

Martin welcomes PFI savings plan

Martin Horwood has welcomed tough action announced by the Government to save more than £1.5 billion from the Private Finance Initiative.

Importantly all of the money saved will go to PFI schemes. This could include GCHQ's 'doughnut' and Cheltenham's new fire station.

In a Written Ministerial Statement delivered to Parliament, Treasury Minister Lord Sassoon laid out Government plans to save more than £1.5 billion on existing PFI deals, and to plough much of that money straight back into frontline public services.

The announcement comes after a series of forensic investigations by Treasury experts into PFI contracts including at the Queens Hospital in Romford.

Martin is part of the PFI Rebate campaign of more than 80 MPs, from all three major parties, who

have been calling for savings on the PFI.

Speaking after the announcement he said: "I am delighted by this news. Our target of £1 billion has been significantly exceeded. The government has listened and taken our campaign very seriously. This announcement could mean real savings right here in Cheltenham and a real improvement in our local public services.

"The actions announced by the Government are deliberately cautious. They are a long-term solution to a long-term problem. This kind of detailed forensic work may not be glamorous, but it is vital if we are to clear up the economic mess left by previous governments."

Under a PFI contract the government effectively rents a capital asset, such as a school or hospital, from a private sector company. Many of the deals, almost all of which were signed off by the



previous government, have proved to be disastrously bad value for money - with many firms making huge profits at the taxpayer's expense.

The PFI Rebate campaign was set up last year by Jesse Norman MP. It now has more than 80 members - details can be found at www.pfi-rebate.org.

Forthcoming social events

Skittles Evening

Saturday 3rd September from 7.30pm St James's Hotel, Ambrose Street - £6 per person including light buffet

Trip to London including a tour of Parliament

Monday 12th September
Depart: Town Hall 7am. Return Tickets £15.00 Contact Andy at the office on Chelt 224889

Jon's supper club

Wednesday 14th September
7.30pm Homemade curries at the Kemble Brewery Inn - £8 per person Contact Jon Walklett at walklettjon@gmail.com

Arguing politics

Friday 23rd September -

location and topic to follow

Quiz Night

Saturday 1st October Bar Open from 7.15pm - Quiz Starts at 7.30pm Swindon Village Hall. £7.50 includes supper

Jon's supper club

Thursday 13th October
7.30pm the Ryeworth Inn - £8 per person Contact Jon Walklett at walklettjon@gmail.com

Jon's supper club

Thursday 10th November
7.30pm the Kemble Brewery Inn - £8 per person Contact Jon Walklett at walklettjon@gmail.com

Annual Dinner

Friday 18th November,

7.00pm for 7.30pm. Renaissance Restaurant, Gloucestershire College. Our speaker will be David Laws, MP for Yeovil. Menu and prices to follow later

Arguing politics

Friday 25th November -
location and topic to follow

Skittles Evening

Saturday 3rd December from 7.30pm St James's Hotel, Ambrose Street - £6 per person including light buffet

Unless otherwise indicated, for more details on these events contact Heather Turner on 574227 or pandhturner@blueyonder.co.uk

August 2011

The newsletter of Cheltenham Liberal Democrats

Free Speech

2012 elections - the three new faces chosen to fight for the Lib Dems in Cheltenham

We will be defending ten Borough Council seats in the local elections in Cheltenham next year, as well as looking to make some gains from the Conservatives.

It will be a tough battle but the Liberal Democrats have chosen excellent new candidates to fight three of the key seats.

Andrew Lansley has been chosen to fight St Paul's ward, to replace Councillor Paul Wheeldon who is sadly standing down because of work commitments

Andrew was born in St Paul's in 1980 and now lives on St Paul's Road. Andrew lives with his wife Anna, and their first child is due in November.



Following years of community work and almost a decade working in charity, media and education Andrew decided to get involved with local politics and he joined the Liberal Democrats because he agrees with their aims of trying to make this country a fairer place to live in.

Andrew said "Local issues are currently dominated by redevelopment work, anti-social behaviour, crime and traffic as well as the increasing importance of a green life and community living. This gives us the unique opportunity of working together and cultivating true community engagement at a time when it is needed the most." For more information about Andrew go to: <http://andrewlansleystpauls.tumblr.com>

Marcus Annfield is our new candidate in St Mark's replacing Councillor John Webster who is retiring after many years of invaluable service.

Marcus lives in Cheltenham with his wife Caroline and their family. After years of experience in property management, he has recently established his own lettings agency.

