



# Parliamentary News

## Martin Salter's Eleventh Annual Report to Constituents

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

# Still Going Strong After 25 Years

It was 25 years ago when Reading West MP, Martin Salter, first entered public life in Reading as a local councillor. He served as Chair of the Leisure Committee, bringing back the Rock Festival and bringing WOMAD to the town. He opened Rivermead and introduced the popular 'Passport to Leisure' scheme. He helped push through the regeneration of central Reading and the move of Reading FC to the fabulous new Madejski Stadium.

Martin was first elected to Parliament in 1997 and was comfortably re-elected in both 2001 and 2005. Although Martin has announced his intention to stand down at the next election, it will be business as usual until then from our hard-working MP, who has now published 11 annual reports to his constituents on his work in Parliament and in Reading West.



**25 NOT OUT!** - Reading Chairman, Sir John Madejski, presents Martin Salter MP with a signed Royals football shirt to commemorate his 25 years in public life.

Photos courtesy of the Reading Evening Post

### Martin says:

*"It's been a busy year but we've won some great victories. I was so pleased to have helped stop the sell-off of the lock-keepers' cottages along the Thames and to have once again defeated the developers wanting to build on the Kennet flood plain. It was also great to see the new law against violent internet pornography introduced after a six year campaign with Reading mum Liz Longhurst and to help achieve a better deal for those brave Gurkha soldiers."*

*"I've now completed a quarter of a century in public life in Reading and have decided that it's time to move on and seek new challenges whilst I've still got some energy left. It's been a massive privilege to represent the people of Reading both on the Council and in Parliament and I will keep working hard for you right up to the next election."*



**SAVING THE LOCK-HOUSES** - Martin launches the successful campaign with the formidable lock-keeper's wives against the proposed sell-off of lock-keepers' cottages along the Thames.



**25 YEARS REALLY IS A LONG TIME IN POLITICS** - Martin Salter came to Reading in 1980 as a hairy young man because the fishing was good and it was (then) a cheap place to buy a house. He went on to become Deputy Leader of Reading Borough Council and MP for Reading West. He has announced his intention to stand down at the next General Election after 25 years in public life in Reading.

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# Local action all year round



**HOWZAT!** – Martin gets caught behind by Oxford Road youngsters petitioning for an all-weather cricket pitch at Kensington Road Recreation Ground – watched by local councillors Gul Khan and Chris Maskell.

**Over the last year Martin has:**

**January** – Led opposition to the recommendations of the Planning Panel to allow building on the Kennet floodplain as part of the South East Plan.

Urged the Post Office consumer watchdog to challenge the decision to close sub post offices in Kentwood Hill and Wantage Road.

**February** – Organised a meeting with faith groups in the Reading area attended by Stephen Timms, Minister of State and Gordon Brown’s special envoy on faith groups.

Told Thames Water to “go back to the drawing board” regarding their plans to build on the Bath Road Reservoir site.

**March** – Led calls for a dedicated school bus service to be provided for Whitley children attending either Prospect College or Blessed Hugh Faringdon School.

Invited senior Local Government Minister, John Healey MP, to Reading to press for planning protection for Kennet Meadows.



**LET THE CHILDREN PLAY** – Theale Primary School parents raised funds for a new children’s playground and asked Martin to open it for them.

**April** – Celebrated the restoration of the night cover service for the elderly and disabled residents at “Friends of Chimney Court”.

Demanded an overnight parking ban to prevent travellers parking in Deacon Way.

**May** – Joined the lock-keepers and their wives in opposition to the plans published by the Environment Agency to dispose of 22 lock-houses along the River Thames.



**TAKING ITS TOLL** – Villagers in Pangbourne and Whitchurch enlisted Martin’s support against attempts to double the price of the toll on Whitchurch bridge.

Wrote to the Primary Care Trust re-stating his demand for a new medical centre on the former Battle Hospital site.

**June** – Welcomed the announcement by Network Rail that the Cow Lane Bridge traffic bottleneck could be solved without blocking off pedestrian and cycle access from Oxford Road.

Celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the NHS with local councillors and nurses.

