

# BLUEPRINT



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**Winter 2007**

## **Message from the Chairman, Barrie Noble:**

When I wrote my last Blueprint message, Gordon Brown was still benefiting from a general sense of relief that Blair had gone and we in WOCA, like so many in the constituency, were trying to cope after being flooded. Nothing much has changed in Bridge Street - it is still smelly and damp - but the "Brown bounce" has gone flat and people are beginning to see that nothing much has changed in the government either.

This dawning realisation coincided with our Party Conference in Blackpool, which was the most stimulating and exciting that I have attended. It showed that we were ready for an election and could win. Brown took fright and in the process displayed a weakness which contrasted deeply from the promised clunking fist

Something that struck me in Blackpool was how young many delegates were. They were active in the Conference hall, in the fringe meetings and, it must be said, in the Imperial Hotel's bars and discos at night. As well as making a serious contribution, they showed that politics could be fun. I wish that WOCA attracted more young members. After all, we have a young MP and a fair number of youngish councillors. I know things are different from my own "Young Conservative" days, but Blackpool (and BBC Question Time audiences) show that young people still want to play a part in politics.

The question is, how do we attract them to WOCA? Our Treasurer depressingly points out that the number of Branch events this year so far is down. We need more. Perhaps it would be worth consulting our own or our friends' children to see what might interest them? Christmas provides a particularly favoured time in which to try something which might appeal across the ages. Which leads me neatly to wishing you early, but most sincerely, a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

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## **Message from your MP, David Cameron:**

First I would like to thank everyone for their help and support over the last few weeks.

It was great to see so many of our members at Blackpool last month (I asked them to sit somewhere prominent so I could see them as I spoke - and that's what they did!)

It was a great conference - full of enthusiasm. Some of that was enthusiasm at the thought of fighting an imminent election - and doing our bit finally to get rid of this Government. I realise also that everyone put a huge amount of work into preparing for that election. So there was bound to be a sense of anti-climax when Gordon Brown announced his humiliating retreat.

It is true that the Prime Minister's great weakness and indecision means we have to wait for another possible two years before our country can get the real change it needs. But the challenge for every one of us is to be ready for that election whenever it is called.

That means continuing to set out our vision for Britain.

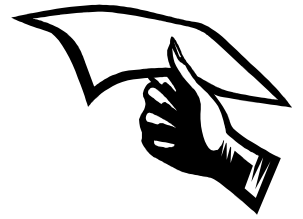
We want to see schools where head teachers are really captains of their ships; a health service where doctors and nurses are no longer bogged down in red tape; active policing on our streets; and a referendum now on the EU constitution.

All our policies are based on three clear themes. We need to give people more opportunity and power over their lives. We need to strengthen families and make our society more responsible. And we need to make our country safer and greener.

Over the next three months we will be setting out further detail on how we will put these principles into practice. In that way we will continue not only to hold this failing Government to account but to offer people a real alternative.

Finally Samantha joins me in wishing everybody a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Remember to check your forthcoming events sheet which is enclosed with this publication.**



**Deputy Chairman (Finance and Membership) - Dr Graham Haslam**

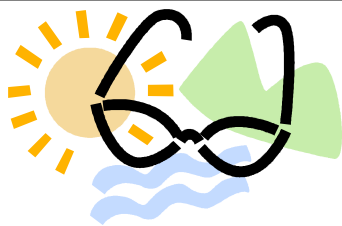
Throughout 2007, the Association has continued to make solid financial progress, which has been considerably enhanced by the great support received from the Principal Patrons, a wonderful Summer event and several generous donations.

Whilst, a small number of branches are making substantial contributions, we still have a problem with many branches having difficulty in arranging fund raising events. This aspect is being addressed and the Association is intent on assisting branches to overcome this problem. I am pleased to confirm that the Kingham & Churchill branch has been revived recently and we are also seeking to strengthen other branches within WOCA.

On the membership front, we have campaigned to recruit new members to cover time's attrition and other losses, but results were not as productive as we had hoped, such that overall numbers have reduced. However, during the past six months we have instituted a follow-up procedure, which highlights to branches on a monthly basis, those members who are in danger of lapsing through non-payment of subscription dues. This enables contact to be made at an early stage and is helping to maintain membership. We are working well to maintain our income, so we will again be in a sound financial position to contest the District Council Elections next May, when seventeen seats are up.

With good wishes to you all for a very Happy Christmas and grateful thanks for the effort and time you have given during the past year.

**Summer Draw Winners**



**1st Prize**

Mrs D Byrom, Church Enstone

**2nd Prize**

Major P Parker, Ramsden

**3rd Prize**

Sam Butler, Cirencester

**4th Prize**

Carol Cutler, Stonesfield

**5th Prize**

Dr P Hacking, Long Hanborough

**Deputy Chairman (Political) - Mr Rob Barton**

After the hard work of May and June, and again the fantastic showings in all the local elections, we were again on stand by, this time for a General Election. The smoke signals from Westminster and the e-mails winging their way through the ether had us all on tenterhooks. The WOCA office in Bridge Street had decamped from its flood zone to the upstairs store room and was up and running, so we were all ready to run an aggressive campaign. The team at WOCA, working closely with CCHQ and David's team, had plans in place and were ready to go as soon as Gordon Brown fired the starting gun. We waited as the policy groups and think tanks tested public opinion, with voting trends varying according to the newspaper you read, and then we watched Brown bottle.

Wasn't it amazing the way someone like Gordon Brown, who could attract no flak, suddenly couldn't do a thing right? We saw David and the Party relentlessly put pressure on him: Northern Rock, the economy, defence, immigration - in fact any area you could care to mention. We are at last in the driving seat and we can see a very real prospect of returning to power.

So how can we as an Association contribute? We need to be behind David, available to help with those endless leaflets, and also to ask the question: "How can I contribute?" Well, there are a number of ways, whether that is as an elected member of the Council, part of the team available to help local constituencies, or within the WOCA area. All I would say is phone the office if you would like to help as I am sure they can find something for you.

As we creep towards Christmas I know there are many Branch events planned so I wish all of you a very Happy Christmas in what has been a nail-biting but very successful year for WOCA.

**Christmas Raffle 2007**

Books of raffle tickets are enclosed. Your support in buying these tickets or selling them to friends is greatly appreciated in helping raise much needed funds to run our Association.

**West Oxfordshire  
Conservative Association  
wish you a very Merry  
Christmas and a  
Happy New Year**