



Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter

Issue 58; April 2012

Welcoming Note

Welcome to the April issue of the Mole Valley Conservative Association's Newsletter from the House of Commons.

To unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact us through the website 'Contact us' page with a subject line of 'unsubscribe'.

We hope you enjoy reading the April issue.

News from the House of Commons

Bringing the Act into force



I was pleased to receive a letter from the Ministry of Justice informing me that on 2nd July the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act which started life as my small, but very significant, Private Members Bill will come into force.

My only sadness is that those who have committed this offence during the period of time between the date that this Bill received Royal Assent and the date it comes into force will not be able to be retrospectively prosecuted.

The expert who has helped me throughout the drafting and passage of this Bill, a Detective Chief Inspector with considerable experience in the area of child abuse, estimates that 157 offenders will slip through the net between 8th March and 2nd July 2012.

The reason for the delay is to give officials time to prepare guidance for the police and others in the criminal justice system on the new offence of causing or allowing a child or vulnerable adult to suffer serious physical harm. This will take the form of a Ministry of Justice Circular to be issued by the commencement date. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) will also update their guidance for prosecutors.

It is thought that the implementation of this new legislation will cost in the region of £1.5 million. I believe this amendment is long overdue and will be welcomed by children's charities such as the NSPCC and police and prosecutors.

Paul Beresford

Member of Parliament for Mole Valley



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Feature Article

The Citizens Advice Bureau launches new consumer advice service



Citizens Advice
the charity for your community

The Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) offers an invaluable service to people up and down the country and they help many in Mole Valley at their Dorking and Leatherhead branches. The service relies heavily upon volunteers who give their time generously to train as advisors and then help people with free and independent advice on a variety of issues.

The CAB keeps Parliamentarians informed about individual cases that would benefit from the attention of their local MP and also keep MPs updated on which problems and issues are particularly prevalent in their constituency and the country as a whole.

Sir Paul recently received their newsletter which outlined CAB's thoughts on the Chancellor's recent Budget and how it affects working families. They also provided a very detailed poster listing all the current benefits and tax credit rates which will prove a useful reference point.

This month, the CAB are excited about launching their new consumer advice telephone service which aims to assist 1.5 million callers a year on common queries such as scams and problems with utilities providers.

According to the CAB, the new service "marks a major step forward for the Citizens Advice service and follows the Government's announcement in 2010 that it intends to give Citizens Advice and Trading Standards an enhanced role at the heart of the landscape of organisations which provide advice, advocacy, education and protection for consumers."

As well as helping individuals on a one-to-one basis CAB also look at the wider picture at issues that will affect their users such as changes to legal aid, the Welfare Reform Act and the problems arising from the growth of pay day loans market and debt management companies.



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News in brief

Mole Valley Council Elections



The local Mole Valley District Council elections are coming up on Thursday, 3rd May and campaigning is underway.

It would be great to have some extra support from local Conservatives, whether in the run up to the elections or on the day itself. Please contact the constituency office in Dorking on 01306 883312 to find out how you could best assist the candidates.

Below is a list of the wards in the Mole Valley constituency which will have local elections and the Conservative candidates:

Bookham North	–	Clare Curran
Bookham South	–	Bob Kelly
Dorking North	–	Ron Billard
Dorking South	–	Carol Dykes
Fetcham East	–	Lynne Brooks
Fetcham West	–	Emile Aboud
Holmwoods	–	Michael Spicer
Westcott	–	James Friend
Leatherhead North	–	Charles Prescott
Leatherhead South	–	Rosemary Dickson

State Opening of Parliament



The State Opening of Parliament, when the Queen delivers a speech setting out the Government's legislative agenda for the new Session, will be on Wednesday 9th May 2012.

Many will recall that this event usually takes place in November. However, following the passage of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011, all future State Openings are likely to happen in May.

The Act, which sets out new rules on the timing of general elections, received Royal Assent on 15 September 2011. This means that the next general election will be on 7 May 2015.

State Opening is the main ceremonial event of the parliamentary calendar. The Queen's Speech is delivered by the Queen from the Throne in the House of Lords, in the presence of Members of both Houses.

Although the Queen reads the Speech, the content is entirely drawn up by the Government and approved by the Cabinet. It contains an outline of the Government's policies and proposed new legislation for the new parliamentary session.

Following the State Opening, a motion that the House sends a 'Humble Address' to the Queen thanking her for the Speech is introduced in both Houses. The Government's programme, as presented in the Queen's Speech, is then debated by both Houses for four or five days. The debate on the first day is a general one, with the following days' debates on particular subjects.