**July** – Joined local councillors and residents at the Oxford Road Community Fun Day in .

Celebrated the news that the Government had finally rejected the plans to designate the Kennet flood plain as a development zone.

**August** – Worked with local people opposed to the development of Pincents Hill by Blue Living Developers.

**September** – Attended the “World’s Biggest Coffee Morning” in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support in Tilehurst.

Spoke at the ‘Unauthorised Traveller Encampments Working Group’ with Thames Valley Police about traveller problems in Reading.

**October** – Raised awareness of World Mental Health Day at Berkshire Healthcare Trust stall in Broad Street Mall.

Pledged his backing for the campaign for improvements to the Kensington Road Recreational Ground.

**November** – Invited the Energy and Climate Change Secretary, Ed Miliband, to Reading Borough Council’s initiative to combat heat and energy loss.

Launched a Credit Crunch Crisis Meeting at Reading Borough Council, designed to help those most affected by the current economic downturn.



**PLANTING A CORKER** – Martin plants environmentally friendly “cork tree” to provide corks for Direct Wines in Theale.

**December** – Hailed victory at the news that the Environment Agency had scrapped its original plans to dispose of the 22 lock-keepers’ cottages.

Successfully lobbied the Department of Health against plans to close many GP dispensary services.



**KENNET MEADOWS VICTORY** – Campaigners celebrate the removal of the Kennet floodplain from the South East Plan following a campaign by Martin and councillors from Southcote and Minster wards.

# A helping hand



**HITTING THE TARGET** – Martin joins local schoolchildren at Ufton Court – the proposed venue for an exciting new summer camp providing outdoor education along with sporting and countryside challenges.



**EVERY LITTLE HELPS** – Brigid Parkes from Assisting Berkshire Children to Read joins Martin at the opening of the new Tesco Extra store in the Oxford Road which earned the charity a £1,000 grant.



**A LOYAL ROYAL** – Martin has been supporting Reading Football Club for over 20 years and was a prime mover in delivering Reading Borough Council's backing for the new Madejski Stadium.

**Martin works hard to promote and raise funds for good causes at home and abroad. He is a patron of a number of local charities including:- Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, Southcote Toy Library, ABC to Read, Arthritis Matters, Reading Cygnets and Reading Initiative for Tsunami Action.**

**Over the past year Martin has:**

- Successfully nominated the Oxford Road based Charity, ABC to Read, for the Tesco Extra £1000 Community Cash Prize. The money helped buy more books for the reading volunteers to use in local schools.
- Supported the 'Arthritis Awareness Week', visiting the Arthritis Matters stand at the Royal Berkshire Hospital and supporting their Christmas fundraising event.
- Worked with the Whitley school charity ASPIRE2 on a proposal to establish a "summer camp" available for Reading children at affordable prices. Martin is a great believer in the benefits of outdoor education.

# Meeting the people – staying in touch

**Martin Salter is a full time MP who lives in his constituency and travels up to Westminster every day when Parliament is sitting. He runs a busy constituency office at 413 Oxford Road and holds fortnightly advice surgeries. He also holds regular meetings with the Chief Executives of Reading Borough and West Berkshire Councils as well as the heads of other major public services.**

Martin is a keen supporter of our local schools and serves as a governor at the John Madejski Academy. Over the last year he has visited Prospect College, Denefield School, Blessed Hugh Faringdon,



**LISTENING TO THE KIDS** – Martin hosts a special session of the Whitley Schools Council in the House of Commons. The youngsters put forward suggestions on how their communities could be improved.



**PREACHING HARMONY** – Representatives from different religions in Reading packed out Martin's meeting with the Prime Minister's special faith groups' envoy, Stephen Timms MP.

Little Heath, Reading Girls, Battle Primary, Coley Park Primary, Whitley Park and Geoffrey Field Junior and Infant Schools to name but a few. He has also hosted visits to the Houses of Parliament for local pupils and students.

Martin works closely with many community groups, churches and resident's groups across Reading giving talks on his work as an MP or helping out with campaigns and events. He is also Vice – President of the Reading Football Supporters Club STAR. If you would like Martin to visit your group or organisation just get in touch with his constituency office.