He is a member of a local residents association and has successfully campaigned for improvements to a local play area.



In his spare time, Marcus enjoys local amateur dramatics is a proud member of

Gloucestershire WildlifeTrust and fundraises for Gloucester Royal Hospital Special Care Baby Unit.

Julie Morris will fight Charlton Kings, where we hope to gain the second borough council seat after Helena McCloskey's triumph last year.

Julie has lived in Charlton Kings for 16 years and is recently retired from GCHQ. She has always been interested in the welfare of 'communities' as she spent over 20 years wandering around the world with HM Forces. This lifestyle led to involvement with other families in making and maintaining a good community spirit whilst in new surroundings.



Congratulations to Andrew, Marcus and Julie for their selections - and good luck for the elections next May!

Can you help?

If you have some spare time and would like to come in to the office in Hewlett Road and help with stuffing envelopes and sticking on labels, please give **Andy Williams** a call on **224889**. Even a few hours here and there is very welcome.

Positive action by the Lib Dems in government - what you don't get to read in the papers!

Social housing in UK gets building boost after years of decline

Lib Dem MP **Andrew Stunell**, the Communities and Local Government Minister, has announced Government plans to increase social housing after decades of declining numbers and soaring waiting lists:

Liberal Democrats in government are ensuring this trend is reversed. We fought hard to make sure that the Comprehensive Spending Review last October included money for a social housing building programme of 150,000 new social and affordable homes to be built up to 2015. A key part of this was the new Affordable Rent model that we introduced, with an invitation to social housing providers to bid for funding.

We now know that demand from affordable housing providers to be involved in the programme has been huge, bigger even than our own expectations. And as can be seen in the details of the announcement, every part of England is set to benefit. New homes will be delivered across all the country - rural and urban communities alike - and will include family homes.

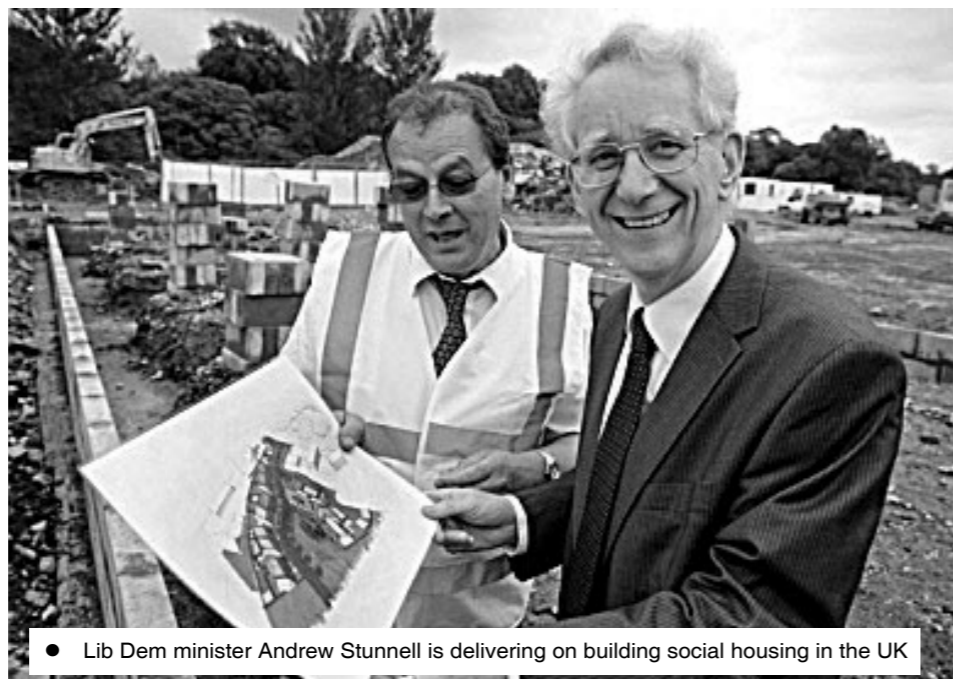
We've been able to announce support for 145 schemes, sharing the £1.8bn pot of funding. This means that not only are we set to achieve our social house building target, we are set to exceed it. The Government is now on course to deliver up to 170,000 new

homes by 2015, safeguarding some 80,000 jobs in construction, and other related trades in the process. We can now confidently say that we will be the first government for over thirty years to finish with more social and affordable homes than we started with.

