

Liberal Democrats - Working for You all year round

FAIRER VOTES - as easy as 1-2-3

:: **The Alternative Vote** is a simple system but infinitely fairer than the discredited First Past The Post system we currently use.

:: Instead of just placing an X in the box as at present, you rank the candidates in order of preference – as many or as few as you like.

:: You no longer need to waste your vote on someone you don't want in order to try and keep someone else out.

:: Instead you can vote for the candidate you like best – while also making the one you like least your last choice (or not ranking him or her at all).

:: **It really is as easy as 1,2,3!**

How it is counted

:: All first choices are counted.

:: The person who comes last is then eliminated. The second preferences for that candidate are then counted, and added to the totals of the other candidates

:: That process continues until one candidate has more than 50% of the vote

What it means

:: No MP will be elected with less than 50% of the local support

:: We keep hold of constituency MPs.

:: MPs will have to work harder to gain and keep your support.

Where it is used

:: The biggest country in which the Alternative Vote is used is Australia, where the strong political system is widely credited with helping the Australians avoid recession recently.

:: It is used in many cities in the United States to elect municipal government, including San Francisco.

:: It is used to elect the Irish president.

:: A form of the Alternative Vote is used to elect the Mayor of London – bringing both Ken Livingstone (Lab) and Boris Johnson (Conservative) into power.

This is about improving the way parliament works, making MPs work harder and making sure they don't ignore voters as easily. Only bad MPs should fear changing the voting system.

Can the Liberal Democrats help you?

Can the Lib Dem Team help with a council or other problem?

Contact Phone Number 01442 866087

[e mail - libdem@berkhamsted-libdem.org.uk](mailto:libdem@berkhamsted-libdem.org.uk)

Keep in touch with local news

For local news and views follow www.nickhollinghurst.co.uk or keep in touch through our web site www.swhertslibdems.org.uk

Why not join the Liberal Democrats ?

*Help us try to improve things!
Are civil rights and liberties important to you?*

Do you believe in social responsibility?

Do you think the town, borough or county - or even the UK! - could be run better?

Have you ever thought of being a Councillor?

Come along and get involved! Join the people who get things done!

**Write to Andrew Horton,
Berkhamsted and Northchurch
Lib Dems
FREEPOST(SCE 7097)
Berkhamsted HP3 9ZZ**

**Or by hand to
Felden House, Dower Mews,
High St Berkhamsted HP4 3BL**

FOCUS

BERKHAMSTED & NORTHCHURCH

Winter 2010/11



For local news and views follow www.berkhamstedlib-dem.org.uk

or keep in touch through our web site! www.swhertslibdems.org.uk

Liberal Democrats - delivering real change



Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP, Deputy Prime Minister

Liberal Democrats in Government

What a surprise Election Day brought! With their best chance for nearly 10 years and after spending what some have estimated as more than £40 million pounds over several years, the Conservatives failed to get a majority.

It was therefore left to the Liberal Democrats to take a courageous step for the sake of our country.

Labour were both unwilling and unable to come to any arrangement with us. The financial crisis that they left behind needed swift and decisive resolution to maintain international confidence in sterling. Coalition Government with the Conservatives was the only way forward.

Last Kick of a Failed System

The need for **voting reform** is now clearer than ever. The unfairness of the “winner-takes-all system” has long been known. In our East of England Region, for instance, 24% of the votes gave the Lib Dems just 4 seats out of 58 - a mere 7%. But 47% (*or less than half*) of the vote gave the Conservatives 90% of the seats!

And now the old system is even failing to deliver majority governments.

The proposed new system would be far more responsive to the judgement of the electorate. No more safe seats for Labour in northern towns; no more safe seats for the Conservatives in the shire counties. **Voting reform** would ensure that each MP would have to earn his or her keep - obey the rules - *and no more duck houses or mansions at our expense!*

Already done FAIR PENSIONS

Restored the earnings link for the basic state pension from April 2011 with a “triple guarantee” that pensions will be raised by the higher of earnings, prices or 2.5%

Phasing out the default retirement age and ending the rules requiring compulsory annuitisation at 75

Implementing the Parliamentary and Health Ombudsman's recommendation to make fair and transparent payments to Equitable Life policyholders

CIVIL LIBERTIES

Scrapped the ID card scheme, the National Identity register, the next generation of biometric passports and the ContactPoint Database.

Ended the detention of children for immigration purposes
Coming soon
Outlaw the finger-printing of children at school without parental permission

Defend trial by jury and restore rights to non-violent protest

If you send your contact details in response to this leaflet the Liberal Democrats and their elected representatives may use the information you have provided to contact you from time to time about issues we think you may find of interest. Some of the contacts may be automated. You can opt out of some or all contacts at any time by contacting us.

