

Parliamentary News

Martin Salter's Seventh Annual Report to Constituents

2005

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

Martin Salter – getting results

Reading West MP Martin Salter is first and foremost a campaigning, constituency MP who works hard to get results for local residents. He has lived here for 25 years and is widely respected for his commitment to the area and its people.

Over the last year Martin has achieved the following results:

- **Persuaded** the gas giant TRANSCO to abandon their plans to dig up the entire Oxford Road to lay a new gas main. Instead, a new pipeline will now run along the Portman Road verge to minimise disruption for local traders and residents and to avoid traffic congestion for much of West Reading.
- **Won** £20,000 for the installation of new CCTV cameras at the Tilehurst Triangle directly linked to the police station, to deter jobs and vandals who have been intimidating local residents and traders.
- **Saved** a popular Berkshire charity which provides help for primary school children in learning to read.
- **Successfully campaigned** for the introduction of Street Wardens in Calcot, Tilehurst and Purley to help cut crime and support the police.
- **Persuaded** Berkshire Healthcare Trust to drop proposals to close Acorn House in Prospect Park hospital, which would have forced vulnerable, long-term mentally-ill patients out into the community.



WINNING FOR READING WEST – Martin Salter joins councillors and local residents and traders to celebrate the decision of Transco to re-route the replacement gas pipeline down the Portman Road verge, avoiding months of disruption to the Oxford Road and West Reading.

- **Saved** the Whitley Wood Post Office from closure after a strong campaign supported by 2,000 local residents. Sadly, Martin was not able to stop the Post Office closing its Meadway, Lyon Square and Calcot branches.
- **Led the campaign** in Parliament to persuade the government to agree to introduce ID cards to help stop fraud and protect our borders from asylum smugglers.

Martin Salter says: "You can never win every campaign but anyone who knows me is well aware that I will do my level best to get results for the people I represent."



Martin says:

“ It is a huge privilege to be a Member of Parliament and I take my job very seriously. I have tried to be a strong, principled and independent voice for my constituents. I am a firm believer in keeping in touch with people all year round and I hope you find this seventh Annual Report on my activities in Parliament and in Reading useful and informative. I would welcome your views or feedback. ”

Local action all year round

Over the last year Martin Salter has been busy in:

January – Launching a report into flooding in Purley which resulted in an improved local Emergency Plan.

– Giving evidence at a Boundary Inquiry in support of the campaign to stop Theale being transferred into the Wokingham constituency. The plan was eventually dropped.

February – Working with traders and residents in the Oxford Road area for increased short stay parking on Saturdays.

– Trying to get a pedestrian crossing installed at the top of Langley Hill in Tilehurst

– Appealing to local dentists to put their patients before their pockets and stay inside the NHS.

May – Winning new traffic lights at the junction of Coley Avenue and Berkeley Avenue to the delight of local residents.

– Hosting a reception to celebrate 20 years of service to families in Reading by the national charity Homestart.

– Launching the new Berkshire charity ABC to Read at Upcroft School after a long battle to keep volunteer reading in local primary schools.

June – Lobbying for funding for a new community centre in Whitley's Swallowfield Drive.



WINNING FOR WHITLEY – A strong campaign led by Martin and local Whitley councillors successfully persuaded the Post Office to drop their plans to close their Whitley Wood Branch. This was one of the very few closures to be halted in the entire country as the Post Office slims down its network to cut losses.

– Winning a campaign against over development in Wingrove Road near Prospect Park.

March – Saving the Whitley Wood Post Office from closure.

– Securing funding for new CCTV cameras at the Tilehurst Triangle.

– Taking part in the annual rivers and green spaces clean-up weekend in Reading.

April – Launching a campaign against West Berkshire Council's plans to spend up to £2m of council tax payers money on subsidising a cinema in Newbury.

– Persuading Berkshire Health Chiefs to drop plans to close Acorn House at Prospect Park Hospital – a residential unit for the long-term mentally ill.

July – Pressing for funding for street wardens in Calcot, Tilehurst and Purley.

