

If you have a problem please contact Councillor Sue Smith on 01483 760217 or e-mail:

cllrsue.smith@woking.gov.uk

**Message from the Mayor**

“Although as Mayor I can't take part in the political process, I can still deal with ward casework, so please feel free to still contact me with your concerns,” says Cllr Ian Johnson.

cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

**Surrey residents facing £50m. of budget cuts**

Surrey County Council Tories have hired a team of 18 expensive outside consultants, working full time with 27 staff, to look for £50 million of budget cuts to be in place for the year 2006/7. Staff are bracing themselves for changes, which may include redundancies.

This comes on top of this year's review, when 10% efficiency savings across the board were asked for. Conservative leader of Surrey CC promised to achieve this “without any impact on front line services.”

Instead, important support work has been cut back: for example, Woking won't have its own Local Transport Director anymore – one post will cover Woking, Runnymede and Surrey Heath. Appointments are being frozen. Other savings are not so much cuts as ways of reducing increases in future spending.

**Dr Anne Lee, Lib Dem Parliamentary Spokesperson for Woking asks: “are you proud to be British?”**



● Dr Anne Lee

**DO WE TAKE OUR LIBERTY FOR GRANTED?**

In the frightening world of terrorism we want to be safe. We do not want people in our midst who might kill, but neither do we want a police state.

How much liberty should we give up? There are three aspects of this liberty currently under debate: identity cards, the offence of 'glorifying terrorism' and detention without trial.

So often governments have been proved wrong, we must be able to prove our governments wrong through the ballot box, not frustrate people so much that they turn to violence.

So: if Liberal Democrats are fighting to keep as many of our civil liberties as possible what else can we do to keep ourselves safe? We must make every citizen feel that they are part of this country, that our country's success is their success.

Yes, we need effective security and we need better passport control. But we also need much more than that: we need to make sure that everyone who lives here feels proud to be British. A police state cannot achieve that.

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Published and promoted by T. Kremers on behalf of the Liberal Democrats at 28 Waldens Park Rd, Woking.

**Have YOUR Say - Tell Us What Concerns YOU**

Your ward councillors Sue and Ian would like to know if there are local issues that concern you? Can we help solve a local problem? Would you like to know more about Woking Lib Dems?

Write to Sue Smith at Woking Liberal Democrats, FREEPOST WQ21, Woking. GU21 4BR.

- I can help to deliver FOCUS
- I'd like to join the Lib Dems
- I would like to help the Lib Dems somehow, please could someone phone me to discuss it.

Name: .....

Address:.....

Phone:.....Email:.....



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**FOCUS** on **Mount Hermon West**

Autumn 2005

www.wokinglibdems.org.uk

**Lib Dems stop parking fiasco**

LibDem Group Leader Cllr Sue Smith, working with local campaigner Norman Johns, has stopped Tory-controlled Surrey County Council ignoring the needs of local residents and shopkeepers on Oriental Parade.

The County Council had wanted to reduce the number of parking spaces by 5 outside the shops on Oriental Parade and install a cycle lane in front of the shops.

Local LibDem Cllr Philip Goldenberg led the opposition to the shopping parade proposals at the October Local Transport Committee and said, “They would be enormously damaging to the economic viability of these important local shops”.

The Committee did approve proposals to improve access to and from the railway station for cyclists, and also to improve pedestrian crossings on the south side of the station. Norman Johns, a keen cyclist who had lobbied for these improvements on behalf of the Cyclists Forum and local residents, says, “Woking needs to encourage people to cycle or walk to the station rather than rely on their cars, and these proposals will help.”



● Councillor Sue Smith with an Oriental Parade shopkeeper. Thanks to the Lib Dems a parking fiasco was avoided.

**Wheeled Bins**

By the time you read this most of you will have taken delivery of your bins. The new system should help us to drastically improve the Borough's recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. In the pilot scheme recycling more than doubled.

Following the pilot scheme we LibDems in the council insisted on an element of flexibility being introduced as 'one size doesn't fit all'. I have already met with many residents to discuss their concerns and potential difficulties, so please contact me if you are having problems.



● Councillor Sue Smith with the new wheeled bin

**Cllr Sue Smith - A strong voice to protect our environment and enhance our quality of life**

## Sue Smith: Re-development proposal must include more affordable housing

Residents will have seen that Wates have now put a planning application to the council for the redevelopment of the large site currently occupied by Coronation House, My Travel and the rear of York Road.

The design will be very familiar to the many residents who attended the two "community planning" sessions earlier in the year. We are hoping to have a further consultation for residents with the developer to discuss the details as there are concerns about traffic, parking and the amount of affordable housing in the proposal.

