

Northchurch DEMOCRAT



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Why not contact Nigel on nigel.t@which.net?



Lib Dems en marche!
The Dacorum contingent marching for co-operation and freedom.



Join Britain's Fastest Growing Party
The Party for YOU!



The Liberal Democrats have more members nationally than the Conservatives. This makes them UK's second largest political party



So are you **Young?** ...or **Young at Heart?**
Do you prefer **co-operation** to competition?
Do you want a **better future...** rather than the false dawn of a rose-tinted past?

Do you value **personal responsibility and restraint**, to egotism and conflict?

Do you prefer **fairness of opportunity** to the maintenance of privilege?

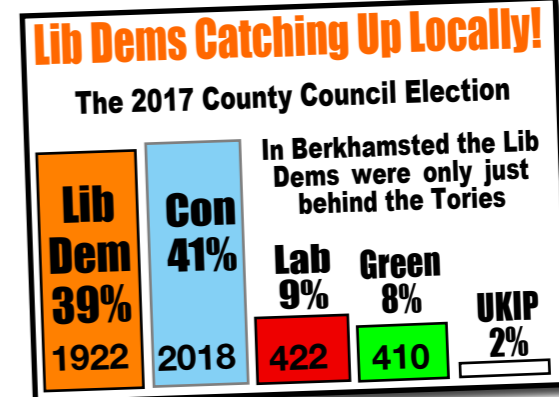
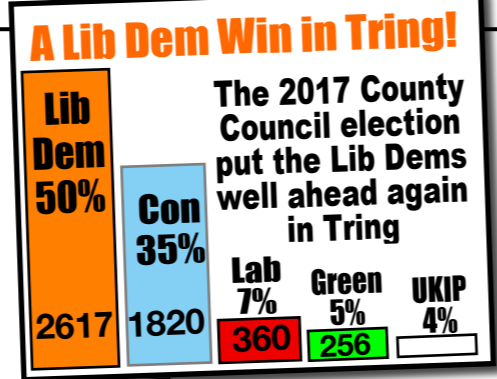
Do you prefer **solidarity** to selfishness? **Opportunity** to oppression? **Encouragement** to control?

Do you believe **reward should come from merit**, not from entitlement or social origins?

Do you believe we have a common interest to **mitigate the disadvantage and misfortune** of others?

Do you believe we should **celebrate differences**, but never tolerate discrimination.

Do you believe we should **help people to make the most of their lives** - irrespective of background, ethnicity, aptitude or handicaps?



Nigel Taylor
The Berkhamsted Liberal Democrat County Candidate

"Thank you, Berkhamsted," said Nigel Taylor and Sally Symington for the strong electoral support this summer. This put both just a tantalising couple of percent short of winning both the HCC Division and the Berkhamsted West Ward seat on Dacorum Borough Council.

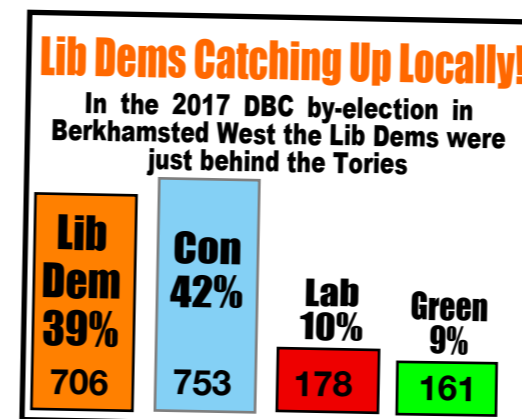
It was Nigel's first time of standing in Berkhamsted. He added, "It is a privilege and a pleasure to be asked to stand to represent the town and I very much appreciate the support I received."



Sally Symington
Liberal Democrat Borough Candidate - Berkhamsted West By-Election

Sally already has had 8 years of council experience. She served as Chair of Gt Gaddesden Parish Council for 4 years, helping draw up the Parish Plan and negotiated additional funding from Dacorum to bring their support for the parish up to the same level they provide elsewhere.

