

Headline

KCC
Election
2021

Liberal
Democrats

Malling North

Addington, Birling, Leybourne, Leybourne Chase, Offham, Ryarsh, Snodland and Trottiscliffe

On May 6th vote Liberal Democrat

Nick Stapleton has been selected as the Lib Dem candidate for Malling North in the 2021 Kent County Council elections on 6th May.

Lib Dems have a track record of working hard for the local community - currently with nine Borough Councillors, covering Leybourne, West Malling, Larkfield, East Malling and part of Tonbridge, and one County Councillor.

Nick was elected as Borough Councillor for Leybourne, Leybourne Chase and West Malling in 2019, and has been a Parish Councillor in West Malling since 2017.

Nick says "I'm delighted to have been selected as the Lib Dem candidate for Malling North. I thoroughly enjoy working within the local community, and if elected, I will continue my efforts to ensure our area remains the wonderful place that it is. I feel passionately about Highway issues, and have run the West Malling Speedwatch scheme for the past couple of years.

Many residents are tired of the status quo, and new, fresh representation in County Hall could make the world of difference. Please vote for me on May 6th, and I will continue working hard for our community".



NICK STAPLETON



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Nick has coordinated the West Malling Speedwatch scheme since 2018.

Nick says "Speedwatch is an effective way to help monitor speeds in the area and make drivers more aware. I would love to see schemes set up across all of the local villages, as working together would be even more effective! Please let me know if this is something you would be interested in".

The Local Lib Dem Team, along with residents and local Parish Councils, played their part in fighting against the proposed development of Forty Acre field, just off of the London Road, between Leybourne and East Malling.

As we write, we are still waiting to hear the Inspector's decision from the Appeal held last year.



Where is my local polling station? This will be written on your polling card.

When can I vote? Polling stations are open from 7am to 10pm on Thursday 6th May 2021.

You must take your own pen to the polling station to be able to vote.
Pens will not be provided.

YOU DO NOT NEED YOUR POLLING CARD TO BE ABLE TO VOTE

LIB DEMS - WORKING HARD ALL YEAR ROUND

Local News

Local toilets closed

At the very time more people than ever are walking around their communities the Borough Council is shutting a number of public toilets, including that in Snodland.

The Borough Council decided in 2019 that as a money saving exercise they would offer to transfer the public toilets in the Malling area to the relevant parish or town council, and that if they did not agree to take them on, the toilet would be closed on the 1st April this year.

Snodland Town Council felt it could not accept taking on the cost involved and so the toilets closed. In Larkfield, the parish is keeping the toilets open but have had to increase the parish council tax to do so.

Although public toilets are not one of the things a borough council must provide we think it is a loss and of course the basic reason for closure is the year by year cuts the Government has made to the monies it provide to local councils.

Draft Local Plan stalled again

Back in October the Planning Inspectorate after initial hearings stopped the local plan and cancelled all further hearings. They told the Borough council that it had failed to meet the legal duty to co-operate with adjoining councils particularly Sevenoaks. The Borough Council sent a long detailed reply refuting that conclusion.

Now by a further letter of 2nd March 2021 the Planning Inspectors say they "stand by" their previous findings and give the borough council 21 days to withdraw the plan or alternatively that they will send a letter saying the plan should not be adopted as it fails to meet this duty to co-operate. If the second option is followed it is possible the Borough could challenge the decision in the courts which Sevenoaks have done so far without success.

If the plan were to be withdrawn the borough would have to start all over again. None of the people who have made submissions on the plan for or against sites or about the proposed extension of the Green Belt between East and West Malling would be heard. Everyone would be back to square one. It is ironic this impasse has been reached as the Government has stated they intend to abolish this duty to co-operate. Meanwhile the Borough Council, plus several parish councils, have with the support of the two local MPs asked the Secretary of State to use his powers to intervene and require the Inspectors to continue the hearings despite their findings.

So once again we all wait to see what happens next. Whatever the rights or wrongs in the meantime as our Borough does not have a 5 year land supply as required by the Government, it is open season for developers to put in plans on green field non Green Belt sites.

Leybourne Lakes Cafe plans at last!

After holding a contribution from developers for over ten years, TMBC have finally shown plans for the Cafe and Watersports buildings at Leybourne Lakes Country Park. We have a number of suggestions for improvements. The large windows do not overlook the lake for instance, and the promised education room is missing. You can get the plans from the TMBC website, from the papers of the Communities and Housing Advisory Board at their meeting on February 16th. (We have already reported this item to Leybourne residents, so we're sorry you'll be getting this twice!)



Former Aylesford Newsprint site

It was in 2015 when local people were shocked to hear that Aylesford Newsprint had gone into administration ending paper production on the site which had been there since 1922.

The site was subsequently cleared and now planning permission has been given to Panattoni for new employment uses which are predicted to create 3000 jobs. The approval includes re-opening Bellingham Way through to Station Road, Ditton; landscaping; works to Ditton stream that flows through the site; upgrading of the public footpaths; a bus link through the site; and improvements to New Hythe and Aylesford stations. Details can be seen on the Borough website under planning application no 20/01820/OAEA

Kent Police & Crime Commissioner Elections

May 6th will also be the election for Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner. Liberal Democrats have selected Graham Colley.



Graham is the President of Liberal Democrat Lawyers, studied Law at Aberystwyth and European Law at the College of Europe. Graham worked in the City, and has been a Legal Aid lawyer in Lambeth, Westminster and Chatham.

Graham now lives in Rochester, and has stood three times as a Parliamentary candidate. He is also a former Kent County Councillor and co-chair of the Kent Fire & Public Protection committee.

For more info on Graham and his campaign, visit www.grahamcolley.org

Visit our website: www.tonbridgeandmallingleibdems.org.uk