

# *The* **COMPASS**

*for Godalming, Haslemere, and the wider area*

THE NEW  
WAY FOR  
WAVERLEY

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*How we have  
changed.*

CLIMATE CHANGE

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*Anyone for an uprising?*



*What happens...*

# **When We Work TOGETHER!**



## Editor's Letter

*Collaborative politics:*

### WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER.

**Hello and welcome to our second edition of The Compass magazine.** When we published the first edition last year, we received lots of feedback from so many people who were delighted that Labour, Liberal Democrats, Greens, and progressive independents of no political party, were working together collaboratively as part of Compass. We are united by the knowledge that we have far more in common than that which divides us.

Knowing about the work of South West Surrey Compass led many people in our area to vote tactically in the local elections and ensure that the overwhelming Conservative majorities on Waverley Council and on the Town Councils of Godalming, Haslemere and Farnham were replaced by a more democratic variety of the progressive parties working together co-operatively for the good of their local communities. Many more voted tactically in the general election and ensured that Paul Follows secured 39% of the vote, almost twice as much as the largest progressive vote in the previous general election of 2017 (Louise Irvine of the National Health Action Party), and four times as much as the largest progressive vote in the 2015 general election (Howard Kaye of the Labour Party).

We believe that working together offers so much more to local people than party tribalism, and we show how this works in practice in this edition of "The Compass", which includes contributions from some of the new Waverley councillors and news from last year's general election campaign. We believe that the brand of collaborative politics we now practise is exactly what people want – **doing politics differently.**

Editor



### What is Compass?

**Compass is a home for those who want to build and be a part of a Good Society;** one where equality, sustainability and democracy are not mere aspirations, but a living reality. We are founded on the belief that no single issue, organisation or political party can make a Good Society a reality by themselves, so we have to work together to make it happen. Compass is a place where people come together to create the visions, alliances and actions that spark the change we wish to see in the world.

At Compass, we are building a Good Society; one that is much more equal, sustainable and democratic than the society we are living in now.



thegodalmingcompass  
southwestsurreycompass

# LOCAL NEWS

*Some of the things Progressive Councillors have achieved so far*

## Climate Emergency

Supported by councillors from across the political spectrum, on 18th September 2019 Waverley Borough Council passed a motion declaring a climate emergency, and providing for a sixth month period of research and planning to enable the council to come up with a plan to become carbon neutral by 2030. Godalming Town Council, Haslemere Town Council and Farnham Town Council have now all declared climate emergencies, and are setting to work on plans for greater sustainability in everything they do. Read more about our response to the climate emergency on page 6. You may also be interested to read the article on Extinction Rebellion on page 7.

## Dunsfold Drilling

In July 2019, Waverley Borough Council organised a 'Listening Panel', at which local residents made clear their opposition to drilling for hydrocarbons at Dunsfold. The new administration of Waverley Borough Council vigorously opposed the proposed drilling operation and argued that it was inconsistent with Surrey County Council declaring a "climate emergency". Our serious concerns about the drilling together with a technical report drawn up by Waverley planning officers was presented to Surrey County Council – as the determining authority for this planning application. We await Surrey's response to this.

## Restructuring the council

The new administration has acted quickly to make the council more democratic and more attuned to Waverley residents' opinions by extending the opportunities for residents to speak at council meetings, holding events and public consultations. The Dunsfold drilling "Listening Exercise" in July 2019, heard from 22 people, who all objected to the scheme. They included representatives of parish councils, local businesses, community groups and residents.

## A New Programme for Waverley

At the second full council of the new administration, the new corporate strategy was announced. Council deputy leader Paul Follows described this as a "significant shift in the council's priorities". You can read the complete text on the new programme for Waverley on page 11.

