



Message from GCA Chairman

Welcome to our Autumn newsletter for Guildford Conservative members. With politics being so volatile – and changing day to day I am reminded of a quote from Willie Whitelaw who served as Mrs Thatcher’s Deputy. He said: “Nothing in politics is as good or as bad as it first seems.”

One piece of good news is that our membership is growing quite rapidly, and it is clear that our new members are from across the constituency and a range of ages, and also with a range of views across the broad church of conservative thinking.

At the time of writing our Member of Parliament, Anne Milton, does not have the whip in Parliament. This is a complex matter for Guildford Conservatives, but when we have better clarity about the situation and the future I will ensure that members are kept informed.

Nearly every year we have elections of one sort or another. Of course we all anticipate that there could be a General Election this year, and next year we have the Police and Crime Commissioner election. We have an excellent, dynamic and experienced candidate in Charlie Chirico who is busy making herself known across Surrey.

A year later we have the elections for Surrey County Council and we will start selecting our candidates later this year. That means we are looking for candidates, so if any member of the Party would like to be considered for selection, please get in touch with the office (info@guildfordconservatives.com) and we will send you a form to fill in. We intend to start the interview process later this year.

Bob Hughes

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Members’ Survey



Many thanks to those of you who completed our recent members’ survey. We were delighted with the high number of responses we received, with around a 32% return rate. The key highlights from the question responses were as follows:

- 36% of you have been a member for over 5 years and 16% under 6 months
• Whilst 34% of you were somewhat or very satisfied with your membership of GCA during the last 12 months, there were some comments about the need for us to consult better on policies and to improve our communications with you
• 87% of you had received communications from your local branch, with 25% wishing to get more involved with your branch’s activities
• 33% had attended one of our events during the past year and there were helpful ideas for future events and activities
• The key national political issue you raised was Brexit and a strong call for us to focus on winning future elections
• Locally there was no general consensus on the key issues we are facing but infrastructure, housing, green belt release, local plan, homelessness and car parking were all mentioned.
• There was support for us holding political discussion groups, which we will introduce in the future
• 27% of you had helped us with our campaigning and there were a number of offers of future help - please get in touch with the office if you would like to help.
• 50% had received the first edition of our newsletter and there were some great ideas for future input which we are working on

The results of the survey have been really useful in providing us with helpful insight into what you want from the Association and your future elected Conservative councillors. We are currently developing an action plan to ensure your comments are acted upon and we hope you will see an improvement in our engagement with you in the future.

Sallie Barker
Deputy Chair Membership & Fundraising

Message from the Deputy Chairman Political

I am excited to have been elected as your Deputy Chairman Political at the last Executive Council meeting. We have a tough battle ahead in the expected General Election which we have already started campaigning for.

We will be doing some different campaigning methods this time including Connect Calling which has already generated positive support for the Conservative Party in Guildford.

We will need all the help we can to keep Guildford blue going forward. If you can help out please do contact Bev or myself and we can add you to our campaigning group. I can be contacted by email at cllrmattfurniss@outlook.com or mobile 07891 022206.

Matt Furniss

Delivering our message to residents

In preparation for a General Election, we’ve been out in the constituency delivering leaflets. Even though the position with our parliamentary candidate is uncertain, it’s important we get our message out. Let us know if you’d like to help deliver leaflets by joining us on one of our Action Days or if you’d like to deliver leaflets in your area. Also, let us know if you’d like to join our WhatsApp Campaign Group.



Join us for Telephone Canvassing



We have arranged for Guildford to have a session at Surrey Heath’s excellent new call centre facility in Windlesham on

Wednesday 9th October to carry out some telephone canvassing. We’ll start at 5.30pm with a short training session, and then finish at 8pm. We’re happy to provide lifts to anyone who would like to join us. If you’re interested, please email agent@guildfordconservatives.com or call 01483 300330.

Report from GCA Executive Council

The Executive Council of the Guildford Conservative Association is made up of the Management Team and elected representatives from the Branches. Here are the key points from the last meeting held in September:

- Following the Party Whip being withdrawn from Anne Milton, MP, we were waiting instructions from CCHQ regarding any forthcoming candidate selection. It was noted that the Whip may be reinstated following the appeals process. If a General Election is called there would be an emergency procedure to select a new candidate if Anne Milton is still whipless, which would usually follow by-election rules. GCA Officers were keen to have as wide as selection process as possible, but this was dependent on the time available
• Following discussion the following motion was approved. 'The Executive Council rescinds its decision of the 8th March 2019 to select Anne Milton as the Conservative candidate in the next election'
• Bob Hughes confirmed that Simon Ashall, Agent, would be leaving GCA to start a new job with effect from the 25th September and that Beverley Weddell had accepted the position of Campaign Manager. Simon was thanked for his hard work for the Association over a number of years and given a token of the Association’s appreciation.
• The results of the Members’ Survey were discussed, alongside the recommendations for future action. These were approved and the headlines would be shared with members in the next newsletter.
• There has been an increase in membership of GCA, with the numbers now standing at 870.
• A report on the Association’s finances was received and it was noted that additional expenditure would be necessary if a general election is called.

