

Parliamentary News

Martin Salter's Fourth Annual Report to Constituents

Reading West Constituency – which includes: Pangbourne, Purley, Tilehurst, Theale, Calcot, Coley, Norcot, Southcote, Whitley and the Oxford Road

Speaking up for Reading West

Since he was first elected as Member of Parliament for Reading West in 1997 Martin Salter has established a well deserved reputation as a hard-working constituency MP and as a tough, energetic campaigner who gets results for local people. Martin believes in keeping in touch with his constituents that is why he produces an Annual Report setting out what he has been doing on your behalf during the last year.



Health Secretary, Alan Milburn, joins pensioners' champion, Kay Everett, and Martin Salter in Broad Street during the General Election campaign in June.

Martin Re-elected – majority tripled!

Much of the first half of this year was dominated by the General Election which looked set for May 3rd but had to be postponed until June due to the restrictions caused by the foot and mouth outbreak. Reading West produced one of the largest swings in the country to a sitting MP with Martin Salter tripling his majority from 2,997 to just short of 9,000 votes. The final result was:

Martin Salter (Labour)	22,300
Stephen Reid (Conservative)	13,451
Polly Martin (Lib Dem)	5,387

Martin says: – *“I felt that with all the hard work over the last four years I had a good chance of holding my seat but never in my wildest dreams did I expect to achieve such a result. All I have ever wanted to do was to represent my constituents to the best of my ability. I am so very grateful to have been given an opportunity to serve the people of Reading West again. I only make one promise – that is to work every bit as hard in my second term as I did in my first.”*

Local action in your area

Over the last year Martin Salter has been busy in:

Whitley

Protesting about the dreadful layout of the new Basingstoke Road bus lane and the junctions at Rose Kiln Lane and Buckland Road. Martin has won a review of the scheme, calling for the bus lane to begin further down the Basingstoke Road and for a complete re-design of the changes to these two junctions.

Working with the police and the Council to tackle anti-social behaviour by local youths outside the South Reading Leisure Centre in Northumberland Avenue and in the South Whitley Park off Swallowfield Drive. New cameras will now be installed at the



LIDL CELEBRATIONS - Martin Salter breaks open the champagne to celebrate yet another successful campaign with local councillors Jo Lovelock and Pete Ruheman who together with local people fought off plans by the supermarket chain Lidl to build on the former Waitrose car park.

Leisure Centre, as well as gates and bollards which have been put in to deter the joyriders who have been spoiling the park for everyone else.

Fords Farm & Beansheaf

Pressing for planning permission for a new supermarket and community centre at Underwood Road following the fire that destroyed Swards.

Launching a petition to persuade West Berkshire Council to re-think the installation of bollards and chicanes in Charrington Road which have caused a number of accidents.

Calcot

Organising a huge protest petition against the closure of the popular Post Office facility at Savacentre. The owners, Sainsburys made it clear that they wanted to rent out the space to other commercial interests. Sadly local protests were ignored and the Post Office closed on January 12th.

Tilehurst and Birch Copse

Pressing for new pedestrian crossings at Norcot Road and School Road.

Opposing unsightly telecom masts and pushing for funding to re-develop Dee Road Estate.

Spearheading the campaign to save the Tilehurst allotments in Kentwood Hill from plans by

Wimpeys to build 61 houses on this important area of green, open space. Over 3,500 have signed the protest petition against the proposals.

Martin has also been working hard to persuade Thames Water to adopt the drains and sewers in the Hilden's Drive area.

Oxford Road area

Opposing plans for unsuitable development in Western Elms Avenue

Working with Local Councillor Chris Maskell to sort out flooding problems with the drains and sewers in Stone Street, Ivydene Road and the Battle Hospital.



MARTIN SALTER joins local residents and shop keepers protesting about the barmy Basingstoke Road bus lane layout by the Buckland Road junction.

Working with local residents and the police to clamp down on drug dealing in the area and pressing for proper consultation over plans to re-locate former Fairmile patients into a community home in Audley Street.