– Protesting at an abysmal planning foul up by West Berkshire Councillors which denied local residents a chance to have their say over plans for yet another fast-food takeaway in Hildens Drive, Tilehurst.

August – Presenting prizes at the World Blind Cricket Series in Bradfield College.



GIVING EVERY CHILD A CHANCE – Martin and Battle ward councillor Chris Maskell join the staff of Reading Libraries in launching the expansion of the government's Bookstart project which provides free picture books for every toddler. Martin says: "Developing children's reading skills is a great way to give them the best possible start in life."

– Giving disabled kids a day's fishing with the help of anglers from Tilehurst Royal British Legion and Reading Fishing Club.

September – Demanding a review of the decision to block the closure of a problem alleyway running through the middle of Norcot Nursery school.

– Protesting to the Department of Work and Pensions with local advice agencies about delays in processing benefit claims.

– Pressing for an alcohol ban in Arthur Newberry Park following drunken and intimidating behaviour by gangs of local youths.

October – Being appointed a trustee of a new project to restore the river Kennet to its former glory as a chalk stream.

– Campaigning with local businesses for Crossrail to

come to Reading rather than ending at Maidenhead.

– Supporting Local Democracy Week by giving talks at local schools.

November – Launching the expansion of the fabulous Bookstart scheme in Reading to give free books to all toddlers.

– Starting a campaign to get a new walk-in medical centre on the Battle Hospital site.

December – Holding his annual Christmas card design competition with children from Whitley Park Junior School.

– Helping to open the annual Mayor's Charity Market at the Hexagon.

– Raising funds for the Caribbean Hurricane Disaster Appeal to help rebuild the damage to St Vincent and Grenada



SAYING NO TO UNDERAGE DRINKING – Martin joins Tilehurst newsagent Harish Patel in launching the NO ID – NO SALE campaign in local shops to deter underage teenagers from trying to purchase alcohol or tobacco. Anti-social behaviour by teenage gangs is often fuelled by alcohol sold to them by some irresponsible traders.

Making a difference

Martin is a strong supporter of the work of local charities and hardly a week goes by without him being asked to help promote or raise funds for a good cause.



HELPING GOOD CAUSES –

Martin launches the Oracle's 2004 charity fund for St John Ambulance, Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis and Dogs for the Disabled

Over the past year Martin has:

- **Completed** the Reading Half Marathon to mark his 50th Birthday – despite nursing a calf injury – raising £1,000 for Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre where he is patron.
- **Helped** local school children to improve their reading skills by working as a volunteer reader in Reading primary schools. Appointed a patron of the new charity – Assisting Berkshire's Children to Read (ABC).
- **Donated** prizes such as a dinner in the House of Commons or bottles of House of Commons Whisky signed by the Prime Minister to a number of good causes, including The Mayor's Charity, Cystinosis Foundation, Royal Berkshire Hospital's Baby Unit, Caribbean Hurricane Disaster Appeal, Fiona Appleyard Appeal.
- **Organised** a fishing trip for disabled children from the PALS play scheme along with local anglers at Tapperns Lake, Theale.



BIKE 2 BORDEAUX – Martin gives a send off to West Reading resident Mark Lyford at the start of the first leg of his sponsored Bike Ride from Pingewood's Hanover Hotel

- **Encouraged** all lapsed donors to give blood in order to boost the nation's blood stocks. Martin donated his 9th pint in September.
- **Launched** the sponsored Bike to Bordeaux event which raised £5,000 towards the work of the Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

Meeting the people – staying in touch

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, resident groups, churches and playgroups. He also has regular meetings with the Chief Executives of Reading Borough and West Berkshire Councils, as well as the heads of the other major public services.



CARING FOR KIDS – Martin is a great supporter of schools and children's projects in his constituency. He is patron of the Southcote Toy Library which recently celebrated its first birthday. This year he also led a successful campaign to save a local charity that helps primary school children with their reading.

