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WEST END FOCUS



June 2003

Your Number One REGULAR Newsletter

Editor : Cllr David Goodall

No. 96

Thank You!



In this Issue

After 20 years serving West End Martin Kyrle narrowly loses this time

Lib Dem gain in Eastleigh

Lib Dem surge in Hedge End

Conservative PPC loses out

New West Parish Council

Allotment rumours unmasked

Dear Residents of West End

I would like to say thank you to everyone who supported me on 1st May.

Regardless of whether you voted, or for whom, I promise to work hard for the people in West End.

Now that the election is over I, together with the rest of the Lib Dem team in West End, can get back to the real work of helping local people with local problems.

So if I can help don't hesitate to contact me.

Thanks again

Eastleigh Borough Councillor - West End South

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The West End Results

West End North			West End South		
Martin Kyrle	LD	547 (44.4%)	David Goodall	LD	604 (48.0%)
Steve Broomfield	Con	578 (46.9%)	Colin Murphy	Con	524 (41.7%)
Christine Hadley	Lab	108 (8.7%)	Nigel Welton	Lab	129 (10.3%)
Turnout 31.8%			Turnout 28.0%		

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West End will miss Martin Kyrle

David Goodall writes: After nearly 20 years' service to West End residents Martin Kyrle lost his council seat by just 31 votes.

Martin joined the Liberal Party in Southampton 45 years ago, with no thought then of ever becoming a councillor (as he puts it, in those days if there were only three candidates the Liberals would still manage to come fourth!). From joining he went on to

hold many Party posts and stood for parliament four times (twice in Eastleigh). He was also Mayor of Eastleigh in 1993-94, when he founded his own permanent charity to help our young people, "The Arts & Youth Trust for Eastleigh".

Martin's long association with the village began in 1980, when a sudden resignation caused a by-election in West End South. At the time Martin was constituency President and party membership in West End was virtually zero, so his arm was twisted into standing. Against all expectations he won! His wife, Margaret, sat for Chandler's Ford and he had just fought the seat next door, and now suddenly he found himself elected in a ward 6 miles away! However, having been chosen by the residents of West End to represent them he accepted the challenge of bringing a breath of fresh air to a village where every other councillor at every level was a Conservative.

The need for change was brought home at the first Parish Council meeting he attended where he felt patronised by the chairman, who clearly regarded the by-election result as a fluke that the next election would correct. Well, it didn't - Martin held the seat for 7 years! Having established a reputation for hard work he was asked by West End Liberals to remain as their candidate. He did and in 1990 he won West End North where he was successfully re-elected many times until this year's nail-biting finish. His total of 19½ years service is the longest ever by any West End borough councillor.

His main legacy though is the hard work he put in for the people of West End behind the scenes without seeking publicity. Throughout his years of service he made the 12-mile round trip from his Chandler's Ford home many times a week to deal with casework and to consult residents.

Martin always made sure that no opportunity was lost to further West End's interests and many residents have cause to be grateful for his help. For tangible evidence of his efforts - look around!

- The new pedestrian access to Itchen Valley Country Park, a project he conceived 8 years ago.
- The smarter High Street, with the unique monument to Richard St Barbe Baker (all other memorials to him are tree planting schemes - so a "world first" for West End!).
- The many street nameplates that reveal West End's history and even the lack of fly-posters because he personally removed them.

These projects and many others took lots of persistence and patience to steer them through many obstacles from conception to implementation.

In short, he did a great deal of work to try and improve the lives of people in the Borough. So Martin will be a hard act for anyone to follow, but as fellow Liberal Democrats we are committed to continuing his work for West End and carrying on his legacy of public service.

And finally ...like several other mayors he could deliver speeches when necessary in French or German. But he was the only one also to give them in Russian and Polish, and bits in Dutch and Italian (and he's now learning Spanish!).

All is new at West End Parish Council, **writes Cllr Peter Humphreys**, following the uncontested parish election, we have a new Parish Council, and a new clerk, Laura Cooke. Other new features are :-

- email - clerk@weparish.co.uk
- website - www.weparish.co.uk

At the Annual Meeting Chairman Neville Dickinson and Vice Chairman John Read were re-appointed, following a particularly hard year, coping without clerk services for most of the year. Neville and John did a grand job holding the fort !!

Election Roundup

Prior to election two contests were clear to predict, i.e. Eastleigh Central and Hedge End St Johns.

In Eastleigh central Steve Sollitt had lost by just 5 votes last year. The result of a good campaign was a **Lib Dem gain**. Well done Steve and his reward - Chairman of Eastleigh LAC.

In Hedge End St Johns Lib Dem June Hughes had to defend a majority of just 12. The result after an excellent campaign was a **Lib Dem surge** and the seat held with the majority up to 479. Well done June, and her reward - Deputy Mayor of Eastleigh Borough.

The overall council position was little changed, and the party standings are now 30 Lib Dem, 10 Conservative and 4 Labour councillors.

In the parish council elections the interesting contest was again in Hedge End St Johns. In the end the three ward Borough councillors won all 3 town council seats. However, Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate **Conor Burns** followed the **loss** of his Southampton City Council seat last year by narrowly missing the **wooden spoon** in Hedge End this year. He came 5th out of 7 behind not only 2 Lib Dems, but also the other 2 Conservative candidates !!



Campaigning all-year-round for local people !

Allotment Rumours Unmasked

Before the recent elections there were various rumours about the future of the allotments in West End. Well, rumours should be checked with facts :-

- Parish Council & the allotment association run the West End allotments.
- Queens College, Oxford owns the West End allotments land.
- The land is marked as open green space in the latest Local plan from Eastleigh Borough Council to stop anyone building on it.
- Don Simmonds, a long-standing allotment holder and allotment supporter, signed Martin Kyrle's nomination paper in the last election.

Aha, I hear you say, but there is no smoke without fire. True, the smoke is coming from various groups opposed to the Eastleigh allotment service changes, which are as a result of two things the:-

- Best Value Allotment Review completed in March 2002.
- Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan passed in December 2002.

The Allotment Review outlines a few changes and this includes :-

- Identifying more allotment sites & promoting the existing ones more.
- Site closure or size reduction, with linked alternative land use.
- A 20 point service improvement action plan.

The Local Plan outlines future land use until 2011 and this includes :-

- Some of the Eastleigh allotment land is earmarked as building land.
- All this land in Eastleigh is subject to a development brief so that the Borough Council can have greater control over the development.
- The Local Plan also outlines other possible new building sites, but it marks **Allington Lane** correctly as a **GREEN countryside**.

The affected Eastleigh sites differ in two main aspects to the West End site :-

- it is the Borough Council & the associated allotment associations who run the Eastleigh allotments.
- it is the Borough Council that owns the land, and so could the use the land to meet housing needs.

The moral of this tale is: **"Beware of rumours just before elections - they may not be true."**

West End Allotments and Allington Lane - Green and Safe

And finally ...In Eastleigh itself where these issues have been widely discussed and at times hotly debated the election results were quite interesting. Peter Wall who led the team on the Best Value Allotments Review kept his seat with a good majority, and Steve Sollitt regained his seat lost last year against the Labour candidate who was campaigning against the Local Plan proposals. The Labour candidate's argument was that it would be better to build the houses elsewhere, like up Allington Lane for instance !...

What can David do for YOU?



David Chidgey MP

If there are issues you want us to take up, or if you have a problem or an idea for West End, get in touch with our unique FREEPOST service. Write to: David Chidgey MP, Liberal Democrats, FREEPOST, Eastleigh SO50 9AA. It needn't cost a stamp - but using one helps save funds for campaigning!

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____