

Waverley

# HERALD

Covering Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere, Cranleigh and all our villages. Free leaflet paid for by the Liberal Democrats and delivered by volunteers.

Liberal Democrats

LIB DEMS FIGHT FOR SURREY RESIDENTS



SEE INSIDE

## SURREY'S CHOICE IN 2025

MORE FAILURE WITH THE CONSERVATIVES AT COUNTY HALL

OR

A FAIR DEAL WITH THE LOCAL LIB DEM TEAM

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# CONSERVATIVES HAVE FAILED OUR CHILDREN

Over 1800 Surrey children with SEND are missing school



Surrey County Council leader apologises over SEND 'failings'

More than 1,800 children with SEN missing school

SurreyLive

BBC NEWS

**The Conservative Leader of the County Council has been forced to apologise for the poor treatment of vulnerable children and their families.**

Shocking statistics revealed by the Lib Dems show that over 1,800 children in Surrey with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities missed more than a third of their schooling last year.

Surrey Liberal Democrat leader **Paul Follows** said, "This issue dominates my email inbox. Parents, grandparents, and carers, all deeply distressed about the state of provision in Surrey, feel like they are constantly battling a system led by people who don't care and don't listen."

The council also has ten times the national average of special

needs complaints submitted to the Ombudsman.

**Tory leader apologises for "indefensible" failings**

Surrey Lib Dem Councillor **Liz Townsend** added, "For the last 28 years, the Conservatives have been responsible for these services in Surrey. Only now are they apologising to families for a system that is failing their children, makes vital decisions behind closed doors, and leaves too many without the education they need for too long.

"The Liberal Democrats would create an equal and collaborative partnership with families and schools where everyone's experience, knowledge and skills are used to create better outcomes for all children and young people."

## WHAT HAS THE CONSERVATIVE COUNCIL DONE FOR ME LATELY?

- **Public service chaos** - crumbling roads; underinvestment in public amenities; police and fire service budgets cuts; further cuts to adult social care
  - **Financial incompetence** - £498 million in unidentified budget cuts in the £1,034 million cuts planned for 2025 - 30
  - **Internal mismanagement** - Surrey Lib Dems are demanding answers on why vital information on how the council is being run had been 'missing' for 14 months
  - **Special educational needs neglect** - one of the highest rates of education-related complaints in the country
  - **Environmental calamity;** the council has unlawfully approved expansion of an onshore oil site; it has also approved fracking in the Surrey Hills
- The Lib Dems are committed to getting a fair deal for residents.**

## SPECIAL REPORT: Latest on the Lib Dem fight to take overall control of Surrey County Council...

# A FAIR DEAL FOR SURREY



**Fab Four:** Your current team of hardworking Lib Dem Surrey County Councillors from Waverley: **Penny Rivers** (Godalming North), **Liz Townsend** (Cranleigh & Ewhurst), **Paul Follows** (Godalming South, Milford & Witley) and **John Robini** (Haslemere). They hope to be joined by **Theresa Meredith-Hardy** (Farnham Central), **Keith Buchanan** (Waverley Western Villages), **Mark Merryweather** (Farnham South), **Ben Bristow** (Farnham North) and **Paul Wright** (Waverley Eastern Villages) after May's Surrey County Council elections.

**Over the past four years, Surrey has been shifting from Blue to Yellow.**

The Lib Dems now control, or are the largest party in, six of the 11 Borough Councils, up from just one in 2021. In last July's general election, they gained six Surrey MPs. The Conservatives no longer represent the majority of Surrey's residents, and it's the Lib Dems who now have the momentum to remove them from County Hall.

Lib Dem group leader at Surrey County Council, Cllr Paul Follows, said, "We know it's hard to focus on May elections in January, when residents are worried about the cost of living. But this time of year is

also when people notice extra potholes on the roads or worry about elderly relatives managing through the winter. Wouldn't it be reassuring to know that those problems were being tackled by an effective Lib Dem-led County Council?"