Old Coley & Coley Park

Working with local residents and Minster councillors, Dave Dymond and Catherine Wilton, on new plans for an acceptable housing scheme beside the river at Lower Brook Street. The controversial plans for an 11 storey Kennet tower block have been thrown out.

Working with local residents groups to evict nuisance tenants, remove abandoned cars and pressing the police to target known criminals in the area.

Southcote

Working with tenants in Granville Road flats to persuade the Council to install door entry systems to provide security and protection. Pressing for the eviction of anti-social tenants and a zero

tolerance of drug dealers who sell to children. Campaigning with local residents in Hatford Road for traffic calming measures. Supporting S.I.T.E. - the award winning Southcote Information Technology Experience. This community computing project has opened up opportunities for hundreds of local people.

Purley & Pangbourne

Opposing plans to build 65 houses on a greenfield site off Long Lane. Ensuring that there are no plans to remove the police station in Pangbourne.

Theale

Successfully persuading West Berkshire Council to threaten prosecution against the golf course owner who had installed intrusive floodlighting without planning permission which was shining straight into peoples' bedroom windows.

Persuading Thames Trains to reduce their planned car parking charges by 50% until such time as the station car park is re-surfaced.



WORKING WITH PENSIONERS - Martin Salter joins Tilehurst Liberal councillor Jean Gardner and former Reading Mayors Janet Bond and Kay Everett in a cross party campaign to try to save the Savacentre Post Office.

Meeting the people



READING DEAF CENTRE – Helping out with the refurbishment of the new premises of Reading Deaf Centre in Cardiff Road. Martin has also helped local deaf sportsmen and women raise money to go to the Special Olympics.

Martin Salter lives in his constituency and travels up to Westminster every day when Parliament is sitting. He runs a full time constituency office at 413 Oxford Road and holds regular advice surgeries. On Fridays and during many weekends Martin gets out and about meeting local people, visiting schools, businesses, community projects, residents groups, churches and playgroups. He also has regular meetings with the Chief Executives of Reading Borough and West Berks councils as well as the heads of the other major public services.

Listed below are just some of the visits that Martin has made over the last 12 months. If you would like Martin to visit your group or organisation just drop a line to his constituency office.

Hugh Faringdon RC School, Prospect School, Brookfields School, Denefield School, Theale Primary School, Ryeish Green School, Mary Seacole Nursery, Ranikhet School, Reading Girls' School, Little Heath School, Theale Green Community School, Kentwood Circle Craft Group, Reading Association for the Blind, Grange United Reformed Church, Sikh Temple, British Legion, Tilehurst: Reading University, TA Day at Brock Barracks, ReadIBus, Swimming Awards at Central Pool, Southcote Fete, Reading Mosques, Hindu Temple, Reading Hospitals Fete – Rivermead, West Reading Carnival, Learning & Skills Council, Reading Deaf Centre - Cardiff Road, Abbey Business Centre, Theale, Stepping Stones Playgroup, Meadway.



BECOMING A DJ – On a recent visit to South Reading Youth Club in Northumberland Avenue, Whitley, Martin is shown how to become a 21st century disc jockey. He won't be giving up his day job!

Making a Difference

Hardly a week goes by without Martin being invited to support the work of one of the dozens of local charities that are active in the Reading area. Occasionally he even gets to have as go himself at some of the more 'interesting' fundraising events like abseiling or bungee jumping – Martin has a liking for dangerous sports and is hoping to take part in a parachute jump next summer.



ANOTHER GOOD CAUSE – Martin Salter starts off a sponsored walk from Brock Barracks in the Oxford Road to raise money for the sufferers of motor neurone disease. Just one of the many local charities that Martin supports.

