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Beautiful Bucks...

a great place to live

This year a Halifax survey declared Buckinghamshire to be the best place to live in the UK in terms of social values, health, housing and employment. Mike Colston your local County Councillor says 'The tranquillity of our countryside, the quality of our schools, our services to older people and disabled, low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour are all things that we as Conservatives value and are prepared to work hard to maintain for our children's children'.



Striving for excellence and value

The County Council was judged this year as a top performer. The Audit Commission rating of Buckinghamshire County Council gave it its highest rating of 'excellent' for its overall quality and effectiveness. A Conservative administration has delivered year on year efficiency savings and been able to hold Council Tax to below the South East average despite the reduction since 1997 in Government funding.

YOUR MONEY drift from south to north

Local Government is funded in two ways to provide statutory services such as schools, social care, libraries and a host of other obligations. Prior to 1997 a formula based upon population and need saw local authorities funded from central taxation and our business rates that covered a significant part of the cost. The remainder was funded by local taxation through the community charge. The Government introduced a new method that allowed funding to be moved from Counties in the South to areas in the North of the Country. This year we received less than 20% of cost from central funding when other distant authorities still received significantly greater support. That decision has had a profound impact on all local authorities in the South East and Buckinghamshire in particular. It is unfair to our residents and we have been campaigning on your behalf for the system to be altered so that it is fairer and more transparent and will continue to do so.

MAKING ENDS MEET balancing the books

To balance the County budget for 09/10 savings and efficiencies of over £16 million had to be found. With the current level of Government induced national debt financial support for future years is predicted to get significantly worse. As a responsible Conservative County administration determined to keep local tax rises down the council has embarked upon a massive programme of outsourcing or merging with other local authorities services such as road maintenance, potentially waste disposal and back office support functions to balance the books for future years and maintain our top rated services. Mike Colston your local County Councillor says '*The county and regional work I do is to encourage collaborative working by local authorities that will see new ways of working and the prudent use of public money.*'

DAVID CAMERON'S PLEDGE return to localism

After nearly thirteen years of top down centralised dictat under this Government Conservatives have pledged in a new green paper to return genuine decision making and power to local people and communities. David Cameron says 'More and more power has been sucked into Westminster. This has made local government frequently little more than the instrument of a Labour regime and has bogged down councils in a mass of artificial targets and inspections that have to be paid for by them and are time consuming.

Local people need to be released to make local decisions.

Your local Councillor working hard for you



Tidying a day centre garden

As the County Councillor for the Great Missenden area Mike Colston says *'I have been committed to protecting our countryside, library, schools, businesses and farming industry and I have resisted the opening of our byways to motorised leisure activity and have helped to challenge the National Air Traffic consultation that would have seen an increase in flights across our villages at very low levels.*

I have helped to solve problems for families ranging from school placements to care homes, flooding and road safety. Our road safety strategy has seen the review of speed limits, weight limits on our two bridges and Great Missenden High Street, two new pedestrian crossings and schemes at Rignall Road and Green Lane to help to slow traffic at restricted junctions.

I am currently working with local schools to seek changes to the Council policies in relation to Grammar schools catchments policy, the creation of school safety zones and improvements to winter gritting recognising altitude as a factor in deciding the gritting of footways and school access routes. I continue to work on speed limit reductions to Spurlings End Road that is now out for consultation, London Road and Mobwell parking and for road potholes and maintenance problems.

POTHOLE PERIL Council pulls out stops for repairs

The dreadful winter weather has done real damage to our roads. Last year after an extra £3.25 million programme the pothole problem was managed down. Now, the combination of repeated freezing and thawing has led to thousands of new holes. This problem is not unique to Bucks and is a problem felt particularly badly in the South East because of continued under investment in our roads by this Government that has starved Bucks of capital for road maintenance. The Council has responded by hiring in additional road gangs and improvements will be made with a target of 2000 potholes to be repaired per week but it is a mammoth task. Mike Colston says *'Whilst this is good news the real problem is that many of our roads such as Wycombe Road, Wendover Road and many local unclassified roads really need complete resurfacing and there just is not the money available to do it. We want to see the Government invest in Bucks roads in the same way that it spends in other parts of the country. I have put forward a list of resurfacing works for this area to be considered for the available funding in this coming year.'*

CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE the Conservative commitment to our most vulnerable residents

Mike Colston says *'We have a significant number of frail elderly and disabled residents in our County who deserve the best we can do for them. We should also not forget carers who look after them 24 hours each day often at home. I have led policy development to modernise service delivery and get value for money in the contracts we place, made carers a priority and authorised the redevelopment of our care homes. Two new homes are already open and six more are under development that will offer first rate facilities to our most vulnerable residents.*

CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE FOR THE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION

MIKE COLSTON has been the County Councillor for Great Missenden, Prestwood and Heath End since 2001. He is also responsible for Adult Social Care and Community Health, sits on a Local Government Association Wellbeing Committee, is a founder of SE Councils Adult Social Care Committee and a member of SE Improvement and Efficiency Board. He is an ardent champion of local issues and our local schools and of being a responsive and available local Councillor.



**ON THURSDAY
4th JUNE VOTE**

Mike Colston



Your Conservative Councillor working for YOU