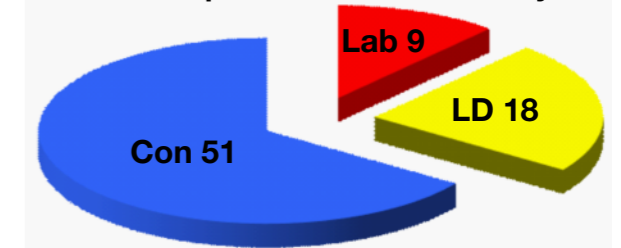
The by-election, sadly caused by illness, was called at very short notice. Nevertheless, Sally and her team came within 3% of winning - and this near miss shows that there is an underlying level of support for Liberal Democrats in Berkhamsted that is growing fast.



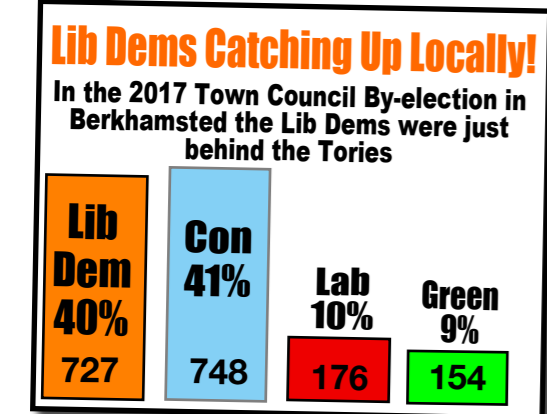
Some of the 78 Lib Dem Candidates at the launch of their successful county campaign.

A Good Result for Herts Lib Dems
The Liberal Democrats lost one seat but gained three and so their Group has now increased from 16 to 18
Labour lost 6 seats to end up with 9.
The Liberal Democrats remain as the Official Opposition on the County Council.

Current Composition of Herts County Council



Still out of balance, still a long way to go!



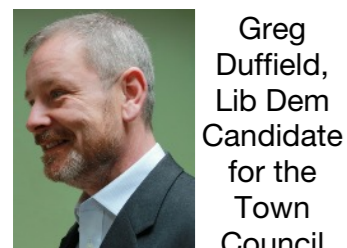
Do you believe **education enhances opportunities and choices** in people's lives?

Do you believe that **modern states need firmer foundations than ethnicity or a dominant culture?**

Do you believe that all human beings should have **equal respect?**

If most or all of this reflects your views... then why not join the Hundred Thousand Plus who have already made the Liberal Democrats their political home?

To join the Liberal Democrats: visit our web site <http://www.libdems.org.uk> or go to <http://www.libdems.org.uk/join>
To talk to someone locally phone Nick Hollinghurst on 01442 866650 or e-mail nickholl1945@btinternet.com



Greg Duffield, Lib Dem Candidate for the Town Council

New Leader, New Party, New Programme



Vince says, “There is much to be patriotic about in Britain today.

It is more tolerant and inclusive than when my late wife and I started an inter-racial family a generation ago. It has great resources of creativity and business talent, of learning and research. There is real generosity of spirit and a sense of community.”

“But there is also much that is wrong.

There are disfiguring *inequalities of wealth and opportunity.*”

Reducing Inequality Matters

In terms of people’s sense of well being and satisfaction, reducing inequality matters far more than the general level of prosperity.

High inequality destroys the sense of community, fosters resentment and leads to social tension and increases in crime.

Income Inequality is growing

Post-tax income inequality rose strongly in the 1980’s, though it has slowed a little since. Among developed countries, UK is now one of the most unequal, well behind Scandinavia, Germany and France. We have become similar to the US, S Africa and post-Communist Russia.

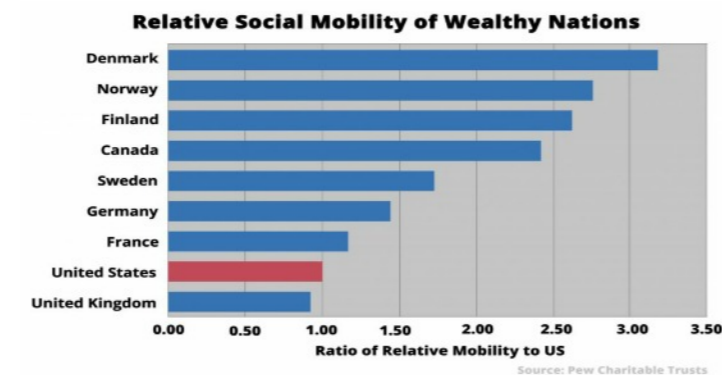
The top 1% are about half a million of mostly middle aged men. They tend to work in financial services, the law or medicine and earn just over £150,000 each.

