

Parliamentary News

Martin Salter's Spring Report – Information for constituents in Reading West

Spring 2003

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

Claim Your Tax Credits NOW

A new system of Child Tax Credits comes into effect in April 2003 to support families with children.

There's also extra help for the lower paid without children through the new Working Tax Credit paid directly through the wage packet.

The new system is designed to bring together all income related payments for families with children and it will be paid directly to the main carer – usually the mother - and worth at least a minimum of £26.50 a week. The Government estimates that 85% of all families with children may be entitled to receive the Child Tax Credit, with families on low incomes receiving higher payments. The new Child Tax Credit will replace the existing Children's Tax Credit and will be payable to more families.

If you are already receiving one of the tax credits, the Inland Revenue will send a new form to you automatically.

Martin Salter says: *"I want to make sure that none of my constituents loses out on the extra money available through the governments new tax credits. Please fill out forms as soon as possible and claim your entitlement."*

Forms and information are available from the Inland Revenue help line on **0800 500 222** or, if you have access to the Internet, via the website at **www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/taxcredits**.

Pensioners will be able to take advantage of the new pensions credit which is being introduced in October to help those with modest savings. Information will be available on a special help line from April 7th.



MARTIN SALTER MP encouraging families in Reading to claim the new Child Tax Credits which will be introduced in April

Beware of Electricity Fraudsters

The energy supplier Scottish and Southern Energy (including Southern Electric) has been accused of using fraud to persuade residents in Reading to transfer to them for their energy supply.

Martin Salter has been contacted by a number of constituents concerned at high-pressure sales techniques being adopted by the company.

A couple in Whitley discovered that a representative of the company had gained access to their house on the pretext of reading their electric meter and had later fraudulently signed an application form requesting that the electricity supply be transferred from British Gas to Scottish and Southern. The company have now dismissed the employee concerned but could face criminal charges if the matter is referred to Thames Valley Police.

Martin Salter is appealing for local people to write to his constituency office, if they have had similar experiences with Scottish and Southern Energy or any other major supplier.

Let Martin Salter know if they've tried to con you or your family.

Write to his constituency office: **413 Oxford Rd, Reading RG30 1HA**

or

Send him an email: **salterm@parliament.uk**

Martin Salter MP – on your side in Reading West

Local Action

Martin Salter has been busy in:

Purley

Highlighting in the House of Commons the failure of West Berkshire Council to provide proper emergency planning or support for residents of up to 200 homes affected by the January floods. A brand new emergency plan is being drawn up and the Environment Agency has promised to look at a possible flood alleviation scheme for Purley following Martin's intervention.

Tilehurst

Winning a better deal for residents of the Haddocks estate whose drains Thames Water have refused to adopt.

Working with local residents and the police to curb anti-social behaviour by teenage gangs in the Barton Road area.

Coley Park

Working with local parents and teenagers on plans to create a new supervised town centre skate park where youngsters can play safely without fear of bullying from older children.

Kentwood

Working with councillors and campaigners to ensure long term planning protection in the new Reading Local Plan for the sensitive Tilehurst Allotments site in Kentwood Hill.



FLOOD ALERT – Martin Salter visits Purley to see for himself the devastating effects of the January floods and how West Berkshire Emergency Planners are performing.

Tackling the People Smugglers

The asylum system is being abused by criminals who try to profit from human misery by smuggling people illegally into Britain.

The Government is clamping down on the asylum smugglers with tough new laws. The maximum prison sentence for traffickers has been raised to 14 years. Fraudulent appeals will no longer attract legal aid and 7 new countries including Kosovo, Albania and Jamaica have been added to the list of asylum

cases that are clearly unfounded with no right of appeal from within the UK. Already any asylum claim from the 10 countries who plan to join the European Union next year is presumed unfounded and deportation follows within 10 days. Asylum claims from these countries have dropped dramatically.

Tough new measures to tackle asylum abuses came in from January this year which mean that benefits will be withdrawn from asylum seekers who do not make a claim as soon as they arrive in the UK. The number of detention places is being expanded from 1500 to 4000. Deportations of failed asylum seekers are now running at 1250 per month – twice as many as 5 years ago

Tony Blair has made it clear that the aim is to reduce asylum claims by 50% by the September of this year.

The message to the asylum smugglers is tough and clear. Britain will not be a soft touch for those who try and abuse our systems or break our laws.



Come along and meet your MP Martin Salter at a venue near you – see below for details.

Local Election Information

There are local elections to both Reading and West Berkshire Councils on Thursday May 1st. If you think you might have a problem getting to the polls postal votes are available. Call the Electoral Registration Officer for your council area: **Reading Borough 9390778** or **West Berkshire 01635 519464**.

Please note there have been changes to ward boundaries in West Berkshire. Calcot ward now includes all of Fords Farm and the Beansheaf estates and will return 3 councillors. Theale village will now have a councillor of its own.

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**

Meet Your MP

Reading West MP Martin Salter has organised a programme of 'Meet Your MP' meetings over the next three months. This is a new service for constituents who want to raise either national or local issues with Martin and is in addition to his regular MP advice surgeries held on the second and fourth weekends of every month. Put these dates in your diary and come along and meet and chat with Martin at a venue near to you.

Date	Venue
Thursday 3rd April – 8pm	Peter Gooch Room Theale Pavilion Recreation Ground, Englefield Road, Theale
Tuesday 22nd April – 7pm	Norcot Youth and Community Centre Lyndhurst Road, Tilehurst
Wednesday 23rd April – 8 pm	United Reform Church Polsted Road, Tilehurst
Thursday 24th April – 7pm	Coley Park Community Centre 140 Wensley Road
Friday 25th April – 8pm	Parish Hall, Calcot Centre Highview, Calcot