

Voluntary sector cuts

Work together for local NHS

The threat to Surrey's NHS services is very real.

Hospital closures, cuts to services and reducing the number of doctors and nurses will do huge damage to the quality of care in the county.

These cuts must be stopped.

We must work together across Surrey to fight Labour's savage NHS cuts.

Together we can save our local NHS.

Lib Dems set green standard

The Lib Dems are leading the way with real plans to tackle climate change.

Their 'green tax switch' plans have been welcomed by environmental experts.

No wonder many people who care about the environment are switching to back Ming Campbell's party.

They are the only party to put our environment first.

Conservative cuts to voluntary sector funding in Surrey are being opposed by local Lib Dems.

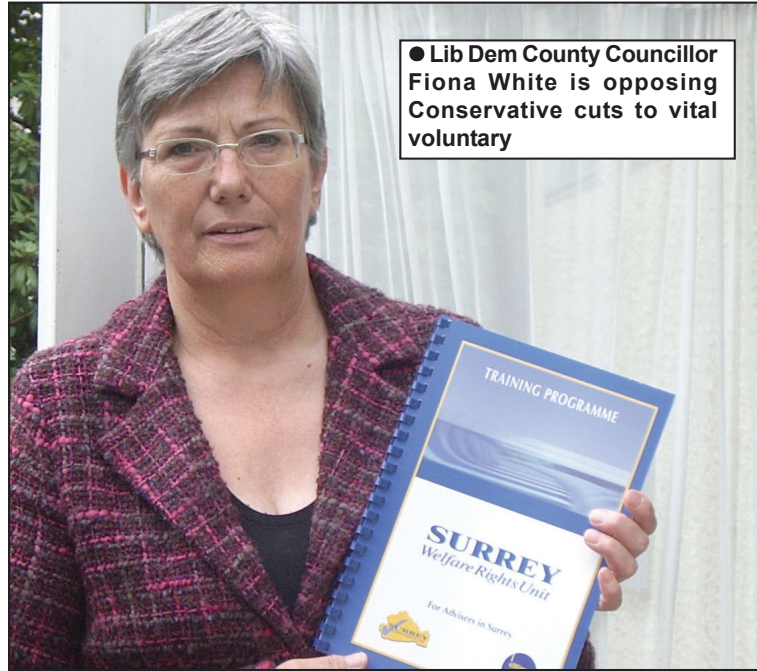
Voluntary services play a vital role in communities across Surrey. The cuts are likely to hit pensioners and disabled people the hardest.

Lib Dem County Councillor Fiona White said, "These heartless cuts will hurt the most vulnerable in our community. Voluntary services allow elderly and disabled people to live independently in their own homes."

"They provide support to carers and a home start scheme to help pre-school children and their families. The list is huge and now Conservative Councillors are putting all this at risk."

Conservative Councillors recently voted down a Lib Dem motion that called for an end to the proposed £838,000 cut in funding for the voluntary sector.

Fiona White added, "For every £1 given in grant to a voluntary organisation, the suggested rate of return is £10. Because the rate of return is so high, a cut of £838,000 would effectively mean a reduction of £8 million or more in services to the most needy people in Surrey. These cuts must be stopped."



● Lib Dem County Councillor Fiona White is opposing Conservative cuts to vital voluntary

Life should mean life say Lib Dems



● Lib Dem leader Ming Campbell MP says "It's time for real action on crime."

Ming Campbell's Lib Dems recently unveiled tough new policies on sentencing.

Under the proposals confusion over life sentences will end, with the introduction of a Life Custody sentence under which life will mean life.

The plans would also end automatic early release. No serious offender would be released without the

agreement of the Parole Board and a judge.

Lib Dem Shadow Home Secretary, Nick Clegg MP said, "Our proposals mean that sentences will do exactly what they say on the tin."

"For too long the Government has been talking tough on crime while second guessing the judges. The public has been left utterly confused."

Tiger skin trade must stop

Local Lib Dem MEP Sharon Bowles has given her support to a campaign to stop the illegal trade of tiger and leopard skins.

The Written Declaration that Sharon Bowles has signed calls for the Governments of India, Nepal and China to clamp down on criminal organisations operating in their region, who are trading in these skins openly.

In the early 1900s there were an estimated 100 000 tigers roaming wild across Asia. Today there are probably fewer than 5000; half of them in the forests and reserves of India.

