

Spotlight

Summer 2008

No 82



Kennington and South Hinksey Focus

Kendall Copse

“I am very pleased to be able to report that the newly planted trees are making remarkable progress,” reports former biology lecturer, and member of the Friends of Kendall Copse, **Cllr Bob Johnston**.



The very wet summer last year caused terrible problems for many people, not least in South Hinksey, however for the newly planted trees in the first area planted, it has meant that virtually all (bar about 8 to 10) the trees planted have not only survived, but have thrived beyond most peoples expectations, not least mine. This means that they are now getting well established, and given that we planted well over 1000 trees in that first planting, it is a most encouraging situation.

On the other side of the road the trees we planted last winter are also doing well, and I am pleased to report that the recent works done by the Environment Agency to clear out the waterway alongside the site, have not caused any problems.

Again if this summer is not too dry, they too will become well established and able to survive more difficult weather conditions which might occur in the future.

A Safe Place to Live

Cllr Jerry Patterson writes

The Vale is one of the safest places in the country to live. During the last three years the reduction in crime was 17%. We are the best performing area in the Thames Valley region of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

The Vale Community Safety Team has been working hard with the Police, Fire and Probation services and others in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to achieve this notable result. In comparative terms the Vale is the only CDRP in the county that has Green as its overall rating.

There is now a big effort to stop sales of alcohol to the under 18s, and there is a continuing education programme on drug and alcohol abuse. Many people have a fear of crime. Community safety newsletters and regular press releases are helping to overcome this problem.

Kennington is no exception to this pattern, and it too is a very safe place to live, there is very little crime committed by residents, and when we do have occasional problems, it is almost always due to people from outside.

SERVICE AND ACTION ALL THE YEAR ROUND

Tory come lately

The Conservatives are trying to pose as the champions of low income earners hit by the doubling of the 10p income tax starter rate, **but they refused to support a compensation package** when one was proposed last year.

Where were the Conservatives when the Liberal Democrats and a small group of Labour backbenchers proposed an amendment to the Government's Finance Bill? "We cannot support it," said Conservative spokesperson Theresa Villiers MP during the parliamentary debate. Only one Conservative MP voted for compensation, and he has since resigned from the party. The truth is that the Conservatives only woke up to this issue after the changes came in and when they saw the press were interested in it. This was **more than a year after the Liberal Democrats first raised the matter.**

Dr Evan Harris, MP supports the Lib Dem argument that for the poorest to pay a high proportion of their income in tax than the richest is an immoral use of taxation against those who can afford it least.

Liberal Democrats would focus attention on cutting taxes from the bottom, a policy endorsed by Vince Cable, MP, the most respected politician on financial matters in the country. 'David Cameron cannot credibly say that he wants to cut taxes and improve public services unless he says how he will do this', says **Lib Dem leader Nick Clegg.** 'Tory tax policies are smoke and mirrors. He has asked us to trust him, but on the basis of his party's showing on the 10p tax rate, why on earth should we?'



Visit our websites at: www.libdems.org.uk
and www.oxwabl.libdems.org.uk

Local Development Framework

In previous newsletters your local Lib Dem Focus team have made much of the importance of the Vale's Local Plan, which will run until 2011 and which sets out how development will take place until then.

This is now set to be overtaken by the **Local Development Framework.** This will supercede the Local Plan and possibly run until 2028, a very long time ahead. Clearly this will be very important to anyone living in the Vale during that time.

The Local Development Framework will have to conform to the South East Plan, but within that will set out site allocations for development, and will have detailed policies for smaller sites.

No major developments are likely to be proposed for the North East part of the Vale, and will therefor be confined to Grove, the Didcot area and Faringdon. This is because there are no proposals to build on the Oxford Green Belt.

The Framework will also not propose development on the flood plain, and will seek to retain the existing gaps between present settlements.

The Framework will be subject to an independent examination in public by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. His report will be legally binding.

The Vale's proposals for its Local Development Framework are likely to be out for public consultation at a number of local meetings in the autumn. Watch out for this, and be prepared to have your say.

Feedback

If you have any comments, complaints or suggestions, or you would you like to know more about the Lib Dems please contact any of your local councillors.



County Councillor:
Bob Johnston,
102 Kennington Road,
Kennington, OX1 5PE.
Tel: 730209,
bob.johnston@rmpc.co.uk

Vale Councillor:
Jerry Patterson,
17 Woodcroft,
Kennington, OX1 5NH.
Tel: 730588,
jerry.patterson@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

