

Responses from Lib Dems

1. What in your experience are the principal issues that need to be addressed in Harringay neighbourhood as a whole. What policies do you have to take action on these?

Among the many issues affecting the neighbourhood, we would mention the need for regenerating Turnpike Lane and two Mews, the need for a register of landlords in order to drive out the rogues, the need for a safe crossing over Alroy Road, and the need for a comprehensive traffic survey which can lead to a rational system, as opposed to piecemeal remedies. The regeneration of Turnpike Lane is one of our regeneration priorities and referred to in our manifesto. The Lib Dem council group has already attempted, via a budget amendment to get the landlord register, but Labour voted it down, even though the funding was identified. The traffic survey and Alroy Road crossing are among our local pledges.

2. Clearly a councilor's ability to influence what happens locally is limited by many factors. Given these limitations, in your experience, how can councillors be most effective in enabling the clear wishes of residents be translated into action on the ground.

It is necessary to treat consultations with residents as central to decision making, rather than as a means to satisfy statutory requirements by means of a purely formal "tick box" exercise. Once councillors have formed a view which is informed by their residents' opinions, it becomes a matter of advocacy. As Lib Dems, we are far more committed to the importance of consultation and we are far less constrained in our advocacy than is Labour, as the contributions to HOL of those of its Councillors who have fallen foul of its leadership can attest.

3. What is your view of the recently published site allocations plan that shows about 20% of Harringay's land area being opened up for development and how do you intend to respond?

We have submitted our views on the local sites, In brief:

Re Finsbury Park, we consider some of the proposed buildings to be too high and we believe that the Rowans bowling alley must be protected by a refusal to allow residential development on that site.

Re the Arena, we agree with the LCSP that the proposed development is unsuitable, largely because of the increase in traffic.

Re St. Ann's, while we agree with the principle of development for housing, we consider it essential to retain enough space in order to provide for sufficient mental health in-patient beds to meet present and anticipated future demand. The present proposals were formulated before the nationwide problem of the lack of beds was identified.

Generally, we are concerned that the present Council lacks a clear vision on the question of affordable homes in new developments in Tottenham. We repeat what we have said before, which is that the contradictions by the then council cabinet member for housing on the subject of affordable housing in Spurs development (he was for it when Spurs agreed to an obligation to provide it and was then against it when Spurs changed tack) reveal an incoherent approach.

4. This question is about how local people are represented at the neighbourhood level. Do you think that the appropriate bodies are in place at the Harringay neighbourhood level to ensure that locals' voices are fairly represented? What body/bodies would you like to see put in place to improve the situation? What will you do to work towards this?

The problem is not so much one of structure as of content. The present model, whereby cabinet members and council officials lecture the audience, depletes audiences. Robust question and answer sessions, such as the recent hustings, may be the key. Also, it is necessary to publicise them more widely than at present. "Haringey People" just isn't read by enough people to enable announcements in it to increase attendances – no doubt for the very good reason that is not in general a worthwhile publication.

5. Please can you give a short pen picture of each of your candidates. How you do that is up to you.

Karen is originally from Essex and has lived in Harringay since 1996. She worked as a legal secretary before being promoted to support staff in a City law firm. She and her husband Mark are the parents of two teenage children. In the Council Karen has worked on the scrutiny committee and conducted investigations into registered social landlords, rubbish and recycling

David is originally from the States and has lived in Harringay since 1987. He is a barrister. He and his partner Valerie have two girls, aged 1 and 6. In the Council, David sat on the planning committee from 2010 to 2013. He became involved in local politics because he found himself living next to a drug den and because the Council proved incapable of dealing with the anti-social behaviour which was occurring there.

Both David and Karen were active in the Green Lanes Strategy Group which promoted two Green Lanes festivals and provided community input into the redevelopment schemes that are now beginning to reach completion. One aspect of that scheme is the Falkland Road crossing for which they had been campaigning since 2009.

Asha has lived in Haringey all of her life and has lived in Tottenham for most of it. She became involved in politics when, while working with the victims of brain injuries, she saw how inadequate the services provided to her patients in Haringey were, in comparison with the services offered elsewhere. She now works for medical charity and is well prepared to involve herself in the role which local authorities now have in health provision.