

**MOLE VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS**  
5TH MAY 2016  
from your  
**ASHTEAD INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE**  
**Mary Cooper – Ashtead Village Ward**

Thank you for your welcome and support so far on the doorsteps. I and my colleagues have had the chance to talk to hundreds of Ashtead residents over the last two or three weeks. We find that many of you agree with us that the **National Political parties have no place in local councils**, and that what is needed are Councillors with no such party allegiance who are prepared to give their time and skills to benefit the community in which they live.

We do not usually comment on the election material issued by our opponents but we feel some of the allegations made this time should not go uncorrected.

**A conservative manifesto leaflet we have seen includes the following misleading statements:**

Firstly:

**“All of the Ashtead Independent candidates in the election this year are members of the “Ashtead Community Vision” group whose “final report” recommended the loss of Green Belt Land around Ashtead.”**

*The facts are:*

- 1 The four Ashtead Independent candidates have all been members of Ashtead Community Vision (ACV), but so has Councillor Hunt, the one remaining Conservative Councillor for Ashtead. None of the Conservative candidates are members so have not taken part in this important piece of work for the future of Ashtead (and are apparently unfamiliar with it).
- 2 The ACV report did NOT recommend the use of green belt, and the chairman of ACV has written to the Conservatives objecting to this allegation in the strongest possible terms, and pointing out its hypocrisy in view of Councillor Hunt's involvement.

Secondly:

**“We have just received increased Council Tax bills. ... The current Independents spoke in the Budget debate to say they regretted the limited staff pay rise ... Vote independent if you want higher bills.”**

*The facts are:*

1. A higher increase for staff would not have resulted in higher Council tax as the Conservatives were proposing the maximum 2% increase anyway for the District portion.
2. The Independents are not and have never been in a position to set Council tax without Conservative agreement.
3. The major part of your Council tax and the part with the biggest increase of 4% is that attributable to Surrey County Council – a Conservative controlled authority.
4. Mole Valley were offering the lowest pay rise (1%) of any Surrey District or Borough.

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There are many other inaccuracies and attempts to mislead in the same leaflet. If you wish to know the true facts about anything please get in touch with me or any other Ashtead Independent Councillor or candidate.

Don't forget:

**Independent councillors are free to express their own independent views**, and I will use that independence to express the views of Ashtead residents irrespective of National Party politics. I am well aware of the strength of feeling locally against moving any Green Belt boundary, and I and my fellow Ashtead Independent candidates are united in representing this view.

**Please make sure that you get an independent councillor by casting your vote for your Ashtead Independent candidate on 5th May.**

Read the leaflets presented by each candidate and decide:

- Which candidate is more likely to have the best interests of Ashtead at heart - the one who is standing as an individual from the community, or the one standing at the request of a National Political party?
- What is the motivation of each candidate? Are they wanting to embark on a political career? Have they been persuaded to stand to make up the numbers? Or do they want to do something to preserve and support the community in which they live?
- What will influence each candidate, should he or she be successful, in making decisions - will it be solely the benefit to Ashtead and Mole Valley, or will it be the direction required by National Party policy?

I look forward to representing you for another four years,

*Mary Cooper*

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