Local Councils Round-up

Waverley Borough Council News

Life at Waverley is certainly different since the May elections. Although the Conservatives are the biggest party, it was felt that we could be far more effective to our communities if we became the opposition. Through hard work and dedication, the Conservative Waverley Councillors are working hard to improve the life of our residents. Councillor Liz Townsend, Cranleigh West, has developed an innovative way to engage with the young people of Cranleigh. A Friday night project Youth Club was set up 10 months ago. This provides an opportunity for young people to socialise, become more active and ultimately lead healthier lives. This is a multi agency approach and Liz has obtained the support of Waverley Borough Council, Cranleigh Parish Council, Places Leisure and Active Surrey. Thanks to a great team of volunteers, this is proving to be a popular weekly event with attendance figures far exceeding expectations.

Waverley Conservatives continue to support the five Day Centres in the Borough. These centres provide essential services and activities for the elderly and the more active and vulnerable members of our communities. Rowley Centre for the community of Cranleigh and surrounding villages, provides dining and activity rooms, hairdressing and beauty therapy, a podiatry service and a small shop to name just a few. The Conservatives have supported essential financial support to Rowleys to ensure it can continue during this difficult financial climate. Councillor Patricia Ellis, Cranleigh West, dedicates much of her own time and effort to support Rowleys, a facility that is hugely enjoyed by members.

I have been heavily committed with planning appeals. Cox Green, a very small hamlet, was subject to 2 large planning applications of 100 houses which would have changed the face of the historical area. The appeals were held separately over a combined period of 8 days. The first appeal was dismissed due to the damage it would cause to the countryside and listed buildings, and its unsustainability. The result of the second Public Inquiry is awaited. The Dunsfold Park development of 1800 houses is starting to commence. The first stage is the building of an access road which will located from the end of the runway, to the A281. If approved by planning, it is anticipated that the road will be completed by Easter 2020. Dunsfold Park will certainly keep me busy, not just in the short term, but for many years to come.

Cllr Kevin Deans
Waverley Borough Councillor for Alford, Cranleigh Rural and Ellens Green

Guildford Borough Council News

We have now had several months of post May election activity at GBC and to date we have seen little, if any, new Policy coming from the new Liberal Democrat led administration.

Our Group were split on support for Cllr Reeves but all agreed that we could not support the Leader of R4GV on the grounds that Cllr Bigmore and almost all of his leadership team had no experience of local government or the public sector in any way or form.

On balance I believe that it was in the best interests of the community that the previous Leader of the Opposition was given the opportunity to form a new administration, particularly given previous support for our Corporate Plan objectives within the Council.

It was disappointing that the Liberal Democrats have chosen to ignore the experience of previous Executive members with one exception: Gordon Jackson remains responsible for innovation, albeit from a back bench position. Our sphere of influence continues with

Conservatives holding the following Committee roles:

- Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny: Paul Spooner
Chairman of Planning Committee: Marsha Moseley
Vice Chairman of Corporate Governance & Standards: Nigel Manning

We also retain Chairmanship of Full Council by the current Mayor, Richard Bloseley, and expect the current Deputy Mayor, Marsha Moseley, to take on the Mayoral duty and Chairmanship of Full Council next May.

As I write this (early September) the only initiative of value from the new administration is the passing of a motion acknowledging Climate Emergency (cross party support) and agreement from the new Administration to support the Local Plan. Judicial Reviews will be heard in the High Court in November but QC advice continues to support the previous administration position in relation to the benefits of adopting a Local Plan.

Cllr Paul Spooner
Conservative Group Leader
Guildford BC

Surrey County Council News

Helping to create a cleaner, greener Surrey
Residents are being asked to help shape Surrey’s long-term climate strategy by sharing their views with our county’s Greener Future task force. Community groups are also asked to suggest ideas for creative, innovative and exciting community projects where groups can work together in our Future Design Challenge. Please respond by 30 September at the following link.

https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/surrey-matters/community/could-you-be-part-of-surreys-greener-future

Safe Drive, Stay Alive Campaign
Thankfully, there has been a reduction in fatalities on Surrey’s roads. The toll, still tragic, dropped from 36 in 2017 to 27 in 2018 but there is always more to do. From the regular feedback SCC gets from residents local road safety, speeding, and anti-social driving remain prime concerns for residents.

SCC’s Fire and Rescue Service and the police have a safety programme in schools, one called Safe Drive Stay Alive is aimed at new young drivers. See more at http://www.safedrive.org.uk/

More homes to enable older people to live independently
Up to 725 affordable homes specially designed to help older people live independently will be provided within 10 years under plans outlined by SCC. This will also involve expanding the provision of supported housing for people with learning disabilities or autism to help them exercise choice and control over their daily lives.

The new housing schemes will comprise self-contained homes designed to enable vulnerable people to live independently knowing that care and support are on hand.

SCC intends to continue working closely with our district and borough councils as the plans are developed.

Waste and Recycling
At the beginning of the year, we carried out a consultation into the potential closure of some of the county’s Recycling Centres and we also introduced charges for certain types of waste. There was an overwhelming response and SCC has listened to the public’s concerns. I’m pleased to report that all existing Recycling Centres will now remain open and the decision to charge for certain types of waste will be reversed.

Cllr Keith Witham
Surrey County Councillor for Worpleston