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To find out about Compass, the national organisation, please go to [compassonline.org.uk](http://compassonline.org.uk)

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### About Us

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**"Progressives are now in a position to enact meaningful reform in our local area."**

## South West Surrey goes to the polls: a tumultuous 2019

*By Clare Weightman, Chair of South West Surrey Compass*

**To quote Dickens, 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times... it was the spring of hope, the winter of despair.' In the May local elections, voters resoundingly rejected the Tory-dominated status quo and new progressive-dominated alliances took control of Godalming Town Council and Waverley Borough Council Executive. By contrast, the winter General Election saw the Conservative incumbent, Jeremy Hunt, re-elected for a fifth term as MP, despite a huge swing to the Liberal Democrats' Paul Follows.**

In the local elections, it is worth surveying the scale of the progressive achievement in wresting control away from the Conservatives for the first time in well over a decade: not only did the Tories hold 18 of 20 seats on Godalming Town, but also 50 of 57 seats on Waverley Borough Council – a tall order, to overturn majorities of that scale! The results were stunning: the Liberal Democrats became the largest party on Godalming Town Council, followed by the Green Party with four seats, with Labour picking up two seats and one going to an independent.

On Waverley Borough Council, the Tories lost 30 seats and control of the Executive. A surge in support for the Farnham Residents (15 seats) and Liberal Democrats (14) saw them forge a cross-party coalition agreement with the Greens (2), Labour (2) and an Independent.

Progressives are now in a position to

enact meaningful reform in our local area. Thus far, the 'rainbow alliance' has hit the ground running to prove to residents that a new way of doing politics, based on trust and co-operation, is in fact a better way of doing politics.

And so, on to the General Election. With the summer dominated by legal wrangling over Brexit, speculation over the likelihood of an election became increasingly fervid as autumn faded. Labour's dogged refusal to brook electoral pacts meant that talks for a Unite to Remain pact were only successfully brokered between minority parties. As part of the UTR agreement, Steve Williams stood aside as the Green Party candidate for South West Surrey to allow Paul Follows, his colleague on Godalming & Waverley Councils, to challenge Hunt.

Many local Green Party activists campaigned enthusiastically alongside Liberal Democrats, with National Health Action Party members and independent councillors also endorsing Follows. Although Labour fielded an excellent candidate in Tim Corry, thus ensuring that the progressive vote would continue to be split, it was notable that at local hustings, both Follows and Corry trained their fire on the longstanding incumbent's record in government. Respectful campaigning of this nature is the kernel of the productive cross-party relationship at town and borough level.

In the end, it was not enough;

Hunt was re-elected with 53% of the vote. Yet, there are some glimmers of hope. Paul Follows achieved 39% of the vote, almost doubling the second place vote share from 2017, and, incidentally, **achieving the largest increase in the Liberal Democrat vote in any constituency at the 2019 election.** Hunt's majority has been slashed from 21,500 only two years ago, to around 8,000. It is arguably within reach at the next election.

The results of the national poll in fact broadly reflect the situation at the May local election: while there is overwhelming enthusiasm for change in the towns of South West Surrey, the rural hinterland and smaller villages remain a sea of blue. This situation is both a source of hope, and a blueprint for the work that lies ahead. The very fact that the Waverley Executive cross-party alliance and the Godalming Progressive Alliance continue to not just exist, but go from strength to strength, is an endorsement of this collaborative way of doing politics. We now need to spread the message widely, with a view to taking more seats for progressive parties in the County Council elections in 2021.

**"We canvassed together, wrote and delivered leaflets together, looked after polling stations on election day..."**

## Reflections on the General Election

*by Paul Follows*

**The time before the general election was called now feels like a distant memory. It feels almost like a different country. But that is another article for another time.**

This was my first time standing in a general election. I always knew that, were I ever to stand, I wanted it to be where I live, and on behalf of the community that I am part of and for which I work. As an elected councillor, it was of course not my first election, and since the cross-party success in May, I have gotten a bit more used to being in the public eye. General elections, however, are a different order of magnitude! I'll be honest: I didn't want to let anyone down.

