

## ‘Working Together’ must be our aim

The pressures we are facing as a country are greater than most of us can ever remember.

If we are going to meet the needs of young people, support the elderly, reduce the number of homeless, etc etc etc, all those who hold elected positions - MPs, Combined Authority Mayor, County councillors, District councillors and Parish councillors, have really got to ‘get our act together’.

Add to that, the many voluntary and faith groups who serve others, and we have a combined workforce which needs to set aside petty squabbles and differences and focus our time, attention and limited resources on where they can be most effective.

### Listening to you ... and responding

Over the course of the recent County election period, many people wrote to me or spoke to me giving their opinion on ‘what needs to be done’.

At the most recent parish council meeting, I suggested that the best way forward to respond to these ideas would be for me to meet with the District Councillor, Terry Hayward and the Chairman of the Parish Council. We could then try to sort out which ideas can be carried forward and by whom.

This suggestion was accepted. Please be patient and remember that some of your ideas may have cost implications outside the scope of our budgets.

#### A14 roadworks

We are trying to keep in close touch with the Highways England officers who are organising this huge operation. Keeping the road between Buckden and Brampton mud-free and getting them to put out and remove the right signage are our two main targets.

#### Monthly councillor ‘surgery’

Although most people are able to get in touch with me by e-mail or phone, sometimes people like to have the chance to talk a matter over face-to-face. I have offered this facility to residents in Brampton for the last 19 years and it has been appreciated. I plan to be available for you in the Buckden Village Hall from 6.45 prior to the parish council meeting on the second Tuesday in the month. *PD*

### Cambridgeshire County Council

The first Full Council meeting confirmed the Conservatives’ intention to dominate the work of the Council.

All the Committees will have Tory Chairs and Vice-Chairs; no decisions can be reviewed without the support of a Committee on which the Conservatives have a majority; in Full Council no amendments to Tory plans can be made without prior notice; no councillors can put oral questions; officers will brief Tory Spokespersons separately from Lead Members from the other groups. Opposition groups will no longer have recognised ‘Spokespersons’.

**A piece of good news:** The Council has used some of its vast farms estate to open a solar energy plant which will eventually be a source of income to the Council as well as providing environmentally-friendly energy.

*From your*

**County**

**Councillor**



What? Another **Focus** already?

Yes, and there isn’t even an election!

The Lib Dems believe in keeping in touch with you all year round, not just in the few weeks prior to an election.

Our aim is to keep you informed about what the Councils are doing (or not, as the case may be).

We do not expect you to agree with all the opinions expressed in **Focus** but we hope they will make you think about the issues and challenges we all face.

If you have any specific questions on the topics raised in **Focus**, please get in touch with me:

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## Some local events and news

### Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital

Many thanks to those who supported the recent piano concert promoted by the The Rotary Club of Huntingdon. This raised £2,500 for for the 'Friends of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital' enabling them to buy extra wheelchairs to help disabled people move around the hospital more quickly and comfortably.

### Village events

Congratulations and thanks to all those who organised the recent Village Festival of events. Activities like these greatly enhance our communal life and cannot happen without time, energy and commitment from volunteers. We should not take them for granted. Many thanks!

### Huntingdon Drama Club

**Shakers** by John Godber & Jane Thornton is described by Variety Magazine as 'delightfully funny, thoroughly entertaining, pure theatre!'

July 12-15 at the Assembly Rooms, Huntingdon Town Hall.

For tickets:

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/huntsdramaclub](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/huntsdramaclub)

## The national scene

### Electionitis\*

In June 2016 David Cameron called a referendum on the European Union believing he would silence once and for all the Eurosceptics in the Conservative party and stop the drift of his voting support to UKIP. Instead, he lost his gamble, the country narrowly voted 'Leave' and Cameron immediately walked away from the chaos he had created.

In June 2017 Theresa May called a General Election which she did not need to call. Her aim was to smash the Labour Opposition. Her inept campaign and a strong performance by Jeremy Corbyn actually wiped out her overall majority, though the Conservative are still the largest party.

The cost to the taxpayer of these two unnecessary elections is estimated to be nearly £300 million, plus the £80 million spent by the political parties, plus the millions of hours wasted by activists from all the political parties.

*\*Electionitis - an uncontrollable urge to call elections to gain party political advantage*

### 'Brexit means Brexit', said Theresa May. But what happens now?

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016 the country voted by a 4% margin to 'Leave the European Union'. Nigel Farage said that if the margin was 4% or less, there should be a second referendum (but only if Remain wins!)

The Leave campaign told us we should 'Take Back Control' or 'Make Britain Great again' and promised us '£350 million a week more for the NHS'. The concerns raised by the Remain campaigners were never seriously debated or refuted, simply dismissed as 'Project Fear'.

Now that the negotiations have started, we are beginning to see more clearly what we were not told during the referendum campaign. The £ has lost 14% in value, making travelling abroad more expensive; inflation is increasing; there has been a drop of 96% in EU applicants to be nurses in the UK and a shortfall of 40,000 nurses is forecast for 2020; seasonal workers to collect fruit and vegetables are not coming in the numbers needed.

The Liberal Democrats have argued consistently that the public's votes in 2016 were based on insufficient detail and evidence. When we know what Brexit really means - for commerce, for employment, for students coming here or going abroad to study, for agriculture and fishing, for the environment, for crime and justice, - then we should have a second chance to express an opinion. Brexit will affect the lives of our children and grandchildren for decades - we owe it them to get it right.

**Perspective** All our local worries and concerns pale into insignificance when we reflect on the recent tragic events in London and Manchester. What is clear that we cannot continue to reduce our funding to the police, the NHS and local government. We are going to need them more than ever.

### Why not get more involved with the Liberal Democrats?

In this time of great uncertainty, more and more people are joining the Liberal Democrats, attracted by our clear policies: working for an open, tolerant and united country, making society fairer but building a stronger economy which benefits everybody, not just the wealthy. If you would like to join, please go to our national web-site [www.libdems.org.uk](http://www.libdems.org.uk). Nationally we now have more members than ever before.