



Stevenage Liberal Democrats

www.stevenagelibdems.org.uk

Members' Newsletter Autumn 2010

It's Less than Six Months

Hi Everyone,

Stevenage Borough Council elections are due in May 2011. At the same time we will be involved in the campaign to replace the present 'first past the post' electoral system with a fairer one. We expect to be very busy and anything you can do to help would be great.

But this is your party so we have included a survey for you to tell us what you want from us. Please take the time to fill it in and send it back.

And don't forget our winter social in January (see page 3). Until then have a happy and safe holiday season

Regards

Tim Neale, Branch Secretary

We Won An Award

Regional Conference Report by John Mead

On October 30th, Julia Davies, Tim Neale and myself attended the East of England Liberal Democrat Conference. Opened by our newest MP, Simon Wright, there was a real buzz around the conference.

The main conference hall hummed with lively debates on such issues as how we felt the region should be governed (passed) through to tuition fees (which fell on a knife edge). There was an opportunity to hold our parliamentarians and the region to account.

Interspersed with this we heard from our key note speakers the current party president Baroness Ros Scott and our guest speaker Lorely Burt MP.

Outside of the main conference hall there were numerous training and fringe events held to support members as well as an exhibition which covered groups as diverse as LDEG (Liberal Democrat European Group) through to DELGA which campaigns on LGBT issues.

In the afternoon the Stevenage party were awarded the East of England Membership

Shield. In the morning Tim Neale and myself had given a five minute presentation to the judges on why this year has increased membership by over 50%. But the award recognises the hard work of Graham Snell, our membership development officer.

The event was rounded off by hustings for the two candidates running for the party's presidential election.

The overriding messages I came away from conference with, is that Liberal Democrat parliamentarians are making a difference and that for the first time in 70 years Liberal Democrat policies which we campaigned for in May's General Election are now being put into action.

We are now more than just election campaigners! Hope to see you at next year's conference.



What did the Romans Ever Do for Us?

You may have come across local representatives of The People's Front of Judea (or is that The Peoples' Judean Front?), demanding you, "Name one policy, ONE POLICY!!! that the Liberal Democrats have got through the Coalition!"

Here are a few:

- Increased the personal tax allowance up by £1,000, taking 880,000 people out of income tax. The objective is to increase it to £10,000, making further real terms steps each year.
- Restored the earnings link for the basic state pension from April 2011 with a "triple guarantee" that pensions are raised by the higher of earnings, prices or 2.5%.
- Scrapped the ID card scheme, the National Identity register, the next generation of biometric passports and the Contact Point Database.
- Ended the detention of children for immigration purposes.
- Capital Gains Tax has been increased so those with the broadest shoulders bear the greatest burden.
- Introduced a Banking Levy to ensure banks play their role in restoring public finances.
- A referendum on electoral reform for the Commons will be held on May 5th next year
- Phasing out the default retirement age and end the rules requiring compulsory annuitisation at 75.
- Launched Your Freedoms, a national dialogue on which laws we should scrap.

Yeah, but apart from that...

Coming Soon:

- A "pupil premium" will be introduced to give all children a fair start.
- Outlaw the finger-printing of children at school without parental permission
- Extend the scope of the Freedom of Information Act to provide greater transparency
- A review of libel laws to protect freedom of speech
- An entirely or mainly elected Lords on the basis of proportional representation
- Establish a smart electricity grid and the roll-out of smart meters
- Creation of a green investment bank
- The provision of home energy improvement grants
- Power to recall MPs who have engaged in serious wrongdoing
- Establish feed-in tariff systems in electricity

Members' and Supporters' Survey

Included with this newsletter is a members' and supporters' survey. Please take a few minutes to fill it in and return it to me. My address is on the survey.

Tell us what you want from the party. Help us grow and develop.

Local Party Development Plan

I will be holding a number of meetings in the new year so members and supporters can come along have a chat to help me create a development plan.

The dates are Tuesday 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th of January at the Liberal Democrats Office at Daneshill House, Town Centre between 7 pm and 8 pm except for the 18th which will be between 1 pm and 2 pm.

John Mead

Congratulations to Julia Davis

Julia Davies our candidate for Westminster, has recently become a Councillor on Stanstead Abbots Parish Council. Congratulations to Julia.

And Thanks to Len Lambert

Len Lambert is retiring this year from being campaign organizer in Chells ward. Len was a councillor for the ward from 2004 - 2008. Thanks to Len for all his efforts over the years .

Party

Our annual party will be held in the Ingleheim Lounge in Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, SG1 1HN on January 15 2011 starting at 7:30 pm.

Come along, we would love to see you and hear what you think of what has happened this year, and where you think the party should be going locally and nationally.

There is a small admission charge of £5 (£3 for concessions) to raise money for campaigning.



The YES! Campaign Online

If you have not done so yet, please sign up to the national website - which has recently been relaunched: www.yestofairervotes.org.

There is also a Facebook page for the region, which has some news items on it and links to further information. You don't have to be on Facebook to see it; but please become a Fan if you are: <http://www.facebook.com/Yes2FairerVotesEast>

Answers to Christmas Quiz, 2010 Quiz 1. Nick Clegg, 2. Deep Water Horizon, 3. Gillian Duffy, 4. 1, 5. The Hurt Locker, 6. Liam Byrne, 7. India - Delhi, 8. Lara Stone, 9. Internazionale, 10. Cadbury. Trivia Trail 1. Charles Dickens, 2. Shoes, 3. Silent Night or Stille Nacht, 4. The Holly & The Ivy, 5. Yuletide, 6. Ernie the Fastest Milkman in the West, 7. The Snowman, 8. Narnia, 9. Annus Horribilis, 10. Seven Swans a Swimming



Christmas Quiz



2010 Quiz

1. Who's luxury item on Desert Island Disc was a 'stash of cigarettes'?
2. Name of the BP oil rig that caused the worst oil spill in US history?
3. Who did Gordon Brown call a 'bigoted woman'?
4. What is the name of Britain's first national newspaper in 25 years?
5. What film won 'Best Picture' at this year's Oscars?
6. Who left a note for David Laws stating "I'm afraid to tell you there's no money left"?
7. Name the country and city that held this year's Commonwealth Games?
8. Little Britain star David Walliams married who in May 2010?
9. Who won the UEFA Champions league this year?
10. What company did Kraft acquire in February?

4. What carol contains a chorus that begins "The rising of the sun and the rising of the deer"?
5. Which Christmas word means 'turning of the sun'?
6. What was the full title of the 1971 Christmas number 1 ?
7. Raymond Briggs wrote what book which was turned into an animated film in 1983?
8. Where was it always winter but never Christmas?
9. Revealed in January 1994 Queen Elizabeth had barred the family and aides from repeating which two word phrase that she had used in a previous Christmas day address?
10. According to the song 'The 12 Days of Christmas'. What is given on the seventh day of Christmas and what where they doing?

Christmas & New Year

Trivia Trail



The last letter of the previous answer is the first letter of the next

1. Who wrote? "It was always said of him,, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge"
2. On the eve of 'Kings Day' the 6th January, what do children in Argentina leave under their beds in hope they will be filled with small gifts and sweets?
3. Which song was heard on both sides of the trenches on Christmas Eve 1914?



Write an amusing caption to the picture and win a £25 Book Token £1 per entry and you can enter as many times as you like. Make cheques payable to Stevenage Liberal Democrats. Send your caption suggestions and entry cheque by the 12th January 2011 to:

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