One of my biggest concerns going into this was the thought of having to go 'into battle' against the people I call my friends and allies in in our cross-party local government administrations. Would there be Green and Labour candidates? Who would they be? For the Greens, it was clear it would be Steve Williams, and for Labour, it would be Tim Corry. Steve, of course, sits with me on the groups running Waverley BC and Godalming TC. But would this whole election cause divisions to open between our councillors, activists and supporters?

What happened next was (after a great deal of discussion) - 'Unite to Remain'. South West Surrey was to be part of the national agreement between the Liberal Democrats and

the Green Party. Consequently, Steve Williams stood down as Green Party candidate. I will never underestimate what doing that meant and what that took. Some may take issue with parties standing down this way and perhaps label it 'undemocratic'. I will get back to this theme later - but our archaic 'first past the post system' demands that we think seriously about who stands where. Standing down is one thing; joining forces is another. I had no expectations of my Green Party colleagues on this. We should remember that nothing in the broader national agreement went any further than to say who was standing where.

I am fortunate (and thankful) that my fellow Liberal Democrats locally are a fantastic team and when it comes to elections, we do give it our all. But in South West Surrey (an area where we... work as councillors), something different happened. The Green Party firmly backed the campaign and joined the Liberal Democrats in all the things we do in elections. Greens and Lib Dems (along with dozens of non-aligned and even a few Labour members) attended my launch event. We canvassed together, wrote and delivered leaflets together, looked after polling stations on election day itself and took part on social media. Steve Williams joined me at the count.

Five hustings events later, after a vast amount of work from everyone,

the election was over. This time, it was not to be. However, we can take some solace from the results here. Our vote share increase was one of the highest in the country, and the Conservative majority was slashed from over 20,000 to around 8,000.

Where do we go from here? Well, firstly, I want to say - I do not intend to go anywhere! I am about to turn 34, and I will be standing again here in South West Surrey (perhaps with fewer leaflets next time though!) In the meantime, I hope to stand in the Surrey County Elections in 2021.

Secondly, the Conservatives promised many things (especially around Brexit, the NHS, policing and local government funding). We will all hold Mr Hunt and his party to account and do our best to protect the most vulnerable.

I also hope that we can now think about a more comprehensive national partnership of the centre and centre-left. So many people are left voiceless by our electoral system as it stands. We must now unite to reform, in order to bring to the national scene the values which we share and work for at a local level.

Thank you to everyone who voted for me and everyone who gave their valuable time, expertise and support during the election - to those of all parties (and none). None of what we achieved would have been possible without you. Next time!



# Where now for Remainers?

*John Gaskell, South West Surrey Branch: The European Movement*

The election of a Brexit majority government was a disaster. It showed we can't rely on LibDem and Labour to represent pro-EU interests, or even to be a competent opposition. Neither should we rely solely on pro-EU groups based in London, as the collapse of Peoples' Vote illustrated. But this country needs a broad and active Opposition right now.

Grassroots activists representing all major groups from all parts of the country met in London in January and decided on the following action points:

1. Working towards the Closest Possible Relationship with Europe
2. Productive Economic and Trade Links (via many Non-Governmental Organisations)
3. Safeguard Citizens' Rights (including EU citizens in the UK)
4. Accountability (Hold the government to Account)
5. Transparency and Freedom of Information

Some aspects of the above are best dealt with nationally – and we can still support and amplify the message. Others aspects have a local dimension. For example EU citizens may need support locally when their 'application' is given 'pre-settled status'. Within South West Surrey we aim to work with charities like [Settled.co.uk](https://www.settled.co.uk) and the [Citizens Advice Bureau](https://www.citizensadvicebureau.co.uk) to support EU citizens.

The SW Surrey branch of the European Movement is not going away. We are consulting our supporters over the next month on all that we can do locally.