The super-rich (the top 0.1%) are roughly 50,000 people earning £1+ million per year.

Wealth Inequality is growing

The Resolution Foundation now estimates that the top 1% of adults - 488,000 people - own 14% of the UK’s assets. That’s about £3.16 million each.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, 15% of adults (7.3 million people) either have no assets at all or are in debt.



Social Mobility in UK is worse than in US

These inequalities make Social Mobility in the UK one of the worst in the world. Here, by and large, your prosperity and wealth depend on your father’s. If he was poor, you’ll be poor - if he was rich, you’ll be rich. Not very fair, is it?

Lib Dems will Work to Put This Right by:

- **improving equality of opportunity**
- **integrating tax and National Insurance**
- **taxing wealth fairly to finance education**
- **putting a penny on tax to fund the NHS**
- **direct measures like the Minimum Wage**

LATCos - A Better Way to Keep our Roads in Good Condition?

Local Authority Trading Companies - or LATCos in the jargon - are not new. They are authorised under the 2003 Local Government Act. *Perhaps it’s time to think about a LATCo to handle basic highway maintenance in our county?*

For a long time now, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has outsourced most of its highway maintenance and design work under long term contracts. The current contract with Ringway has been in place since 2012 and is worth £182 million.

However, these contracts need more checking and management than HCC seems able to carry out. The public’s view certainly is that the results for this contract - like the one before it - always fail to meet their expectations.

Nevertheless, despite poor contract management HCC still clawed back £1.2 million for proven poor workmanship over the last 5 years - and further deductions are pending.

You might think that they may have learned the lesson at the end of the first 5 years - but no! The Tory councillors decided to extend the contract for another 5 years. There appears to be have been no market testing.

The Tories say that results are getting better. This could be true if fewer penalties really



does mean performance is improving, but Lib Dems say, “This is not the experience of residents. It could just mean Ringway are getting better at gaming their targets - or even just that HCC is catching them out less! These contracts are working no better in other parts of the country.”



“New arrangements should be explored.”

“Southampton is said to be setting up a Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) to run waste collection and other public services and savings could be reinvested into council services.”

“Some highway work is already directly contracted and this works much better. Why not a LATCo like Southampton, but for routine highway repair and maintenance? It could hardly be worse than what we have at the moment - and it could be a lot cheaper!”

The Multi Storey Car Park

Berkhamsted Liberal Democrats still question the rationale and value for money of this project, which is held up by the unexpected discovery of a gas main. DBC have retendered and a contract award is expected soon. We will bring you more news in our next newsletter.

DBC Tories Want to Privatisise Our Sports Centres - local Lib Dems Say the Tender Process is Flawed

Sport for all is important - especially in Northchurch, with its thriving cricket team! And Northchurch people also value and appreciate the Sports Centre in Berkhamsted.

Sports facilities in Dacorum are run by SportSpace - a local not-for-profit company. Their management has cut the cost to DBC from £1.4 million to around £250,000 per year over 14 years. Despite those savings the Tory councillors now want to privatise the service.

However the **Lib Dem Group Leader on DBC, Cllr Ron Tindall** says, “The tender process is flawed - no public consultation, no serious involvement of the schools and no meaningful negotiation with SportSpace before being given notice last May. And DBC have wrapped everything in a cloak of secrecy that prevents councillors revealing the details. It’s clear to anyone using the facilities that they need refurbishment and improvement. But this year DBC will get £3 million from sales of old garages which could be used.”



“Many people are worried that DBC wants external investment from a new operator in exchange for increased subsidy or higher charges to the public. We say DBC should make it clear to the public what they intend.” *Ron has called a special meeting with all-party support to formally question the council and ask for these proposals to be reconsidered.*