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Liberal Democrats - Putting Policy into Practice

Working Together in Government



Liberal Democrats, Vince Cable Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and President of the Board of Trade with Rt Hon Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister.

Coalition Government

Most of the people we have spoken to are very pleased to see two parties working together. It's what we have been calling for for 30 years. It brings the modern politics of consensus to Britain.

A Courageous step for both Leaders

No party won the last election: with neither Labour nor the Conservatives winning enough seats to form governments on their own, the country faced a huge problem. Labour's recklessness has left us with £70 billion to pay in interest charges alone. You only have to look at what the banking crisis has done for Ireland to know that we have stepped back from the brink of a calamity. This disaster was avoided when Nick Clegg and David Cameron took the courageous step of negotiating and forming a Coalition Government.

Conservative Policies Moderated

According to the right wing *Spectator* magazine, the Conservatives have dropped 190 of their commitments - including the one-off £8,000 "Retirement Tax" to pay for social care and some tax cuts that would benefit only a few hundred of the very wealthiest people.

Thanks to the participation of the Liberal Democrats we now have a moderate Coalition Government.

Liberal Democrats Deliver on Election Promises

Of course a coalition means give and take on both sides - neither of the parties can have everything they want.

But these are the promises upon which Liberal Democrats can now deliver:

- **No tax on the first £10,000 you earn**
- **10% more in capital gains tax for the highest paid**
- **More money in the classroom and nurseries to help disadvantaged children**
- **The right to sack corrupt MPs**
- **Protection of NHS frontline services**
- **The link between pensions and earnings restored**
- **Action to tackle climate change**
- **Tax credits increased for the poorest**
- **Action to get Britain working again.**



Liberal Democrats Danny Alexander, Chief Secretary to the Treasury and Sarah Teather, Minister of State for Children & Families



We need a better Dacorum Borough Council

But if Liberal Democrats and Conservatives are working well in Government, why should you vote Liberal Democrat locally?

Simple! The Conservatives do not run Dacorum well!

Over the past five years the Conservative run council has submitted its accounts late and earned itself critical comments from the Audit Commission - though this year they just *might* have got it right at long last.

The Housing Department is in a mess. It was bad enough last year when it took 78 days to get an empty council house ready for a new tenant. So the council brought in consultants to improve this poor performance. **But in June it was reported that the turn-around time was up again - to a truly dreadful 116 days.**

Six years ago the Pavilion was demolished as part of an ambitious development scheme involving an unwieldy 7-partner consortium. This cracked at the start, and partners were threatened with compulsory purchase when they wanted to back out. Now a key development company has gone into liquidation and the scheme is in turmoil.

Huge amounts of consultancy and legal fees have been paid out along the way.

Dacorum Borough Council is made up of :

- **42 Conservatives**
- **6 Liberal Democrats**
- **3 Labour councillors**

Just seven Conservatives take all the decisions.

The other 35 just ensure crushing majority votes, forcing through whatever they want, brushing aside criticism and frustrating any chance of effective scrutiny.

The Conservatives have had things their own way for too long. They are poor stewards of your taxes and public assets. You need a progressive, alternative and positive voice on Dacorum Borough Council.

You need us.

We need Liberal Democrats to get an effective opposition.

We need Liberal Democrats to hold the Conservatives to account.

We need Liberal Democrats to get a better Borough!

Liberal Democrats - Standing up for you! Keeping taxes down

Councils run by Liberal Democrats, such as Watford and Three Rivers have a good record in keeping council tax rises to the minimum while providing efficient services. And here in Dacorum we are fighting to keep council taxes down.

Christopher Townsend, Councillor for Tring West & Rural, called at the spring Budget Meeting, for the Borough to lower its Council Tax demand.

He said, "We need to think carefully about where to make savings, particularly in the current climate. We propose therefore to cut the Borough's heavy communications budget."



Cllr Denise Rance

Liberal Democrat Group Leader in Dacorum, Denise Rance said, "Everybody is suffering financially at the moment. We have an obligation to be prudent with the council's expenditure."

"Our amendment made it clear that there are still savings to be made in the current budget.

But the Tories, supported by Labour, chose to ignore this."

Conservatives Waste Our Money!

Over the last 10 years Dacorum has wasted enormous amounts of money on failed schemes.

- The first and most expensive was the Public Private Partnership to outsource all the council's admin and support services. They spent over half a million and it never even started.
- An IT outsourcing contract which staggered through its first year and was then surrendered.
- More recently, a scheme to share services with neighbouring councils came to nothing.
- An accountancy package was incorrectly set up and expensive manual data entry had to be done at weekends and on overtime.
- A housing maintenance contract turned out to cost far more than the council expected.

Dacorum Conservatives are wasting our money on consultants and lawyers!