Please join us and help, via social media or e-mail:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EMSWSurrey/>

Twitter: @EM\_SWSurrey

Email: [swsurrey@europeanmovement.co.uk](mailto:swsurrey@europeanmovement.co.uk)

## Climate Emergency

*On 18th September 2019, Waverley Borough Council agreed the following motion, but before it by the new cross-party executive: The Executive recommends to Council that:*

- i) Waverley Borough Council declares a 'Climate Emergency' requiring urgent action.
- ii) Waverley Borough Council aims to become **carbon neutral by 2030**, taking into account both production and consumption emissions, and takes a leadership role to achieve this working with other councils, including town and parish councils within the borough.
- iii) Waverley Borough Council recognises that the achievement of the target will require central government to provide the powers, funding and other resources to achieve the target and therefore calls on the government to provide such powers, funding and other resources as appropriate to facilitate achieving the 2030 target.
- iv) Officers be instructed to provide to the Council's Executive, within six months of the date of this decision, a report on the actions the Council and the local community can take to address these issues together with an action plan, specifying year on year milestones and metrics to show progress towards achieving the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030 noting any additional costs that might be involved.



Photo by Gavin Dunt



## Anyone for an uprising?

*by Kirsty Clough*

**It is not an exaggeration to say that human induced climate change presents an existential threat to all life on earth. In 2018 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported that we have just 12 years to avert a complete climate catastrophe by keeping global average temperature rise below 1.5 degrees centigrade.**

Extinction Rebellion was born out of extreme frustration regarding the lack of urgency and the token actions proposed to avert the breakdown of a stable global climate and the collapse of ecosystems that will inevitably follow.

When I became part of Extinction Rebellion's local group in Godalming, people were just returning from the Easter

uprising, where for two weeks, parts of central London had been brought to a standstill by thousands of climate change protestors. In the UK the movement has three core demands of the government. These are that they:

**Tell the truth about the scale of the ecological crisis we are facing.**

**Reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2025.**

**Set up a citizens assembly to hear evidence and design robust policies.**

There is no doubt that a fundamental shift in our values system and in our patterns of consumption is required in developed countries such as the UK, especially if we

are to have any hope of averting a global climate breakdown. Such a change requires that we put our political leanings to one side and recognise that this is a moral issue that will not be solved unless we work together. Extinction Rebellion has, personally, provided the space for me to do this and I have been inspired by the dedication and creativity of the rapidly expanding group that I am part of.

Whether you agree with Extinction Rebellion's tactics of peaceful, sometimes unlawful, civil disobedience or not you cannot argue with the fact that it has, in a matter of months, shifted to the mainstream an issue which has for far too long languished in the shadows of our society.

# Working In Partnership...



*Paul Follows – Deputy Leader of Waverley Borough Council – Liberal Democrat*

Even after almost a year, it is still a pretty special feeling to walk into the weekly meeting of the Waverley BC political leadership.

Many people in the country would think it an unusual situation to have four parties represented, but I wouldn't change a thing. So much so this is the way Cllr Williams and I manage Godalming Town Council.

When one party dominates a council, one set of views and one set of ideas dominate too. As time passes, that one party often runs out of ideas (and aren't likely to get any more just talking amongst themselves).

Our cross-party model means that a diversity of ideas, views and political traditions are brought to the table every week. It means we debate the merits of what we are doing and have to convince other people that something is a good idea before we do it. With no single party ruling the roost, one party does not dominate (in fact in our system one party cannot overlook the others).

I think that leads to better decisions for our residents.



*Nick Palmer – Portfolio Holder for Parking & Enforcement – Labour Party*

“We must hang together... or we will hang separately” – as Benjamin Franklin put it. In these difficult post-Brexit times, it's vital that the progressive alternatives to Conservative hegemony work together constructively.

I'm delighted to be part of the cross-party alliance which runs Waverley. I know there are parts of Britain where Labour, LibDems and Greens struggle to get on, but by focusing on what we share rather than what divides us we are making a difference in Waverley after years of Conservative dominance. Committed to progressive values, we bring together our different priorities: social housing, the climate emergency, decentralised and open leadership.

