

ED VAIZEY WRITES...

A general election campaign is an opportunity for me to reflect on my five years so far as your MP. It has been a great privilege for a number of reasons - the chance to help people who have run out of options, and the chance to participate in debates that affect the whole country. Of course, after the expenses scandal, politics has never been held in greater disrepute, and we have a long way to go to enhance the reputation of House of Commons and MPs in general. The most important lesson I have learned in my time as an MP is the importance of communication. By this, I do not mean spin. I mean the simple process of engaging people in decisions and trying where possible to address their problems and concerns. We have seen a little of this locally with the issue of the Anson Trust. I have always said that I admire the trustees for taking on this issue (unpaid and in their spare time), and they have the unenviable task of squaring a circle. But I do think that the regular public meetings that are now taking place will help the process of getting a solution that most people either support, or at least understand. I've held meetings in Wantage and Wallingford which have allowed people to discuss contentious issues, and they have been well received. Sometimes it brings together people who have never met, even though they have similar interests and live in a small town.

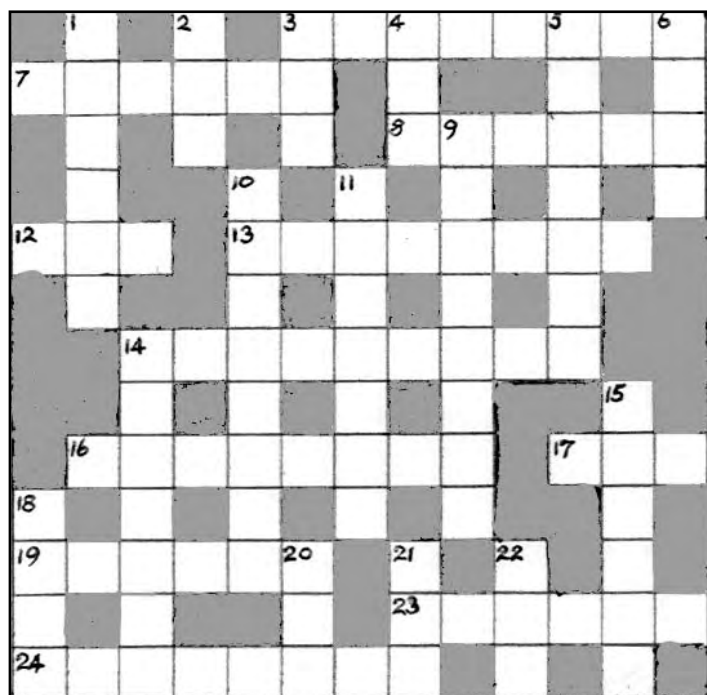
I have also tried to respond to constituents as quickly as possible (no doubt I will now receive e-mails from people to whom I never replied!), and to deal with whatever concern they have, even if it is not strictly within my remit (parking tickets spring to mind - and no, that is not an encouragement to you to write to me the next time you get one). Again, if someone feels strongly enough about an issue to write to their MP, they should get a response.

This is a long way of saying that the biggest frustration for me has been the way many public bodies deal with the public. The last debate I held in the House of Commons was on the Criminal Records Bureau. What may have been a good idea at the start - to check whether people working with children had a relevant criminal record - has turned into a bureaucratic nightmare, with checks taking weeks, multiple checks being required, and huge costs for individuals. All this does is put people off doing what they have hitherto done without any interference, namely helping and supporting children's activities in their local community. There are dozens of institutions like this, which seem to have no appreciation of the burden they place on ordinary people.

In the spirit of communication, I should say that discussions are continuing on the replacement of Newbridge. This will have an effect on Marcham as a replacement will encourage more lorries to use the A415. Personally I want a lorry ban through the village and for all lorry traffic heading west to be routed via the A34 and A420.

ED VAIZEY, Candidate Wantage and Didcot (Con)

MAY CROSSWORD BY ALISA



May 2010

Marcham Community Group

Following the open meeting about the future of the Anson Trust (in March), a new Marcham Community Group (MCG) has been formed to develop and implement plans for new community facilities to meet the needs of Marcham people. At the first meeting of MCG, held on 30 March, a general consensus was reached on a way forward. Since then, two working groups, a Finance group and a Planning group have met, and a further meeting of MCG has been held. Although it is early days in the workings of MCG, there are good signs of positive progress and we will keep you informed of developments and plans for wider community involvement. If anyone is interested in helping and has specific skills to offer, please contact Jim Asher on 391727 (jim.asher@btinternet.com) for further details. Watch this space...

MARCHAM SHOP SURVEY

We have now had time to collate and check the responses to the survey contained in last month's MADNews and we have pleasure in sharing the results with the parishioners of Marcham.

To understand the figures it is important that we consider the following (figures are approximate):

Marcham Households – 681 :: Marcham Population – 1811
1100 copies of MADNews are circulated within Marcham and a wider audience.

We received a total of – 198 Responses.

The response received from what seemed the most relevant questions was that Marcham Post Office was the top most currently used, and it would continue to be used daily by 22 people, weekly by 124 and monthly by 41. Also 186 replies thought it was important to have a village shop and they asked for a range of services such as Post Office, Local Produce, Newspapers / magazines, Fresh Fruit and Veg, Home Made produce, delicatessen, fresh /frozen meat and fish etc. It was also considered a small community cafe would be a welcome facility.

The conclusion of the survey is encouraging and deserves further investigation. It is felt that the people with reduced mobility miss not having a shop and there will always be a percentage of people living in the village that would welcome a local shop.

To move the project forward we will now discuss the results with the OCC rural community council shop development worker to evaluate the best way forward to provide Marcham with a shop to meet local needs.

To help us evaluate the best way forward, one idea may be to run a shop on a voluntary basis, and it would be helpful therefore to hear from anyone in the village with a few hours to spend each week who may be interested in trying their hand serving behind the counter!!!If this appeals to you please contact Malcolm Denton 391497 or Chris Ricketts 391329

We will keep you informed of progress.

ACROSS

- 3 Relating to the clergy (8)
- 7 Hill near Oxford (6)
- 8 Animal with strong incisors (6)
- 12 Example of 8 (3)
- 15 Where Abingdon Prep school is (8)
- 14 See 17
- 16 No charge for residence (4.4)
- 17 11 10 & 14 Marcham Society subject (3.7.2.6.9)
- 19 Happening on the 6th (6)
- 23 Where the European School is (6)
- 24 Determined (8)

DOWN

- 1 Musical instrument (6)
- 2 Insect (3)
- 3 Call (3)
- 4 Head of corn (3)
- 5 Plainly (7)
- 6 Musical instrument (4)
- 9 Wrongdoer (3)
- 10 See 17
- 11 See 17
- 14 Invents (7)
- 15 Road in Marcham (3.3)
- 18 Finished (4)
- 20 Wildebeest (3)
- 21 Playing card (3)
- 22 Big deer (3)