# Westminster report 2008



**MARTIN SALTER**  
– a full time MP

Martin Salter has been described by commentators as a “sharp, clever, backbencher...loyal but no robot”. He is respected for not being afraid to speak his mind and for being an effective campaigner. He is a member of the powerful Home Affairs Committee. 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 as he does not have a taxpayer funded flat in London.

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

## January

- Sponsored a Ten Minute Rule Bill against online retailers deliberately selling alcohol or pornography to under-age children.
- Persuaded the government to abolish the “ancient, discriminatory, and unnecessary common law of blasphemous libel.”

## February

- Opened the new offices for the United British-Gurkha Ex-Serviceman's Association in Reading and pledged to campaign in Parliament for Gurkha's rights to settle in the UK.
- Supported Women and the Vote to highlight both the progress and the barriers that face women in politics today.

## March

- Lobbied for the increases in the Winter Fuel Allowance and help for low income families which were announced in the Budget.
- Spoke out in Parliament in support of the £1.7bn subsidy to secure the future of the Post Office Network until 2011 to avoid further closures.

## April

- Invited the Home Affairs Committee to take evidence in Reading as part of their inquiry into “Policing in the 21st Century.”
- Supported the joint declaration from the TUC, the CBI and the Government to give temporary and agency workers improved employment rights.

## May

- Tabled a Parliamentary motion in support of the Trade Union campaign calling on employers to do more to promote green behaviour in the workplace.
- Called for a re-think over retrospective increases in Vehicle Excise Duty for older cars, in a House of Commons debate. The Government eventually backed down.

## June

- Campaigning for more respite care and short breaks for carers and better financial support.
- Hosted a meeting of the Whitley Excellence Cluster (WEC) pupil council in the House of Commons to discuss the potential of a summer camp for Reading kids.

## July

- Contributed to the final report by the Joint Committee on the Draft Marine Bill to establish marine conservation zones to protect wildlife.
- Signed House of Commons motion for the “Stop the Drop” campaign to punish those responsible for littering and fly-tipping.

## September

- Signed up to a new campaign from children's charity Action for Children who lobby for more long-term support for vulnerable children and young people across the country.

## October

- Spoke in Commons debate on Reading's good race relations record and the positive contribution that newcomers have made.
- Lobbied the Home Secretary to raise the South East Allowance for the police in order to stop the Met from poaching Thames Valley Police Officers.

## November

- Elected chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Gurkhas' Rights.
- Joined the rebellion by Labour MPs opposing plans for a third runway at Heathrow Airport.
- Campaigning successfully against direct elections for police authorities which risked dragging the police into party politics.

## December

- Wrote to Universities Secretary John Denham to try to stop the proposed closure of the School of Health and Social Care at Reading University.
- Called for windfall tax on energy companies who have failed to pass on to customers recent falls in oil prices.
- Contributed to a joint statement by MPs of all parties calling for an immediate ceasefire on both sides to end the slaughter in Gaza.



**STOP THE SLAUGHTER** – Martin was one of the first MPs to condemn the slaughter in Gaza and to call for an end to the appalling Israeli bombardment which has left over 1,300 dead – a third of whom were women and children.



**NO THIRD RUNWAY** – Martin joins a delegation of Labour MPs to 10 Downing Street opposed to building a third Heathrow runway.



**GURKHAS MUST STAY** – Campaigning for Gurkhas' rights with actress Joanna Lumley and Gurkha Victoria Cross holders in Parliament Square.

## Send Martin your views

On the planned third Heathrow Airport runway:

1. **AGAINST** – I want Martin to continue campaigning against the 3rd runway on grounds of noise, air quality, traffic congestion and the environment.
2. **IN FAVOUR** – I support the business and economic case for the 3rd runway at Heathrow.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 Ways to Contact Martin Salter

- Book into one of his Saturday morning advice surgeries. Phone: **954 6782**
- Call in to one of his Friday evening drop in surgeries in Whitley or Calcot.
- Write to his constituency office at **413 Oxford Rd, Reading, RG30 1HA**
- Write to Martin at the **House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA**
- Email Martin at **salterm@parliament.uk**
- Go to his website at **www.martinsalter.com**