Does this mean that we don't have differences? No – we have distinctive ideals and beliefs, and sometimes we compete in elections. But Compass isn't only about elections – it's about respecting each other and working together. For the sake of the people whom we represent – the non-Conservative majority!



*Steve Williams – Portfolio Holder for Environment & Sustainability – Green Party*

I was elected as the Green Party councillor for the Charterhouse Ward in the local elections last May and I was delighted to be invited to join the cross-party Executive as the portfolio holder for Environment and Sustainability. As such, I have led on planning how to reduce the council's net carbon footprint to zero by 2030.

In contrast with the previous single-party Conservative administration, we comprise an Executive which represents no less than FOUR political groupings. Whatever our differences, we have shared values of social justice, sustainability and a commitment to extending democratic participation in local issues rather than being a council aloof from the people. You can read about our common programme on page 11.

## How we have changed

### THEN

*50 (out of 57) Tory Borough Councillors.*



### NOW

*34 out of 57 Progressive Borough Councillors*



The graphic shows the seismic shift in politics in our area as a result of doing our politics differently. **Waverley is now run by a coalition of Farnham**

**Residents, Liberal Democrats, Greens Labour and Independent councillors.** On page 8, read about how we work together in partnership.

## Waverley: Milford Ward By-Election

**Following the sad and untimely death of popular independent councillor for Milford, Jack Lee, at the end of last year, a by-election was held on Thursday 13th February to elect his successor.**

Supporters of progressive collaboration will be delighted to know that the seat was won by

Maxine Gale, an independent candidate actively supported by Labour, Liberal Democrats and Greens. Maxine won against opposition from a Conservative candidate and another candidate who had formerly stood for UKIP, and she is a supporter of the current multi-party administration.

**Maxine Gale**  
(Independent) 452 (51%)  
**ELECTED**

**Carmel Oates**  
(Conservative) 328 (37%)

**Rosaleen Egan**  
(Independent) 113 (13%)





Waverley's new Executive  
(back row left to right:  
Mark Merryweather, Nick  
Palmer, John Neale, Andy  
MacLeod, Steve Williams)  
(front row left to right  
Anne-Marie Rosoman,  
Paul Follows, John Ward,  
David Beaman)

## Waverley: This is our borough

The borough of Waverley is one of 11 Surrey districts that covers the South West corner of the county.

It comprises four main centres: Godalming, Haslemere, Cranleigh and Farnham, as well as numerous

villages and rural areas in between. It is the most wooded of Surrey's 11 districts.

Waverley Borough Council is one of a number of local authorities in Surrey where the Conservatives lost control in 2019. In Waverley, the

administration of the council now comprises a coalition of Farnham Residents, Liberal Democrats, Greens and Labour, supported by one Independent councillor.

## News from Haslemere Town Council

Claire Matthes, Green Party Councillor, Shottermill Ward

The May 2019 elections brought big changes to the make up of our local councils, not least of which was the election of myself and fellow Green Party candidate Gary Lloyd to Haslemere Town Council.

It was an unexpected result which nonetheless both Gary and I have embraced. We have gotten involved in the push to have a climate and biodiversity emergency declared in both Haslemere and the wider area, as well as linking up with other community initiatives, such as Love Haslemere

Hate Waste, and Transition Haslemere. We also collaborate with other councillors to develop the Strategic Vision.

The next step for Haslemere Town Council is the public consultation regarding the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. I am happy to be involved in that process, helping to ensure that ultimately the Neighbourhood Plan will reflect the views of the people who call the Haslemere area their home.

If I had to pick one thing I have learnt as a councillor, it is that each

and every councillor has the best interests of the Haslemere community at heart; we may all have different priorities or approaches, but this remains true. And in many ways it is that diversity in approach and priority that may serve the community well as things progress along in the remaining years of this term and beyond, ensuring that the needs and concerns of all residents are explored and addressed wherever the Town Council has influence.

