

Freezing Council Tax for the Second Year Running

intouch



News from your local Conservatives in Underhill Ward

Spring 2011

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.

OUR DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN!

Since our election as your local Conservative Councillors in May 2010, Andrew Strongolou and I (Rowan Turner) have been working hard to represent the residents of Underhill.

It is a difficult time for Barnet as a whole because the council is being asked to provide services on a substantially lower budget. However, we are determined to ensure that residents in Underhill continue to enjoy high standards of service from the council despite budgetary restraints.

We like to be 'in touch' with the community as much as possible and believe it is important that residents know what we do and how we can help.

If you have a problem that you would like our help with, please contact us using the details below or come and see us at our monthly advice surgery.

CLLR ROWAN TURNER

T 07798 631 109

E cllr.r.turner@barnet.gov.uk

CLLR ANDREW STRONGOLOU

E cllr.a.strongolou@barnet.gov.uk

SURGERY DETAILS:

3rd Saturday of every month,
10.30 am - 12.00 noon at Chipping Barnet
Library, 3 Stapylton Road, Barnet EN4 4QT.
No appointment necessary.

HELPING RESIDENTS FOLLOWING THE OPENING OF BARNET COLLEGE

By Councillor Rowan Turner

Many residents have contacted in to talk about the re-opening of Barnet College.

The sudden influx of students has caused one or two issues for residents. In particular, a large numbers of cars have been parking in the roads near the college and causing problems for residents driving and parking their own cars. Also, some local business owners have complained about a small group of college students using alleyways near the High Street to meet and smoke cannabis.

I have been working closely with the police & Underhill Safer Neighbourhood Team to address these issues. I have been able to make

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'educational establishments' one of three key priorities for policing in Underhill, thereby ensuring that patrols will be undertaken by police in key areas and that motorists who obstruct drives or park irresponsibly will be challenged.

Through my work with the police I have also ensured that certain key areas are monitored regularly, resulting in several warnings, fines and arrests for possession of drugs.

I have made it clear through my ongoing work with Council Officers that I expect the highest standard of service for all Underhill council tenants. I continue to work with a number of residents and community groups, and to serve as a direct link between Barnet residents and Barnet Council.



Cllrs Andrew Strongolou & Rowan Turner with members of Underhill Safer Neighbourhood Team.

CLLR STRONGOLOU – OUT AND ABOUT IN UNDERHILL WARD

Andrew has worked tirelessly since his election. He has earned the respect of many residents around Chesterfield Road, for his involvement in the difficult process of evicting residents guilty of repeated anti-social behaviour.



He was quick to act in the interests of Underhill residents during the snow in December, efficiently arranging for Council officers to fill grit bins around the ward.

Andrew's involvement in the community shows great dedication to his role. He continues to work regularly with the Dollis Valley Regeneration Association of Residents, and to scrutinize the work being done by Council Officers in relation to the long-term goal of regenerating the Dollis Valley Estate.

Andrew is never shy about standing up for Underhill residents in Council meetings. He campaigns constantly in the interests of the local community, on a range of issues, and can often be seen attending community meetings and local events in and around Underhill.



In January, Rowan and Andrew attended the launch of Barnet Community Project's first mobile skate park in Underhill Ward, which aims to reduce anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood. Chipping Barnet MP, Theresa Villiers, also attended.

CONTACT US

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CLLR BRIAN COLEMAN AM

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THERESA VILLIERS MP

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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.

THE 'AV' REFERENDUM: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



David Cameron: 'Our current voting system is simple and works well. This change would not be progress.'

What is it? On 5th May 2011, 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?

This 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.

5 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 will take longer to count, it can take longer to figure out who has won, leading to more expense and uncertainty. And taxpayers will end up footing the bill.

4. AV is not a proportional system. Many supporters of AV really want proportional representation. But an independent commission run by the senior Lib Dem Roy Jenkins concluded that AV was 'even less proportional' than our existing system.

5. Even the 'Yes' campaigners don't really want AV.

Ben Bradshaw, the Labour MP and Yes campaigner, said only last year: 'I've never supported AV' because it would not help to rebuild public trust in politics.

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)?

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

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 Underhill Ward Conservatives, both of 163 High Street, Barnet EN5 5SU.