Sharon Bowles said, "It is shocking to think that even now in the 21st century



● Local MEP Sharon Bowles

there are communities who think it acceptable to hunt and kill tigers and leopards for their skins, and even more shocking to think there are still people who will buy the skins and openly wear them."

"There are international laws such as the UN Convention on International Trade in

Endangered Species that make it absolutely clear that this trade is unacceptable no matter where in the world you live."

"We must take immediate action to stop the illegal international trade in tiger and leopard skins before these species are driven to extinction."

End the waste in Europe says MEP



● Sharon Bowles MEP with some of the trunks that have to travel with her from Brussels to Strasbourg and back again once a month.

Local Euro-MP Sharon Bowles is backing the campaign calling for the European Parliament to have a single base.

The Parliament currently has two homes, one in Strasbourg and another in Brussels. Over a million people have signed a petition calling for an end to the wasteful practice.

Sharon Bowles said, "It is truly absurd that all 732 MEPs, with staff and trunks full of files have to make the trip from Brussels to Strasbourg every month. It is a total waste of taxpayers' money."

"This travelling circus has been going on for long enough, it is time to put it to rest!"



This column is supported by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

Conservative roads shame

The condition of Surrey's roads is a disgrace say local Lib Dems. Under the Conservatives, a huge backlog of repairs has built up across the county leaving many roads in an appalling state.

Now leaked confidential reports by Surrey County Council into highway repair work across Surrey have exposed wasted time, and unacceptable standards of workmanship. Significant overcharging has also been identified.

Despite this, Conservative leaders have REJECTED a cross party bid for an outside investigation into its failing road repair contracts. Instead they

backed a one-year extension to the two contracts involved.

The Lib Dems backed by some Conservative Councillors called for outside auditors to review the two contracts to see if the Council was getting a fair deal.

Lib Dem County Councillor John Doran said, "First Conservative leaders allowed a huge backlog in repairs to build up. Now we find out there are problems with the repair work being done. However Tory leaders don't seem to care!"

He continued, "Surrey residents are paying larger Council Tax bills than ever before. They deserve much better than this."



● All all too familiar site across Surrey. Lib Dem Cllr John Doran wants action to improve our roads and to minimise disruption from roadworks.

20 MPH safer roads campaign

The County Council has given its full backing to the Lib Dem campaign to introduce more 20mph zones in Surrey's residential streets.

Lib Dem Cllr David Goodwin said, "More 20mph zones is an important step in making our roads, especially closer to schools, safer. The chances of surviving a crash increases hugely when speeds are lower. These zones save lives."

Climate change action to save the planet



Environmental experts have welcomed new Lib Dem plans to tackle climate change.

The Lib Dem 'green tax switch' is about taxing people less and taxing polluters more.

A Lib Dem Government will cut income tax by 2p and take 2 million low paid families out of income tax altogether. At the same time, taxes on pollution will be increased. The greener your habits, the more of your tax cut you will keep.

The Lib Dems also want to invest more in renewable energy. They are opposed to Conservative and Labour plans to build more nuclear power stations.

Lib Dem Environment Spokesman Chris Huhne MP

[Lib Dem tax plans] will penalise behaviour that is bad for the environment while benefitting families with incomes of up to £70,000.
- Financial Times

said, "This is the biggest campaign ever run by the Liberal Democrats. The green tax switch will not only help stop climate change, but it will also strike a blow for fairness and social justice."

The Lib Dems have challenged both Labour and the Conservatives to follow their green lead.

Surrey Lib Dem Councillor Ian Beardsmore said, "So far we have heard nothing but hot air from Tony Blair and David Cameron on green issues. The time for talking has passed - we need real action to save our planet."



● Lib Dem leader Ming Campbell is making tackling climate change a top priority for his party.

Adult learning blow for Surrey



● Lib Dem Education spokesperson Cllr Diana Smith

If you have signed up for leisure learning classes run by Surrey County Council this Autumn, make the most of them.

From Autumn 2007, the Tory run County Council isn't intending to run them any more following The Learning and Skills Council's withdrawal of funding for these courses.

Lib Dem County Councillor Diana Smith said, "These classes covered subjects such as dance, upholstery, and creative writing. Many residents have found benefits from attending these classes in terms of confidence and in opening up further learning opportunities at a higher level."

Diana Smith concluded, "Surrey County Council should, like some other authorities, subsidise these courses and bring them up to the standard that will allow the funding to be restored."