Over the last 12 months Martin has:

- **Taken part** in MPs Back to School Day as well as regularly visiting local schools, including All Saints, Blessed Hugh Faringdon, Brookfields, Church End Primary, Denefield, Downsway Primary, Geoffrey Field, Newbury College, Norcot Nursery, Ranikhet, Reading College, Thamesbridge, Theale Green, Whitley Park, Presentation College, Prospect College, Moorlands, Upcroft, Southcote Primary. Martin has also visited Southcote Toy Library, Book Start and Sure Start Whitley.
- **Worked with** parish councils in Purley, Tilehurst, Holybrook, Theale and Pangbourne. Spoken to pensioners' groups including the Silver Surfers, Fir Tree Club and the Silver Roses and youth groups, in Whitley, Tilehurst and Southcote. Martin is a keen supporter of Reading F.C. where he is a season ticket holder in the East Stand.
- **Supported** local churches and voluntary organisations such as Reading Interfaith Group, Age Concern Berkshire, Berkshire Helmet Initiative Trust, Common Purpose, Elizabeth Fry Hostel, Mothertongue, Reading Association for the Blind, Reading Refugee Support Group, Resource, Southcote SITE, Willow House at Salvation Army and YMCA.

If you would like Martin to visit your group or organisation just drop a line to his constituency office.

Westminster Report 2004

Martin Salter has been described by commentators as a "sharp, clever backbencher...loyal but no robot". He has earned respect for not being afraid to speak his mind and has, on occasions, voted against his own party when the interests of his constituents or his conscience demanded it. He is Deputy Leader of Labour's Parliamentary Campaign Team and Parliamentary Spokesman for Fishing and Shooting. Martin has no outside business interests, believing that representing 70,000 constituents is a full time job. He claims considerably less in allowances than most MPs. Martin does not have a tax payer funded flat in London, nor does he go on regular foreign trips at the public's expense.



MARTIN SALTER
– a full time MP

Listed below are a few highlights from his work in Westminster in the last year:

January

- Called for increases in student maintenance grants to offset the cost of tuition fees for students from families with modest incomes.
- Won Home Office backing for better drug treatment and testing of addicts.

February

- Launched a national campaign with Liz Longhurst against violent internet pornography, with the support of 180 other MPs.
- Opposed the spread of GM Crops in the UK.

March

- Called for the re-introduction of the Bill banning fox hunting, in line with the manifesto promise.
- Helped win significant improvements to the Higher Education Bill.

April

- Pressed for a ban on further boat licences on the Kennet and Avon canal until water quality problems are solved.
- Welcomed the draft bill on ID cards.

- Secured the support of Solicitor General Harriet Harman MP for the Jane Longhurst campaign.

May

- Pressed the Home Office to tighten procedures for criminal records checks on people working with young children.
- Lobbied for more cash for flood prevention and emergency planning in the Thames Valley.

June

- Opposed Opposition plans to use NHS funds to subsidise private operations.
- Contributed to Select Committee Report on re-connecting Parliament with the public.

July

- Chaired a national gun crime seminar in London.
- Called for renegotiation of outdated treaties covering asylum and immigration.

September

- Voted to ban fox hunting.

- Secured new measures to help fisheries protect stocks from cormorant predation.
- Launched a national report into the scandal of cash machine charges.

October

- Called for medicinal cannabis to be made legally available to MS sufferers.
- Raised the case for Crossrail to terminate in Reading.

November

- Organised delegation from Reading advice agencies to meet Work and Pensions Minister over the delays in processing benefit claims.
- Called for local councils to be given tough powers to oppose the introduction of new gambling casinos in their areas.

December

- Contributed to Select Committee Report on reforms of Parliamentary business.
- Lobbied for convicted drug dealer assets to be ploughed into funding drug treatment programmes for addicts.



TACKLING THE MENACE OF HARD DRUGS – Reading was awarded extra government money to help combat drug addiction. Martin Salter joins Home Office Minister Caroline Flint MP to open the new Bowman House facility in the town centre.



HELPING MS SUFFERERS – Martin celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre where he is a Patron and active fundraiser.



CLEAN UP THE INTERNET – Solicitor General Harriet Harman MP gives her support to the Jane Longhurst Campaign against violent internet pornography.

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**