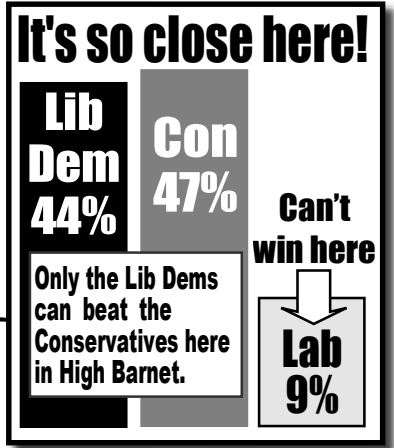


FOCUS

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

On High Barnet Ward



Cllr Duncan Macdonald & Barnet Liberal Democrats

Town Centre Strategy? Let's write our own!

Residents of High Barnet have been waiting for years for a proper strategy for our town centre. The Council has repeatedly promised one but has so far failed to deliver.

We have seen what can happen in places such as New Barnet where Tesco and Asda are attempting to carve up the town centre between them.

Without a proper strategy in place, we are wide open to developers who do not have the community's best interests at heart. Barnet's High Street has suffered badly due to the credit crunch but a proper strategy that deals with issues such as parking, and

redevelopment could afford valuable protection.

Cllr Duncan Macdonald says,

'If the council will not get on with writing a proper strategy, then I think we as a community should

write our own. There are enough residents' groups and people with expertise to write a comprehensive document that we can push to be adopted formally by the Council. If you are interested in contributing to this, then please get in touch.'



Tories run Barnet like a cheap airline

Plans by Tory-controlled Barnet council to copy the 'no frills' budget airline approach to service delivery have been slammed by Cllr Duncan Macdonald.

Duncan said,

'There is a huge difference between running cheap flights to Benidorm and, for example, managing social services for the most vulnerable. We know from the Baby P case what happens when

under-resourced social services departments try to work on the cheap.

The danger of this approach is also apparent within the planning department where property developers will be allowed to pay extra to jump the queue for planning consents.

Planning has to be fair and be seen to be fair. Once money starts changing hands the whole process will start to look sleazy.'

We've been busy over the summer

During the summer your Councillor has been working hard for you.

Duncan has informed the council of numerous potholes following his Summer Pothole Campaign.

He and his team have conducted street surveys to find out what the issues are in your area. Duncan will respond to each issue raised.

Delivered free by volunteers

Tories in a 'chaos' over green belt

Tories in Barnet are in a 'crisis of confusion' over local plans for the green belt.

In June, the Conservative council leader was put on the spot by residents demanding to know if the greenbelt was safe in Tory hands. The leader's assurances were quickly undermined, however,

when he warned that changes in the guidance from Whitehall might make it easier to build on the green belt in the future.

Says **Cllr Duncan Macdonald**, 'As readers of Focus will know, Barnet does not have to slavishly follow government guidance. Tory councillors had the opportunity to

strengthen local green belt policy earlier in the year but instead chose to stick with a weak local policy which is, by their own admission, nothing more than a copy of government guidance.'

Adds **Duncan**: 'In 2002 the Tories promised to strengthen local protection of the green belt. Now they're kowtowing to Whitehall. Have the Tories lost their backbone when it comes to protecting the green belt? Are they softening us up for bad news?

What's happened?'

Vince Cable's recovery plan for the UK

Lib Dem shadow Chancellor **Vince Cable** MP has launched his recovery plan for the UK setting out how the Lib Dems would tackle the economic crisis.

Vince argues that there should be no "no go" areas of spending and that all existing plans should be justified with the emphasis on controlling public spending, not higher taxes.

Vince Cable said, 'Asking the British public for their vote at the next election means being up front from the outset about what Government should and should not be spending its money on.' Vince's plans are set out in 'Tackling the Fiscal Crisis:



A recovery plan for the UK' published by the independent think tank *Reform* available on-line at www.reform.co.uk.

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