## Our New Way of Doing Politics: The New Programme for Waverley

### Waverley Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2019-2023

A programme for Waverley developed by the Executive of Waverley Borough Council

#### Our Vision

Waverley Borough Council is a council which promotes and sustains:

- open, democratic and participative governance
- a financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and services fit for the future
- the value and worth of all residents, regardless of income, wealth, age, disability, race, gender or sexual orientation
- high quality public services accessible for all, including sports, leisure, arts, culture and open spaces
- a thriving local economy, supporting local businesses and employment
- housing to buy and to rent, for those at all income levels
- responsible planning and development, supporting place-shaping and local engagement in planning policy
- a sense of responsibility for our environment, promoting biodiversity and protecting our planet.

#### In our four-year term of office, we shall: develop a more open, inclusive approach to communications and decision-making;

- protect, support and empower Waverley's communities by changing the way that the council is organised and operates, seeking the delivery or devolution of responsibilities from Surrey County Council to Waverley and to Waverley's towns and parishes;
- encourage the development of small businesses and support for local employment; review charging policies to ensure that they are consistent with our vision;
- encourage affordable access to sports and leisure facilities and the arts for all, improving services across

the borough, focusing on health inequalities ensuring that no area is disadvantaged;

- ensure local residents have access to local countryside and are not excluded through high parking charges;
- improve facilities for young people;
- work to maximise the availability of housing that meets the needs of local people at all income levels, as well as reviewing arrangements for preventing homelessness and providing accommodation for vulnerable people, such as those experiencing domestic abuse;
- take steps towards our aim of becoming a net zero-carbon council by 2030, encouraging carbon reduction and carbon offsetting and the promotion of biodiversity and sustainable homes, businesses and transport;
- promote reduction and re-use as well as recycling;
- work with partners to promote a pedestrian-friendly and cycle-friendly road system, taking action on air quality, especially that caused by vehicle emissions, and encouraging an improved "clean" bus service;
- tighten planning guidance so that it is consistent with meeting local needs and protecting the Green Belt, engaging with government to promote rebalancing the planning system in favour of localism; implement the Community Infrastructure Levy fully and allocate funds fairly and transparently;
- engage with all stakeholders to better control crime and anti-social behaviour;
- press the government for appropriate funding to meet local needs as reflected in our vision for Waverley, and reverse cuts to local government funding to enable us to intelligently deal with the looming budget shortfall.

*“An inspiring call to action for all progressives.”*

FRANCES FOLEY, Compass

*“There has never been more important time since WW2 when the various Parties, campaigns and caucuses of the Centre/Left should put aside their differences to identify common cause to combat the disturbingly successful march of the right. This book shows the how's and whys behind the process of progressive cooperation.”*

ANDREW GEORGE, former Liberal Democrat MP for St Ives

*“An invaluable primer for those seeking to chart a path beyond the obsolete landscape of British electoral politics and out of the sorry mess it's dumped us in.”*

BARRY LANGFORD, author of “All Together Now”: The Progressive Alliance and the 2017 General Election

*“Grown up politics can be done, and this book is the guiding light.”*

ANDREE FRIEZE, Green Party Councillor, London Borough of Richmond

“This book delivers hope for politics.”  
Dr Phil Hammond, NHS doctor, broadcaster and journalist

## A NEW WAY OF DOING POLITICS

WORKING TOGETHER TO CHALLENGE A 'SAFE' TORY SEAT



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STEVE WILLIAMS SUSAN RYLAND  
PENNY RIVERS AND  
LOUISE IRVINE

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# The Tory safe seat is the epitome of entitlement...

“A New Way of Doing Politics” tells the story of those drawn into the campaign to elect Dr Louise Irvine, a GP passionate about the NHS who, with the help of a cross-party team, challenged Conservative MP Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health in

his safe South West Surrey seat. It dispels the view that only ‘marginal’ seats are worth contesting and points instead to a new kind of activism, driven by shared values across party divides bringing democracy to Britain’s antiquated political system.