Freedom – Fairness – Responsibility**

## THE COALITION - Does it affect us locally?

The Liberal Democrat-Conservative coalition agreement applies only to **WESTMINSTER!** As previously, there will continue to be a variety of arrangements in councils where there is no overall majority, but this is not the case locally, either for **Surrey County Council** or **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council**.

At **Surrey County Council** the Tories will continue to form the administration and the Lib Dems will continue to be the main opposition party. Two by-elections are expected to be held later this year to replace one councillor who has now been elected as an MP and one who has died. Our borough has 5 county councillors, each representing an area called a division. A division covers about two and a half wards. Of these 5 county councillors, 4 are Residents' Party and one is Liberal Democrat. County council elections take place every four years and the next is in 2013.

The **Residents' Party** continue to control **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** with a reduced majority following the resignation of one of their councillors (in protest at plans at charge disabled people in council car parks). Here too the Lib Dems are the opposition. The borough is divided up into 13 wards with 3 councillors elected to each ward apart from one small ward which has only 2 councillors. There are therefore 38 councillors making up the borough council. At present there is one Labour, one Independent, four Conservative, 10 Lib Dem and 22 Residents' Party (or RA as some people call them). Borough council elections take place in 2011.

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## NATIONAL, COUNTY AND BOROUGH-WIDE NEWS

The planning application for **Epsom Station** was permitted, mainly because there already is a scheme with planning permission. Developers will build on the land in front of the station, moving the taxis onto Station Approach with the buses. The new parking area will be for flat owners.

*Two evening taxi ranks for black cabs have been provided in Epsom. One is near to the Ebbisham Centre and one is near the Odeon Cinema in **Upper High Street**. The plan is to help people leave the town centre as quickly as possible after a night out.*

A recent meeting between residents, councillors, policy and licensing officers discussed reducing the noise level in Epsom town centre late at night, after people leave clubs and bars. Residents living in the centre of town are going to work together and log **noise nuisance**. Residents can help by attending neighbourhood police panels to report problems. Contact your councillors (see back page) for details of local neighbourhood police panel meetings.



The Lib Dems have proposed that **free meals for councillors** and their partners at civic events twice a year should be scrapped. Even though Lib Dem councillors attending such events had paid for themselves for some years, the money was not the entire issue. The Mayor's budget was faced with cuts in 2010 and surely it was better to pay for some civic functions than reduce some of the Mayor's activities, e.g. visits to voluntary organisations. Needless to say, the ruling Residents' Party did not agree and their spokesman said the Lib Dem proposals could "diminish the civic life of the borough".

## Free News Updates by e-mail:

*Epsom & Ewell Lib Dems have launched a news service. To receive our news items each Monday, visit [www.epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk](http://www.epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk) and click on "Get FREE News Updates". Then select weekly digests, tick "Consent to receiving news by e-mail", scroll down and click "Register".*

*You will then automatically receive an e-mail each Monday which gives the titles of the week's news items and you can click on the link if you wish to read it in full. You can terminate the service at any time. If you find difficulty in signing up, please contact Cllr David Morgan.*

## COURT WARD NEWS

Your Lib Dem Councillors attended the recent Court Community Partnership meeting. Parking and speeding on **Longmead Road** was a concern and whilst anti-social behaviour had not gone away entirely, it was much reduced. **Hollymoor Lane** shops and flats continued to be of great concern but there is no progress to report at present. Community Arts funding would be subject to consultation—to see what local folk would like the money spend on.

*The new play area in **BakersField** off **Chessington Road** is considered a success, after incidents of anti-social behaviour have diminished. Residents generally feel it has been a benefit to the local community. A request has been lodged for another path within the facility.*



The first Community Action Week in the **Longmead** area took place between 12th and 16th April. 15 tonnes of rubbish were removed from Longmead including paving slabs, building materials, fridges, televisions and doors. Alleyways were cleared and name plates were placed. Over 100 residents visited the council's mobile communications unit. Problems in the **Cotherstone** area are still on-going. Contact Cllr David Morgan if you would like more information.

*On **Livingstone Park**, Cllr David Buxton has been busy encouraging local people to attend the AGM of the Livingstone Park RA which was held on 20th May. LPRA has a key role to play in the local community on issues such as adoption of roads, fencing which needs replacing, parkland, street lighting, etc. He runs an electronic newsletter for residents living on this new estate, so contact him if you would like to receive copies.*

On **Horton Chapel** there has been some small progress! In council ownership for almost ten years, the building needs to find a use and the surrounding area needs to be landscaped and made to look part of the new housing estate. The council is currently looking for two residents' representatives to sit on a new steering group for Horton Chapel. By now, all residents of Livingstone Park should have received a letter updating them on the situation from Chief Executive Frances Rutter—but only because Lib Dem councillors suggested she should do this.

*The infamous **Water Tower** also on **Livingstone Park** has been the subject of a questionnaire to local residents from its owner, L & Q Housing. Most residents have completed the form and returned it by now. Four options for the future of the Tower were offered, one of which was to demolish it, which was the favoured option by many residents living in the vicinity. Cllr Buxton is in touch with L & Q and hopes to publish the results of the survey. Contact him if you would like more information.*

Cllr David Morgan, as your representative on the Planning Committee, has been busy keeping residents informed of recent planning applications in the **Pound Lane** area. He also attended a Silver Surfers Day at the **Longmead Centre**—to watch computer training for older people. The aim is to give people, who otherwise might not have access, the chance to see the internet and understand what can be done with it.

*There's a new traffic system at the "dump" in **Blenheim Road**, which now splits residential traffic and commercial traffic to make it safer. Remember that cars should now approach the site from the direction of Felstead Road. It's also a good idea to take some ID when visiting as you may be asked to prove that you are a Resident of Surrey.*

## The Court Ward focus Team

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## Councillors' Surgeries

Lib Dem Councillors' advice surgeries are held in the Rosebery Room in the Ebbisham Centre on the second Saturday of every month, from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon.

**These sessions are free of charge and open to all. No appointment is necessary.**

The next three surgeries are due on:

- 10<sup>th</sup> July 2010,
- 14<sup>th</sup> August 2010,
- 11<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

## Mobile Street Surgeries

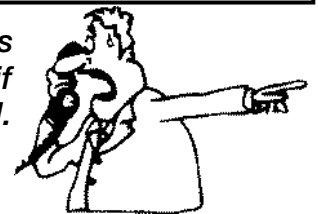
We will be continuing our street surgeries around the ward. We walk down your street and deal with any issues that you raise.

We have dealt with trees, blocked drains, badly parked cars, speeding motor bikes, graffiti, litter and neighbourhood issues.

Cllr **David Buxton** says "Street surgeries are an excellent way for us to visit every road in the ward and see the real problems!"

If we miss you, visit us in the Ebbisham Centre on the second Saturday of each month.

**Got a Problem?** Use this space for any problems, complaints or ideas that you want the **focus** team to take up. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary. Add your name and address in the box below if a reply is needed.



## Help us to help you

Court ward **focus** is a local community newsletter that is produced, financed and delivered entirely by volunteers. It keeps you in touch with what's going on, tells you what the **focus** team have been doing for our area and asks for your views. Would you be willing to help deliver **focus** in your road?

- I can deliver Court ward **focus** in my road.
- I'd like to get involved with the Lib Dems locally.
- I'm interested in joining the Liberal Democrats.
- I'd like one of my Councillors to visit me.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

**Send to: Epsom & Ewell Lib Dems, (Court ward), FREEPOST, Epsom, Surrey KT19 9BR.**