Meanwhile, Lib Dem representatives running Waverley Borough Council continue to work tirelessly on behalf of residents all year round. Through its leadership of Waverley Borough Council, local Lib Dems have achieved:

**Community support** - increased funding for community services, including grants to local organisations and support for those affected by the cost of living crisis

**Council efficiency** - a key focus on financial prudence, with measures to improve the efficiency of Council operations, while avoiding cuts to critical services

**Environmental action** - full commitment to combating climate change through the implementation of carbon reduction strategies, the enhancement of recycling rates, and the improvement of access to green spaces

**Local homes** - new initiatives to build affordable and sustainable homes for local families.

The Lib Dems are now determined to carry over this approach, of efficient council

management, to the overall running of Surrey County Council as well.

Cllr Paul Follows added, "The Conservatives have maxed out the credit card over the last 14 years - both nationally and locally. They have broken our country and our county, leaving a huge financial mess for others to clean up.

"When your Council Tax bill arrives in the coming weeks, take a good look at how much goes to County Hall. Ask yourself who you would trust to manage that money, and vote to overturn years of Conservative mismanagement and neglect in favour of an effective and energetic fresh start."

**Repair our county's roads**



**Honesty about the finances**



**Protect our natural environment**



**The Lib Dem plan for Surrey...**

## POTHOLES, POTHOLES, POTHOLES!



Local Lib Dem campaigner Theresa Meredith-Hardy is calling on Surrey County Council to get a grip on the pothole epidemic. Sign her petition at: [waverleylibdems.org.uk/pothole-petition](http://waverleylibdems.org.uk/pothole-petition) or scan the QR code above.

**Road users in Surrey are getting a rough deal from the current Conservative-run Surrey County Council road repair service.**

The RAC highlights Surrey as having the highest number of vehicle damage claims due to potholes. This isn't just a problem for motorists though; for cyclists, potholes can be lethal.

Paul Follows, Lib Dem group leader at Surrey County Council, commented, "We receive many reports about potholes needing to be repaired after a previous repair doesn't last the distance, or a pothole being fixed but others nearby being

totally ignored. People are justifiably angry. We need to look again at the accountability of contractors and put in place a process that works for our residents. When money is tight, this system is ludicrous."

Theresa Meredith-Hardy, Lib Dem campaigner in Farnham, added, "I've seen a huge increase in the amount of potholes being highlighted as a concern by residents not only in Farnham, but right across Surrey.

"That's why I launched my petition to let Surrey County Council know that they must do better."

## LABOUR LETDOWN

**Lib Dems speak out against government policies harming our local communities**



Lib Dem Paul Follows is listening to and fighting for families and pensioners in need of support.

**The Lib Dems have been speaking out against Labour's controversial slashing of the pensioners' Winter Fuel Payment, which has driven tens of thousands of the country's most vulnerable people into fuel poverty.**

Locally, the Lib Dems have stepped up to provide assistance to those most at risk in our community, so they don't have to choose between heating and eating.

The Lib Dems continue to oppose Labour's decision to raise the bus fare cap, which will reduce mobility for the poorest residents in Waverley and those living in our rural

villages. The rise in National Insurance contributions for employers, including small businesses, will only damage business growth and employment.

