

# Liberal Democrats - The Effective Opposition

To: John Prescott MP, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Westminster

The Council Tax is an unfair tax, based simply on outdated valuations of property and with no link to ability to pay. It should be scrapped and replaced with a system based on people's ability to pay.

Name:  
Address:  
Phone:  
Email:

*The Liberal Democrats may contact you from time to time to keep you informed on issues you may find of interest. Please let us know if you do not wish the information above to be used for this purpose.*

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**Bill Grigg**

Contact Bill Grigg

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## TOP-UP FEES - VOTE FACTFILE

- ◆ Labour's plans for "top-up" fees will go forward after they won a narrow vote in Parliament
- ◆ Of the main parties only the Liberal Democrats had every MP voting against the bill.
- ◆ Two Conservative MP's abstained and one voted with the Government.
- ◆ If all Conservative MP's had opposed the bill it would have only taken ONE Labour MP to abstain to see the bill defeated.

**SCRAP TUTION FEES**  
[www.scraptuitionfees.com](http://www.scraptuitionfees.com)  
**SCRAP COUNCIL TAX**  
[www.axe-the-tax.org.uk](http://www.axe-the-tax.org.uk)

**WHAT DO YOU THINK? PLEASE GIVE US YOUR VIEWS ON ANY ISSUE RAISED IN THIS FOCUS**

## Help the Liberal Democrats



- I can help deliver leaflets
- I enclose a donation of . . . . .
- I want to join

I enclose a cheque (payable to "Liberal Democrats" for £ . . . . .

*A donation of £5 or more entitles you to membership of the Liberal Democrats. Tick above if you would like to become a member.*

Name:  
Address:  
Email:

**Return to : Hexham Liberal Democrats, Freepost NT2899, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5BR**

**Fax 01434 682494**

# Corbridge FOCUS

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

Focus Team: Bill Grigg and Nick Holder



## NEW CAR PARK SOUTH OF THE RIVER



*The new car park has been open since December 2003.*

It is very well used and a great asset to the village after waiting many years for such a scheme.

## CHAINS DEVELOPMENT

A warm welcome to the first new residents on to the Chains Development with the hope that you will be very happy in your new homes and our village.



## Traffic and Parking Consultation

*After a lot of very hard work the residents consultation on the traffic and parking in the village should take place within the next few weeks in the Parish Hall.*

The proposals will greatly benefit the village and hopefully help sort the present problems, which should help residents, visitors and local businesses.



## Village Plan and Village Design Statement

**Corbridge Parish Council, together with thirty volunteers, are busy preparing the first stages of the village plan.** Each working group is busy preparing their section of the questionnaire which will be circulated to every household in early Autumn. The working groups are Highways, Planning, Leisure, Amenities and Village Design Statement. There will also be a young people's survey.

This is your opportunity to say what you would like to see in the future. Please do return the questionnaire which will give us a very good guide in preparing the Village Plan and to try to implement in the future, what you would like to happen.

### In this issue

- ◆ New Car Park
- ◆ Chains Development
- ◆ Traffic and Parking Consultation
- ◆ Village Plan
- ◆ Council Tax
- ◆ Tuition Fees
- ◆ How would you spend £13 million?
- ◆ Andrew Duffield
- ◆ School Changes
- ◆ Back our Campaigns

