

Freezing Council Tax for the Second Year Running

intouch

News from your local Conservatives in Coppetts Ward



GETTING BRITAIN BACK ON TRACK

David Cameron's decision to form a coalition was a difficult one but I am convinced it was the right choice: two parties have come together to clean up the mess left by Labour and we're already delivering on our agreement.

It was a great honour when the new Prime Minister invited me to become a member of the Government and a Privy Councillor. I have been working hard as Transport Minister, in addition to my local campaigns in Barnet.

The Coalition's first priority has been the economy. We promised to tackle Labour's record borrowing and we're doing exactly that. In May the Chancellor made immediate in-year savings of £6 billion. In June, his Emergency Budget brought Britain back from the brink with a plan that the markets have welcomed to eliminate the structural deficit. And the Spending Review in October set out measures needed to deliver that plan and put the public finances back on a sustainable footing.

We've also been working to get the economy moving by scrapping the worst elements of Labour's jobs tax, investing in apprenticeships and transport infrastructure, cutting corporation tax and supporting small businesses.

We promised radical reform of our public services and we're delivering with a big expansion of the academy programme in our schools - four schools in Chipping Barnet have already benefitted.

We're keeping our promise to raise spending on the NHS as well as delivering reform. £1 billion of bureaucracy cuts have been identified, pointless targets have been scrapped and whole tiers of bureaucracy are set to be abolished, giving real power for GPs and patients. We've introduced an Interim Cancer Drugs Fund to help cancer patients get access to vital drugs and started recruiting thousands of extra health visitors to support families.

We've set out plans for tough but fair welfare reforms, meaning that no family on out of work benefits will get more than the average family gets by going out to work. We're also ending the unfair situation where people can claim over £100,000 a year in housing benefit.

We're helping the poorest and most vulnerable in our society by restoring the earnings link to state pensions, increasing Child Tax Credit and setting out plans for a 'Pupil Premium' to support the children from the lowest income families.

Immigration is always a difficult issue, but we are keeping our promise to introduce a cap on



Theresa Villiers
MP for Chipping Barnet

immigration from outside the EU. And we have set out our plans to bring immigration under control, reducing it from hundreds of thousands, to tens of thousands.

We also promised we'd look after our troops fighting in Afghanistan. Since May, we've established a National Security Council to make sure we have a clear strategy on Afghanistan, and we've doubled the Operational Allowance for our Armed Forces. We're also delivering on our election promise that the children of British military servicemen killed in action would be offered subsidised university education.

Locally, we're putting real power back in the hands of our local council and communities, as well as freezing council tax and abolishing Home Information Packs. We have also put in place measures to give extra planning protection to residential gardens to resist 'garden grabbing'.

Our approach couldn't be more different from the Labour opposition. They hoped that the election of a new leader would signal a fresh start and new ideas. Instead, all we've seen is more of the same. Where Labour have Ed Miliband's 'blank page', we have practical common sense policies that are making real progress.

The tough decisions needed to put the public finances back in order will mean difficult times ahead. But we are determined to deliver on our promise to do this in order to secure the economic stability we need for jobs and growth in Barnet and across the rest of the country as well.

NORTH LONDON WASTE PLAN

The North London Waste Authority (NLWA) is the statutory waste disposal authority for seven London boroughs which include Barnet. The amount of waste produced by these boroughs is enormous and was roughly 900,000 tonnes last year. Each year there is a lessening amount of landfill for this excess rubbish to be deposited in. The NLWA has been drawing up plans to recycle 50% of the waste produced within the seven boroughs. This is in line with a ruling from the London Assembly requiring boroughs to be responsible for most of their own waste within their own environs.

"Our waste has to go somewhere but no-one wants it anywhere near them. I understand this," said Cllr. Kate Salinger, "If someone told me that the open space behind my house was going to be turned into a waste recycling unit, I would be furious. So I fully appreciate the concerns felt by many Coppetts Ward residents about the proposals for the Pinkham Way site (North Circular)."

"The plans are still being developed and nothing will be finalised without proper consultation. There will be public exhibitions, giving residents the opportunity to mull over the plans and talk to people from the NLWA about them. I will ensure that every Coppetts resident knows of these exhibitions so that everyone has the opportunity to make their views known."

PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS:

12th February 2.30 - 7.00 pm
Hollickwood School N10

15th February 6.00 - 8.30 pm
Hollickwood School N10

16th February 2.00 - 7.00 pm
St. Paul's Church, High Road N11



The site of the proposed incinerator at Pinkham Way, Friern Barnet.

THE AV REFERENDUM: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What is it? This year, there will be a nationwide referendum to decide whether we should scrap our current voting system and replace it with one called the 'Alternative Vote' (AV).

Why are we having it? The referendum was something the Liberal Democrats wanted as part of the agreement to form a Coalition with the Conservatives.

The Conservatives will campaign for a 'No' vote and the Liberal Democrats will campaign for a 'Yes' vote.

HOW DO THE TWO SYSTEMS COMPARE?

Next year's referendum will offer a choice between two voting systems:

1. Our current system (sometimes referred to as 'First Past the Post'). Everyone gets one vote. You put an 'X' next to the candidate you want to support. The candidate with the most votes wins.

