

Focus

Tooting Graveney Ward

Editors:

Jeremy Ambache
Pamela Clarke
Stephanie Dearden
Surinder Rhode



LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
www.libdems.org.uk

April 2009

Recession hits local businesses

The Focus Team has found local businesses under pressure. Team members recently talked to local businesses in Tooting High Street and Mitcham Road as part of a survey led by Vince Cable, the Lib Dem's national spokesman on the economy.

They found most businesses are suffering, and some may be forced to close. And national chains Clarke's shoes and Adams Kids have recently been forced to close local stores, following Mothercare, Marks & Spencer and others.

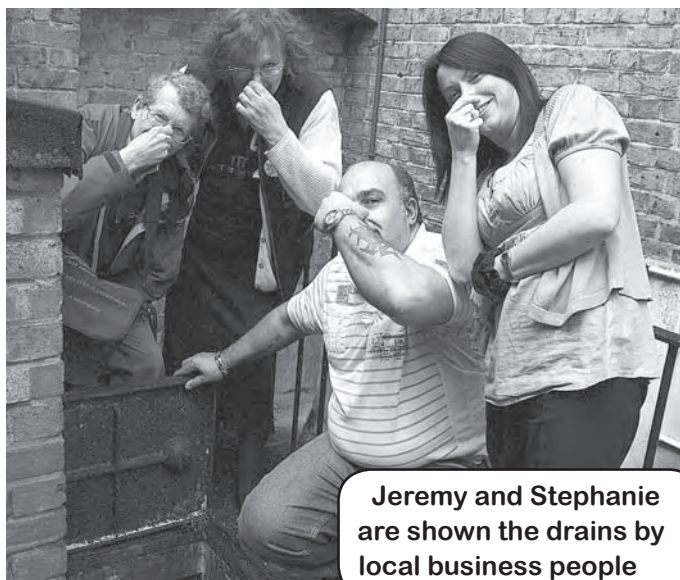
"We are seriously worried that business closures are creating unemployment, which makes things even worse," says Focus team member Jeremy Ambache. "Labour promised there would be no more 'boom and bust' – but they failed to prepare the country for the current crisis. Now things are spiralling out of control."

The survey also found that the local Conservative council isn't helping. Focus team member and local businessman Surinder Rhode says, "Wandsworth used to have a reputation for being friendly to local business, but now they are just interested in property developers. Instead people think they are harassing local businesses to catch them out and levy more fines."

Local businesses also think the Council could help them more to deal with waste and rubbish. "The local Conservatives are very happy to blame local businesses for Tooting's rubbish problem, but the Council is very unhelpful in sorting it out. This really isn't the right time to use small businesses as scapegoats," says Jeremy.



Jeremy Ambache and Stephanie Dearden in Tooting High Street. "Shops are already closing here. Local businesses need to be helped, not treated as scapegoats."



Jeremy and Stephanie are shown the drains by local business people

There's a Stink in the High Street

Mr Mehmet Abdi of Tuxedo Express dry cleaners has told Focus about flooding and sewerage problems affecting shops in Tooting High Street, creating nasty smells and a health hazard. He has complained to Thames Water. "They give us rebates from our bills, but they won't sort the problem out – so it keeps happening again," says Mr Abdi.

But since Focus contacted both Thames Water and the Council, Thames Water have promised to fix the problem. "It appears that Thames Water know where the problem is," says Stephanie Dearden. "It's good news for local businesses, shoppers and residents that they have promised to fix it." Focus will keep an eye on the situation.

WORKING FOR YOU *all year round*

Anger over Parking charges

In the last Focus we started a petition to protest at the Council's increase parking charges by 43% over two years. We had a lot of local support both from our online petition and when we've knocked on doors.

"This is daylight robbery when the cost of parking is used as a form of stealth tax. It should have been evaluated far more carefully for its impact on residents. This is an outrage," one local resident commented.

We've also heard that the Council have stopped the special rate for midwives working at St George's Hospital, so their charges have gone up by 50% in one year!

The Council have told us that they've had to put the charges up because less people are parking illegally, so they get less fines. "This beggars belief," says Stephanie Dearden. "Why don't they cut costs when something like that happens, rather than making innocent residents pay?"

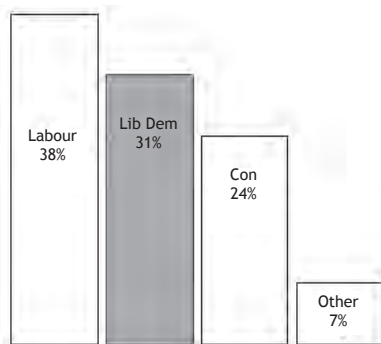
"Many people are angry about the sky-high rise in parking charges. When we called door-to-door with this petition we hardly found anyone who did not want to sign. We do hope the Council will take note! Thank you to all of you that have signed the petition," says Jeremy Ambache.

"So far over 120 people have signed; we will be presenting it as this newsletter goes out."

What they don't want you to know

In local council elections in Graveney ward the Liberal Democrats have been second to Labour in every election since 1986!

The Conservatives can't win here! It's their worst result in the whole of Wandsworth. In council elections, it's a two horse race between the Lib Dems and Labour. **So support the Lib Dems if you think Tooting deserves better.**



Graveney ward election results
May 2006

Published and promoted on behalf of Tooting Liberal Democrats by David Patterson both at 196 Franciscan Rd, London SW17 8HG. Printed by Ted Shrimpton, 120 Dorchester Avenue, Bexley DA5 3AW.

Lorry ban flouted in Rectory Lane



Jeremy and Stephanie: "There's no sign at this end of Rectory Lane to say heavy lorries are banned. How are they supposed to know?"

Since Focus raised this problem in the last two editions, we have had many more complaints from local residents. Heavy lorries over 7.5 tonnes continue to break the law and drive down this road. We have again asked the police to keep a close eye on offending lorries.

We have also contacted the Council to tell them that there is no sign at the roundabout at the top end of Rectory Lane, so some drivers might not even know it is illegal when approaching from this direction!

Local residents are have organised a petition which is going to the Council as we go to press.

Here to help you!

Use this slip to let us know of any issues you would like the FOCUS team to take up.

Or ring Surinder Rhode on 020 8767 9557. Or email us at info@wandsworthlibdems.org.uk

Name:
Address:
Phone:
email:

Return slip to:

Tooting Graveney Focus Team 196 Franciscan Rd, London SW17 8HG