# Liberal Democrats - The Effective Opposition

## LABOUR (& Tories) LOOSE THE PLOT

- **You don't need a reverse gear to do a U-turn**, as Tony Blair proved recently with his decision to at last hold a referendum on the EU Constitution – which the Lib Dems were the first to call for. But Blair announced his U-turn to the press, not Parliament. Cabinet members learnt of his reversal 'from the papers'!
- **In a second U-turn**, Labour is finally considering compensation for workers losing their company pension. Lib Dem pressure has persuaded many Labour backbenchers to sign up to an Early Day Motion opposing the Pensions Bill.
- **Tory backbenchers** have been quoted as saying that a Referendum on the EU constitution would "consume the party", that it "opens a vacuum at heart of Tory thinking on Europe", and it has 'completely shafted our main campaign theme'!
- **Quote of the moment:** If you believe in the nation state, if you believe in greater parliamentary accountability, if you believe that we should try to make the best of organisations, then the constitutional treaty makes a huge amount of sense. **Chris Patten, Former Tory party Chairman (Observer 25/04/04)**
- Lib Dem Parliamentary Spokesman for Hexham, **Andrew Duffield**, says: **The disarray of Labour and Tories over all these issues, plus the ongoing war in Iraq, makes one thing clear - the Liberal Democrats are the only party with a consistent and principled message that puts British interests first.**



### Andrew Duffield

is a Northumberland County Councillor and was recently selected by Hexham Constituency Liberal Democrats to stand for them at the next general election.

## HOW WOULD YOU SPEND £30 MILLION?

Tynedale Council has £30 million in reserves which could be spent outside Tynedale if the Council disappears in 2 years. Liberal Democrat Councillors suggested recently that Tynedale should look at a range of options just to be on the safe side. This was rejected by the ruling Tory Group. We think the public have a right to be involved in deciding this issue. In the meantime what would you like: affordable-housing, a new swimming bath at Wentworth, other community facilities, a reduction in your council tax.

**We would love to hear from you.**

## TORIES STILL BACK THE COUNCIL TAX

Do you know what percentage of your income must you give paying council tax this year? 10%? That is quite possible. Tynedale Tories backed the unfair tax at a recent Council Meeting. Nothing wrong with it, they say. Goes very nicely with income tax levels of 40% for those earning over £100,000.

**Why not sign our council tax petition? We are on the side of the many thousands of pensioners who are rebelling against this iniquitous tax. There are no local elections in Tynedale, but you will be able to vote in the European elections on June 10<sup>th</sup>.**

## LIB DEMS BACK LOCAL INCOME TAX

What difference would it make to you?

Below are some figures for a slightly lower band D council tax

	Council Tax Band D	LIT (at 3.75%)	Gain (+) Loss (-)
<b>Pensioner Couple income £14,600</b>	<b>£1,102</b>	<b>£22</b>	<b>+ £1080</b>
<b>Teacher grade M3 £20,514 (single person household)</b>	<b>£826</b>	<b>£596</b>	<b>+ £230</b>
<b>Average UK pay £24,498 (single earner household)</b>	<b>£1,102</b>	<b>£746</b>	<b>+£356</b>
<b>Nurse grade D, £17,500 and police officer £20,436( double earner household)</b>	<b>£1,102</b>	<b>£1079</b>	<b>+£23</b>
<b>Median Household Income, £21,700</b>	<b>£1,102</b>	<b>£641</b>	<b>+£461</b>
<b>Cabinet Minister £127,791</b>	<b>£1,102</b>	<b>£4619</b>	<b>- £2475</b>

**Note: for the purposes of calculations for this table all existing tax allowances and bands have been maintained. Liberal Democrat policies would see changes to these with tax allowances being raised and a 50% tax band for those earning over £100,000 a year which would alter these figures**

## LOCAL OPINION SOUGHT ON COUNTY EDUCATION OPTION PLANS

**Councillor Philip Latham** chaired a recent public hearing organised by the Community Health & Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee for parents and teachers to gather the views of local people on the outline options from the county. The report which was written after this meeting and a meeting with education chief, Brian Edwards, can be down loaded from the council website. If you want a hard copy please contact Philip Latham on 01434 682494.

Many differing views were expressed at the meetings but it is clear that both parents and teachers have positive and definite views about the proposals 'Building Schools for the Future'. Alternative options have been put forward and no doubt these alternatives will be sent to The County.

Tynedale Council was especially concerned that the plans in the initial stages seemed :

1. to take no account of the effect of school closures on the viability of small villages,
2. the stressful effects of longer journeys on young children
3. that land which might be considered as saleable by the county for housing might have an urgent community function
4. that building new large high schools on the outskirts of towns could breach the green belt.