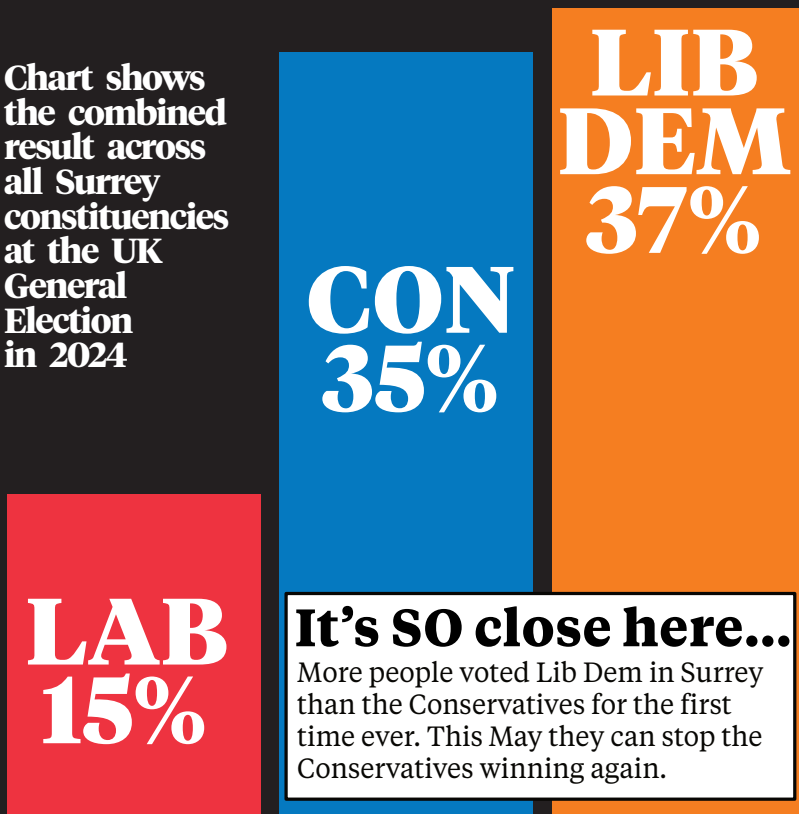
The Labour government is also imposing unrealistic and unachievable housing targets, doubling the numbers across Waverley overnight.

The Lib Dems believe in sustainable, community-driven growth - not reckless policies that disregard local needs and infrastructure limits. It's time to stand up for Waverley and protect our communities from unworkable targets.

# LIB DEMS: THE CLEAR CHALLENGERS THIS MAY

## MAY'S COUNCIL ELECTIONS ARE A CLEAR CHOICE

Chart shows the combined result across all Surrey constituencies at the UK General Election in 2024



### It's SO close here...

More people voted Lib Dem in Surrey than the Conservatives for the first time ever. This May they can stop the Conservatives winning again.

- SEVENTY TWO Lib Dem MPs elected across the United Kingdom
- Lib Dems: Largest third party for over 100 years
- Lib Dems have the momentum to win Surrey County Council elections here this May
- Six Lib Dems MPs elected in Surrey, including Zöe Franklin in Guildford

**The General Election delivered a huge result for the Liberal Democrats across Surrey.**

Half of the 12 constituencies in Surrey are now represented by Liberal Democrats, while the other half retained Conservative MPs. Those winning Conservatives saw their majorities slashed.

### LIB DEMS ARE WINNING HERE

Next May, voters will get to have their say on Conservative controlled Surrey County Council - many residents want to make their feelings known about the state of the roads, record-breaking Council Tax bills and the provision of special educational needs.

**More people voted for the Liberal Democrats in Surrey than any other party in July.**

**Only the Lib Dems can stop the Conservatives winning again. Voting Labour, or for an Independent, will only help the Tories win again in Surrey.**

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## JOIN THE LOCAL LIB DEMS' WINNING TEAM

**The Surrey Lib Dem team of MPs, councillors and campaigners are working hard to get a fair deal for our communities. They rely on help from local volunteers to support their campaigns. Please get in touch and join the team today...**

Name: .....

House No and Road Name: .....

Post Code: ..... Telephone: .....

Email: .....

Can we keep you updated?  Campaigns  News

- I will put up a Lib Dem poster at election time
- I will help deliver Lib Dem leaflets in my area
- I will help with canvassing for the Lib Dem team
- I want to join the Liberal Democrats

Please enclose a cheque for £15 made payable to the Liberal Democrats

Return for **FREE** by sending this slip back in an envelope addressed to:

**Freepost  
WAVERLEY LIB DEMS**

Or sign up online: [waverleylibdems.org.uk/volunteer](http://waverleylibdems.org.uk/volunteer)