Housing is a complex issue, and there are no easy solutions to the myriad of problems we face. Whether it's overcrowding, under-occupation, waiting lists, or housing quality, we need a large package of solutions to tackle these issues. There is no one-size-fits-all option. But clearly the best

place to start is by increasing the social housing supply. This won't end our housing problems, but it is a big step in the right direction.

We all know that times are tough, and we need to learn how to do more with less in every aspect of government policy, including social housing. But even at a time when we are borrowing £400 million every day, government will still be spending billions on getting on with the job of tackling the housing problem in this country. And unlike Thatcher, or Blair, we will deliver an increase in affordable housing.



● Lib Dem minister Andrew Stunell is delivering on building social housing in the UK



Would you like a tour of Parliament?

Martin is always delighted to welcome constituents to Westminster and arrange a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament for them.

Whether you want to come along with a few friends or family members, or would like to organise a group to come from your school, place of work or organisation, just let Martin know on 224889 or email martin@martinhorwood.net.

Martin says: "It has been a pleasure to see so many constituents up in Westminster - do come along if you can."

There is no charge for tours but places are limited so please let Martin have as much notice as possible.

You too could be a Lib Dem Councillor!

What does it really involve?

by **Dennis Parsons**, Secretary of **Cheltenham Liberal Democrats**

We are currently selecting candidates to stand for the Liberal Democrats in the Cheltenham Borough Council elections next year. There are still several wards where no candidate has been chosen yet. And we will soon begin planning for the County elections in 2013 when we will be fighting the ten new county divisions which will come into being following the boundaries review. That will be finalised by early September.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate, you will get lots of help and training from other LibDem members and activists including other councillors who will take you through what's involved with being a councillor and will even let you shadow them for a time to get a feel of council meetings and casework.

The qualities that you will need are, first and foremost, a desire to serve your local community. You will need to be reasonably self-assured and comfortable with talking to people of all backgrounds when you are on the doorstep. You don't need a particular level of education. A diverse group is better able to reflect the views of the

people that the Councils represent. You will need to join the Party and to be approved as a candidate by a panel of party members.

As a LibDem candidate, you can count on the backing and hard work of other activists and the financing of a well organised party. But you will be expected to do your share too. So you should reckon on spending a few hours a week on campaigning work. This will include delivering Focus (our local newsheet to keep people informed) and other LibDem propaganda; working with others to build up the grass roots of the party that are essential to electoral success; and taking part in regular canvassing sessions to discover where our support lies.

If you are brand new to all this, you will be able to accompany a more experienced canvasser and campaigner until you are confident enough. And you will have more chance of being selected as a candidate if you have shown that you have the time and the commitment to get involved with party work prior to the selection process.

So being a councillor is very much a team game. You are part of a team working to strengthen the party from

the bottom up. You are part of a team trying to get you elected. And you are part of a team working with colleagues in the LibDem Group on the council to implement LibDem policies that will improve the lot of the good people of Cheltenham.

We're all very friendly and would love to hear from potential new members.

Better than Top Gear repeats

One student tells us what work experience in our office is like

By **Anna Wilson**

During the summertime, Martin Horwood's Cheltenham office is usually swarming with students on work experience - and this year is no exception. My name is Anna, and I am 16 years old, and I am here on work experience at the beginning of July.

Having just finished our GCSE exams, most people my age will be taking full reign of their newly-found freedom. But, as the novelty wears off (and we run out of Top Gear re-runs to watch), we will soon be spending our copious free time staring blankly into space, secretly wishing that we have somewhere to be.

This is one of the reasons why I have chosen to spend a week in Martin Horwood's office. I have suddenly found myself with more spare time than I know what to do with, so I have decided to use it as wisely as I can. I think that this experience will also benefit me hugely in the future.

As well as this, I think that gaining an understanding of how things work in the local government would be a huge advantage to me, as I intend to start a Politics and Government A-Level next year.

Also, very few young people that I know take an active interest in our country's politics, aside from occasionally watching Question Time when the TV remote is nowhere to be found. I am spending the week here to prove that politics is an extremely interesting subject, and one I hope more young people will become enthusiastic about.

I am enjoying my time at Martin Horwood's offices, and I would strongly recommend it as a work experience placement. I have learned plenty in the short time that I have been here, and I am thoroughly looking forward to the rest of the week.



● **SUCCESS!** You could be part of our winning team as a Lib Dem Councillor in Cheltenham