

A Message from Councillor Paul Johnston.

New Year is a chance to reflect for all in Surbiton Hill, and a time for new beginnings. Whatever you plan to do in 2010, we wish you all success and happiness.

For many we know 2009 was challenging and tested us thoroughly.

Nick has worked very long hours combining his newly established company with his work as a councillor. With his amazing energy he has not lost a single opportunity to take up a cause for residents, from excessive numbers of learner drivers in Southborough to judging the Flower competition in School Lane. He has also been fighting for new primary school places as our party's Education spokesman, before moving to challenge the Lib Dems to deliver on their promised savings through the One Council Programme.

Janet has been as busy as ever, ignoring her husband's request to slow down and enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle. Her strengths on planning have been tested to the full in the past year. With changes in the planning law we have seen so many applications that just have not been acceptable. She never misses the need to build space for the recycling and bins and is determined to stop over development. This is her twelfth year as councillor for Surbiton Hill and she remains as committed as in the first year.

We are supported by the wonderful Mavis Cracknell, who lives in Malcolm Drive. She divides her time between teaching for the Open University, being Church warden at St Marks and St Andrews and keeping Nick and me in line within Surbiton Hill. Her husband John has been a great support to her in all her ventures

This is also my twelfth year as your councillor. I have been at most, if not all the meetings of the Southborough Residents' and The School Lane Residents' Associations. I have helped create the website for the Ellerton and Bond Road Residents' Association and our own ward site, <http://surbitonhillcldr.com>, which is of some pride to me. It has now been viewed over 15,000 times! I am also the Conservative group Health and Well Being Spokesman and with the proposed Polyclinic and other changes in the NHS; it's left little time to rest on my laurels. And I still chair the Borough Housing Consultative Committee. Of course, I couldn't do any of it without the tireless support of my wife, Daphne.

We have had our successes in the past year such as more money for the children play areas on the School Lane estate, investment



Mavis, Paul, Helen, Nick and Janet at the Surbiton Hill Public Meeting

in paths and some of our roads, success in securing money for residents to develop the support they give other residents in their streets. And there are many private stories of individuals we have helped, that we shall keep to ourselves. Our one regret is the loss of the planning appeal made by Sunrise Homes. We opposed the application with Southborough Residents and supported them throughout the public hearings but, alas, Sunrise won and the gateway to Surbiton, at the top of the Upper Brighton Road will be changed for ever. Our thanks and admiration goes to all those who fought so selflessly on behalf of their fellow residents.

This year, we will be placing ourselves once again in the hands of the voters. The Local elections are set for May 6th 2010. I know that, for all of us, it has been once again a pleasure to serve you as your councillors and we would like to take this opportunity, regardless of your voting intentions, to wish you a very happy New Year and the very best of good health, happiness and fortune in the year ahead.

Paul Johnston, Janet Bowen-Hitchings, Nick Kilby and Mavis Cracknell.

We would like to keep in touch with you about the issues affecting our area. If you would be happy for us to do this by email and mobile phone, please complete your details below:

Name

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*By giving us your email address and/or mobile number, you are agreeing to receive communications and information from us by email or SMS.

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Councillors secure important repairs to School Lane

After years of requests from Councillors and residents, the Council Housing department finally replaced the glass and temporary boarding in two of the stairwells on the estate. The work is using new materials and while there is concern over the light quality this solution should prove to be durable enough to signal the end of boarded up light wells and a massive improvement to the general safety in the staircases around the estate.

At the same time work is being undertaken to repair or replace the floor coverings in the stairwells following complaints by Councillor Nick Kilby that a resident could easily be tripped up by the floor covering lifting.



SLE Work in Progress



SLE Windows Boarded up

Nick said: "The state of our housing is shameful and after 8 years of the Lib Dems running the council nothing has improved. This work should have been done years ago and the reality is that this is the easiest and cheapest item on a growing list of repairs. And that is before anyone gets to issues that we could improve! I am pleased we have this work being done but the residents do deserve better and we will have to keep pushing until we finally resolve the financial crisis the Housing department is in. I am grateful to the council officers for their help; it cannot be fun having your hands tied knowing how big the need is."

Paul, who is Chairman of the Housing Consultative Committee said: "This is good news but I share Nick's disappointment about the lack of progress for resolving the Housing department's finances. I have been working with the Residents' Association in School Lane and elsewhere across the borough for the last three years and still we have had no clear leadership from the Lib Dems. It would be funny if it was not tragic for all those who suffer from the lack of investment. School Lane has a strong RA and I dread to think what would happen if they, combined with Nick and me, didn't keep fighting for every penny! "

YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES



Nick Kilby Paul Johnston Janet Bowen-Hitchings Mavis Cracknell

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For more information visit www.surbitonhillcllr.com

