

## Swindon Parish Assembly 2010

### Annual Report of:

**County Councillor Suzanne Williams**  
**Borough Councillor Paul Massey**  
**Borough Councillor Bernie Fisher**



This year we are continuing the practice of submitting a joint annual report to the parish assembly. This is because we work very closely as a team to deal with local issues. Rather than waste paper by producing three similar reports, here is a single report to let you know what your local Liberal Democrat team have been up to on your behalf.

### *Opposing the Urban Extension*

Our top priority remains fighting the plans to build an urban extension of up to 5000 homes between Swindon Village and Uckington. We are all members of “Save the Countryside”, and work closely with this non-political group to oppose the urban extension plans at every level. This year, we have had a number of successes:

- Perhaps the most significant development has been the incorporation of Save the Countryside (which is a local organisation focussing on Cheltenham) into a broader alliance called Save our Green Spaces (SOGS), covering the whole of South West England. This has enabled us to lobby Westminster with more force, and learn lessons from planning applications and appeals elsewhere in the South West.
- Save the Countryside asked all candidates in the borough elections on May 6<sup>th</sup> to answer some simple questions about their views on green field development. Overall, there was a 45% response rate to this questionnaire. The Liberal Democrats had the best response rate (14 out of 22 candidates) and the Conservatives the worst (5 out of 22). Of the responses received, almost all supported Save the Countryside’s positions.
- The Save the Countryside annual walk on 23<sup>rd</sup> May was again a successful event that attracted a number of supporters and generated positive local media coverage.

The new coalition government offers us some hope. At the national level, both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have pledged to return decision-making powers on housing numbers to local councils and local people. It remains to be seen how this is implemented, and (most importantly) what takes the place of the Regional Spatial Strategy if it is abolished.

### *Highways Issues*

Highways issues have been very prominent over the last year, especially after the unusually cold weather in January and the consequent deterioration of many roads and pavements. We have had a number of successes getting roads resurfaced, potholes filled and weeds controlled. However, the new roundabout at the junction of Kingsditch Lane and Tewkesbury Road continues to cause problems. Several individual problems have now been sorted here, but the sheer size of the roundabout and the visibility of control lights continues to be an issue.

### *Cruisers*

The use of Malmesbury Road and the surrounding area by “cruisers” remains a problem. We have been talking with the Highways Agency, Police, Borough and County Council to get this issue

dealt with. The police have had some successes in handing out fixed penalty notices, but this has not stopped the groups congregating.

***Sustainability and Recycling***

One big success of Cheltenham’s Lib Dem controlled council this year has been the extension of kerbside recycling to include plastic bottles (currently being rolled out across the town). This has been a priority for some time, but only this year have we been able to save up sufficient cash to buy the necessary vehicles and make it happen.

***Keeping in Touch***

We aim to deliver our local “Focus” newsletter to every house in the area at least once every three months, to keep everyone informed of what we’re doing on your behalf. We are also available to help any resident with a council problem, via the contact details below.

***Thank You***

Paul Massey thanks all the residents of Swindon Village for being returned as borough councillor for Swindon Village on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Paul received 1,728 votes (65%), with the only other candidate (from the Conservative Party) receiving 925 votes (35%).

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