Over the last year Martin has:

- **Leapt out of a 165 foot crane on a sponsored bungee jump for the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Appeal.**
- **Taken part in sponsored walks for the Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre and to raise funds for Motor Neurone Disease.**
- **Contributed prizes to charity auctions at Nirvana Spa in Wokingham and the Renaissance Hotel, Reading.**
- **Organised a days fishing for disabled children from a holiday play scheme on a lake in Theale with the help of the members of Reading Fishing Club.**
- **Launched Berkshire's Autism Awareness Week.**



HELPING THE KIDS – Battle Ward Councillor and Mayor of Reading, Tony Jones, joins Martin Salter in a fund-raising drive to support the popular Mary Seacole nursery in Wolsey Street.

In Westminster

In Parliament Martin has a number of responsibilities. He currently chairs the South-East Group of Labour MPs and coordinates campaigning activity across the region. He was formally a member of the Northern Ireland Select Committee and still retains a close interest in the progress of the peace process following the Good Friday Agreement. Martin has recently been appointed to the Modernisation Selection Committee which is charged with recommending reforms to the way the House of Commons operates.

Throughout his time as an MP Martin has campaigned for a better deal for pensioners – an increase in the basic state pension, winter fuel allowance and a fairer system of concessionary TV licences. He has sponsored a 10 minute rule Bill to promote cheaper TV licences for pensioners.

Martin is leading the campaign in Parliament for an additional cost of living allowance to be paid to teachers, nurses, fire-fighters and police officers to tackle recruitment problems caused by high house prices.



Martin has no outside business interests, believing that representing 70,000 people is a full-time job.

In the constituency

Bus Pass Victory

West Berkshire councillors were forced to back down in the face of pensioner protest organised by Martin Salter.

Over 500 Tilehurst pensioners who live the 'wrong' side of the Reading Borough boundary were outraged to discover that they couldn't use their new half-fare West Berks bus passes on the popular No 17 route to the Battle Hospital and the town centre. Martin threatened to report the Council to the Ombudsman and the policy was suddenly changed. Now West Berks pensioners can use their new bus passes on any service within 400 yards of the district boundary. Reading Borough Council's bus pass holders were unaffected.



PENSIONERS CELEBRATE – West Berkshire pensioners join Martin Salter in celebrating the climbdown by the Council over the absurd decision to stop them using their new bus passes on the popular no 17 service.



DON'T BUILD ON THE FLOODPLAIN – Local people unite to save the all important Kennet Meadows from the developers.

Protecting Kennet Meadows

Last winter saw a record amount of flooding. Properties in Reading escaped damage due to millions of gallons of floodwater being held back by the natural water meadows beside the river Kennet in Coley and Southcote. For the last 20 years local people have fought off attempts by the developers to build on the Kennet Meadows. Martin Salter has now persuaded the government to give special planning protection to designated water meadows in order to prevent flooding and protect the environment.



Winning more money for the police

In 1996 police numbers in the Thames Valley fell to an all time low. To make matters worse the government axed the police housing allowance in 1994 which caused real problems attracting new police recruits into high cost areas like the Thames Valley. Martin Salter has helped secure a £2,000 regional pay award for our local bobbies to help with housing costs. Martin says "This extra payment will undo some of the damage to police numbers caused by previous policies. Hopefully the funding already agreed for an extra 200 police officers for the Thames Valley can now be turned into real live bobbies on the beat."

Martin has also been campaigning against plans by the Thames Valley Police Authority to demolish 12 perfectly serviceable police houses at Sulhamstead to make way for a new firing range.



WHAT A WASTE – Some of the boarded up police houses at Sulhamstead that Martin Salter is trying to protect.

7 Ways to Contact Martin Salter

- Book in for one of his advice surgeries on 2nd and 4th Saturday each month – Telephone: **954 6782** for an appointment.
- Call in at one of his Friday evening drop-in surgeries in Whitley or Calcot – Telephone: **954 6782** for details.
- Write to Martin at his constituency office at **413 Oxford Road, Reading RG30 1HA.**
- Write to Martin at the **House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.**
- Drop him a note in the MP mailbox in the Civic Offices, Reading and save yourself the price of a stamp.
- Send him an email message to **salterm@parliament.uk**
- Go to his website at **www.martinsalter.com**