2. The 'Alternative Vote' system. Instead of using an 'X', voters rank candidates in order of preference using '1, 2, 3' and so on. If one candidate has more than 50% of the first preference votes, they are elected outright. If that doesn't happen, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and the second, third or later choices of the people who voted for them are allocated to the remaining candidates. If there are no choices for a candidate still in the race, those votes play no further part.

If still no candidate has 50%, the next lowest candidate is eliminated and their votes are redistributed.

This process continues until one candidate has over 50% of the votes which remain in the count.

4 GOOD REASONS TO VOTE 'NO' TO AV:

1. AV is not a fair system.

Supporters of fringe parties can end up getting five or six votes while people who backed the mainstream candidates only get one.

2. AV is an obscure and unpopular system.

Only three countries in the world use AV for their elections - Fiji, Australia, and Papua New Guinea. In Fiji, they're about to get rid of it. In Australia, 6 out of 10 voters want to return to the British system.

3. AV is complicated and expensive.

Because elections take longer to count under AV, it can take longer to figure out who has won, leading to periods of uncertainty. And taxpayers will end up footing the bill for the extra cost.

4. AV is not a proportional system.

Many supporters of AV really want proportional representation. But an independent commission run by the senior Liberal Democrat Roy Jenkins concluded that AV was 'even less proportional' than our existing system.

CLEARING THE SNOW

Snow is lovely to look at, especially when it has first fallen and the whole world sparkles in its glow. However, once it has frozen and the first few feet have trodden through, it becomes a treacherous menace.

Cllr Kate said, "I think we were all amazed by the ferocity of the snow we suffered in the 2 weeks before Christmas. Barnet's grit lorries were out 24/7 trying to keep the main roads, bus routes and town-centres clear. These roads HAVE to be the priority to be cleared and always have been. The weather was so bad that they had to be gritted repeatedly and actually were gritted 49 times.

"I did my best to send help to roads in the ward when I was told there were problems and I certainly saw to it that there were more grit bins."

"I doubt if there is a council in the country that managed any better than Barnet did. We have 435 miles (700km) of roads to treat which if all laid together would run further than from London to Edinburgh."

"Please don't worry about clearing the path and pavement outside your home. There is no law stopping you from doing so. The advice given is to try and clear it early in the day, while it is fresh and put down salt at night to prevent even more freezing."

VISIT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

"I have been asked many questions about libraries lately. Residents are very concerned that one of the ward's libraries might be closed."

"All I can tell you is that nothing has yet been decided. It is obvious to everyone reading the financial figures, that Barnet cannot continue to fund everything that it has done in the past. Your council does not wish to cut anything but if there is only money to fund a tin of beans then champagne is not on the shopping list. To justify keeping a library open, it has to be used."

"I urge all of you reading this to visit your library more often and encourage others to do the same."

TROTT ROAD ALLOTMENTS RESTORED

The old allotment site on Trott Road (backing onto George Crescent) has been disused and lain waste for decades. However, there has been a very determined group of local residents who wished to have the land back as allotments.

They have lobbied their councillors and on Monday 17th January, Cllr. Kate Salinger was delighted to announce that a decision had been reached to recommend that the land which was originally used as allotments would be given back to the residents as allotments.

"This was a victory for sense and I hope that our summertime will reveal a growing haven on both sides of Trott Road," commented Cllr. Kate.

CONTACT US

CLLR KATE SALINGER

T 020 8368 1329
M 07968 964 461
E cllr.c.salinger@barnet.gov.uk

*Kate holds advice surgeries on the first Saturday of the month between 10.30am & 12 noon at Friern Barnet Library and the second Saturday of the month between 2pm and 3.30pm at South Friern Library, Colney Hatch Lane.
No appointment necessary*

THERESA VILLIERS

Member of Parliament for Chipping Barnet

T 020 8449 7345
E theresa@theresavilliers.co.uk
W www.theresavilliers.co.uk

Theresa holds an advice bureau on the first Saturday of every month between 10.30am and 12 noon at her Constituency Office, 163 High Street, Barnet EN5 5SU. No appointment necessary.

BRIAN COLEMAN

London Assembly Member for Barnet and Camden

T 020 7983 4366
E brian.coleman@london.gov.uk

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

On 5th May, there will be a referendum on changing our voting system. Which system do you think you will vote for?

- The current system (where you vote for the candidate you want with an 'X' and the person with the most votes wins)?
- The 'Alternative Vote' (where you rank candidates using '1, 2, 3' etc. and votes may be redistributed until one candidate has more than 50% of the vote)?

How we use your Information Any personal information that you provide in response to this survey will be collected and stored by the Conservative Party in accordance with the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. We will use the contact details you provide to send you Party communications including, for example, updates on policy and special member offers, either by post, telephone, email or SMS. We would also like to share your information with The No Campaign Ltd for the referendum on the parliamentary voting system so that they may send you information about their campaign, by post, telephone, email and SMS. If you do not wish your information to be used by the Conservative Party to contact you or being shared in this way, please tick the box. Printed and promoted by C. Dowson on behalf of Coppets Ward Conservatives, both of 163 High Street, Barnet EN5 5SU.

Name

Address

Telephone*

Email*

Please send me information about ways I can help campaign with the Conservatives.

Please return to: 163 High Street, Barnet EN5 5SU.