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Spring 2008

Shirley Prepares for London Elections

Cllr Shirley Houghton, Conservative London Assembly Candidate for Lambeth and Southwark is predicting a two-horse race in the elections on May 1st. Shirley, who is running alongside Conservative Mayoral Candidate Boris Johnson, said "The choice for Londoners is clear this year – you can stick with the over-taxing, over-regulating mayor that we have or you can vote for a Conservative alternative with fresh ideas to old problems. The minor parties have no chance this year – it is simply Conservative or Labour."

Shirley Speaks up For Lambeth – Ken Dodges Questions

At the last People's Question Time (an opportunity to question Mayor Livingstone), local London Assembly candidate Shirley Houghton submitted seven questions concerning local issues. The Mayor did not answer any of them. The promise made to the public is that all questions will be answered in writing within six weeks. Shirley commented "It is now nearly three months since the event, but still no answers. I wonder whether he just does not have good answers to my questions about transport, policing and planning in this part of south London."

Crime Up Under Labour – Police Need More Support

Despite Labour spin, in the last 12 months Gipsy Hill ward saw an overall increase in crime, with a 5% increase in burglary, a 26% increase in criminal damage, an 18% increase in sexual offences and a 144% increase in fraud and forgery.

London Assembly Candidate Shirley Houghton, said "When I talk to Gipsy Hill residents, the issue at the top of their list is crime. The Conservative Party has pledged to put the focus back on providing Police resources on the front line to fight crime, and we would ensure proper punishments by ending the early release scheme and tackling the prisons crisis."



Only the Conservatives can defeat high-tax Labour

Contact Shirley Houghton

Look out for London Assembly Candidate Shirley Houghton in your street or neighbourhood soon. If you do not get a chance to meet her but have an issue to raise, you can contact her on 07974 817 156 or via cllrshirleyhoughton@googlemail.com. You can also visit her website at www.shirleyhoughton.com for the latest news.

Labour Double Whammy Tax Hit on Tenants

Residents of Gipsy Hill housing estates who rent their homes from the council have been clobbered with a "double whammy" of tax and rent hikes by Labour Lambeth.

First the Labour Party announced an inflation busting 7.23 per cent rent rise for council tenants.

Now Labour Councillors are planning a 4.75 per cent hike of the Lambeth slice of the Council Tax, which will be rubber stamped at February's budget setting when Mayor Livingstone's extra charges are added to the bill.

"Both the rents and the council tax rises are at the highest level allowed by the Government, yet services are appalling," says Suzanne. "At the same time tenants face the prospect of benefit and wage increases of less than half the proposed increases. It's back to tax and spend."

The bad news does not end here. "The Labour council is also proposing increases for tenants in parking and garage charges," adds Suzanne. "In the meantime Labour councillors are happy to award themselves massive and undeserved increases in their own pay packets."



Lambeth Labour have increased rents yet reduced services. Meanwhile, Town Hall wastes money endlessly.

We are around all year round, not just at election time



Support Our Excellent Local Library

The Upper Norwood Joint Library, Westow Hill, is one of Gipsy Hill's special treasures. It is funded by Lambeth and Croydon councils, but it operates independently.

Suzanne says, "The library is a much-loved community hub for the people of Upper Norwood and beyond. Its unique status brings unique problems, but there is a tremendous amount of outstanding work being done by the Chief Librarian and his staff. I urge residents to pay a visit – there is so much going on. There have recently been excellent new children's initiatives at the library, which has links with Gipsy Hill Sure Start and local schools, and it continues to provide a first-class library service to local residents."

Graham and Suzanne serve on the library's committee and work to protect the library's interests, independent of party politics. Local residents can attend the committee meetings to see their representatives in action and have their say.

Upper Norwood Joint Library - Borough Agreement Still Awaited

Years of financial neglect were ended when Lambeth's Conservative-Lib Dem administration increased library funding for Upper Norwood Joint Library by £55,000 between 2004/2006. Unfortunately, Labour took control in Lambeth in 2006 and reverted to a standstill budget. In Croydon, however, it was the Conservatives who took control and introduced annual funding increases of £10,000 that have removed the immediate jobs threat to the library.

More needs to be done. Suzanne and Graham, serving on the joint committee, proposed a new joint funding formula over a year ago. They have pressed both councils to restore full funding and called for joint talks to agree a new locally based partnership. According to Graham, "We have urged Croydon to step-up its funding and are totally frustrated by Lambeth's on/off library review, staff changes, and funding levels. Our immediate aim is to secure sufficient funding. This library is a model for how a locally led library offers a far better service."

Salters Hill Camera Trap Removed

Massive protests led by Gipsy Hill Councillor Graham Pycock last July persuaded Lambeth Council to withdraw the camera car from the Salters Hill give-way point. Council officers agreed to review the operation. Graham says, "This zooming camera sting raised a staggering £300,000 in three months from largely safe and responsible motorists."

According to Graham, "The Council has still not set up the full investigation that was agreed in committee. We need improved safety at the junction with Gipsy Road, where the Kingswood School children cross. The priority should be safety not highway robbery."

Poor Plumbing in Charters Close

Gipsy Hill Councillor Andrew Gibson is reporting to the council all examples of bad plumbing on Charters Close. This means that council tenants should be able to claim insurance money from the council if the council has been notified of a problem and the tenant is subsequently flooded because the council did not fix the fault.

Andrew said, "The plumbing on the estate is showing its age. If tenants notice gurgling or foul smells in their kitchen or bathroom they should let me know and I will notify the council formally. In the past, the council has avoided claims by saying it was not notified of a problem in advance, yet the council lost many records when it moved offices. Gipsy Hill councillors will record all complaints and hold Lambeth to account."



Graham and Suzanne serve on the library's committee and campaign on its behalf.

For more information about any of these stories, log onto our website on www.conservatives.lambeth.com

Mayor's Civic Service in Gipsy Hill

Gipsy Hill Councillor Andrew Gibson is Mayor of Lambeth, 2007-08. The mayor's Annual Civic Service to celebrate the civic year is to be held in Gipsy Hill.

Details:

Service conducted by Revd Andrew Rumsey
Sunday 24 February 2008
4.30pm - 5.30pm (please be seated by 4.20pm)
Christ Church, Highland Rd, Gipsy Hill
Dress: Smart or Smart casual. All welcome.

Mayor's Fun Fundraiser in March All Welcome

Andrew will be hosting the Mayor's Annual Fundraiser – a trip on the London Eye followed by a boat trip down the Thames. The event is usually great fun and a wonderful experience. A buffet is included. Because the event is sponsored, all the ticket money goes to the Mayor's charities:

- Goodliffe Hall, Gipsy Hill
- Southwark & Lambeth Parkinson's Disease Society
- Anti-Slavery International.
- Tickets £40.

For further information, contact Andrew at agibson@lambeth.gov.uk

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