In Woking we all share the concern about the lack of affordable housing for local people and the council expects big developments to contribute around 35% of the homes they build ( or equivalent financial contribution) for this purpose. At present Wates are offering a trivial proportion and we feel residents will be as concerned as we are that if there is to be a big development on that site we should take the opportunity to get a decent deal for low cost housing as a trade-off.

The Centrium (station) building has provided 60 low cost/social housing units- that shows what can be done for our families and we don't want to be short-changed. Anyone with older kids will know how impossible it is for them to get anywhere affordable locally and we want to change that.



● Councillor Sue Smith by the proposed re-development site.

## Proposed waste plant: Lib Dems insist on public hearings



● Planet Earth - We must start to clear up our own mess

Liberal Democrats have insisted on full public scrutiny of any formal proposal for a new Waste Plant.

At the moment, Borough Officers are working up a possible proposal. If they come forward with a specific proposal, this will then be subjected to a review by independent experts, and this review will be published.

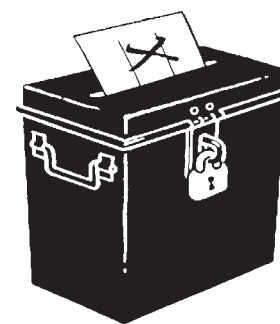
At the insistence of Liberal Democrats, there will then be a series of public hearings that will give the public and councillors a chance to scrutinise the proposals and the independent review, and to question the independent experts and officers. This has resulted in a revised timetable, and any hearings are likely to take place in June.

"It's absolutely crucial that the public have the opportunity to question the experts and officers, and that the whole process is conducted in an open and transparent way," says Cllr Sue Smith, Leader of the Lib Dem Group. "There are massive issues involved –

financial, environmental and operational – and we must ensure that any decision is only taken after all views have been taken into account."

Cllr Sue Smith, who sits on the Borough's Environment Committee as Vice-Chair, wants to assure everyone that she won't be voting for any proposal that does not meet the highest standards.

## Fight to stop election fraud



● Liberal Democrat Councillors have acted to ensure the integrity of the democratic process

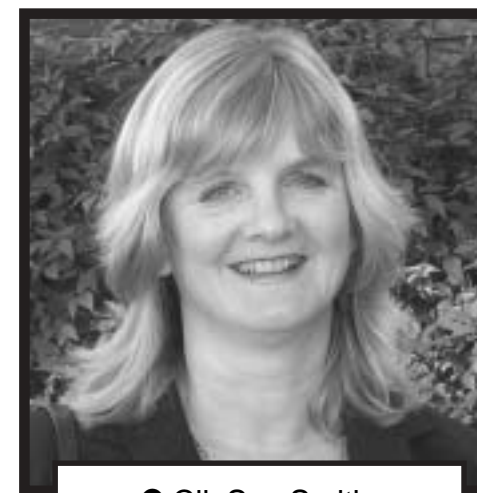
The Liberal Democrat Group has been instrumental in forcing the Council to take a pro-active approach in tackling electoral fraud and malpractice. Backed by the Labour Group, with the only resistance coming from the Tory Group they forced through the setting up of a 'watchdog' panel and the creation of a new electoral post to clean up the register, and police postal vote applications. Cllrs Sue Smith and Philip Goldenberg, Lib Dem Leader and Deputy Leader, serve on this panel and are insisting on many changes to the present arrangements in Woking.

Says Cllr Goldenberg, "Integrity must be at the heart of our democratic processes. The increasing use of postal votes has sadly been accompanied by an increase in fraud, as has been shown by dramatic Court cases both locally (with one Guildford Tory Councillor ending up in jail) and nationally. The Labour Government has rushed ahead too fast, and failed to bring in at the same time the necessary new legislation to crack down on electoral fraud. At the same time it is important for all local authorities to take their own measures to safeguard the integrity of the electoral process, and that is what we are doing in Woking; it is disappointing that local Conservatives have opposed our actions."

## Proposals for Westfield Tip

We welcome the recent exhibition of the proposals for Westfield Tip and the proposed flood alleviation scheme, and hope that residents found it useful. This is still very much an initial proposal so please let us have your views, and let us know if you have any particular concerns with the scheme.

"It's very important that residents are consulted at an early stage with such a major development and have a chance to ask questions and air concerns. I plan to organise a meeting as soon as possible for those residents of Turnoak Avenue and Wych Hill Lane who are directly affected by the plans for flood alleviation, to question officers in more detail," says Sue.



● Cllr Sue Smith

## York Road URC

We understand that the site remains unsold by the church and we await further news on this.

Says Cllr Sue Smith, "It is a great shame that we have lost the church community facilities which were in great demand for local groups. The Ward has very few community spaces and I hope that any future development will take this into account."



● Councillor Sue Smith by the United Reform Church in York Road.