

HELEN PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR TRAINS CAMPAIGN

Kent Messenger 19th June 2009

SUPPORT is growing in the fight to stop Southeastern abolishing services from Maidstone to Cannon Street from December.

Helen Grant, the Conservative prospective Parliamentary candidate for Maidstone and the Weald, is the latest politician to throw her weight behind the campaign to preserve Maidstone's train services to London.

Support

Mrs Grant met Huw Whitethread and Matthew Nash, the founders of the Keep Our Trains movement, and pledged her support in their bid to get Southeastern to reverse its decision to stop the service, which runs off-peak.

Commuters from Bearsted, Maidstone and West Malling will find themselves travelling to Victoria from the end of the year.

Mrs Grant said: "I hope as many people as possible will add their support to the campaign by visiting the website www.KeepOurTrains.com



Helen Grant lends her support to Huw Whitethread and the Keep Our Trains campaign

and signing the online petition, and by writing a letter to their MP, and getting their friends involved, too. "We need to act quickly, before a forthcoming meeting with the Transport Minister."



HELEN GRANT - WORKING FOR MAIDSTONE PEOPLE



IN BRIEF

Tax relief plea

A PETITION calling for income tax relief for low-earners and pensioners was delivered to 5,000 Allington homes last week by teenage volunteers working for Tory election candidate Helen Grant. She plans to get signatures from across the Maidstone and Weald constituency in support of the cuts ahead of April's budget.

'Maidstone Youth Action Day for Savers and pensioners'

- Kent Messenger 27th March 2009



Tory's big push for labour mums!

AN exhausted Helen Grant summed up why she had pushed a pram 17 miles from Maidstone to Pembury.

She declared: "Stiff legs, sore feet and a few blisters but that is nothing compared with the stress, pain and potential threats that will be endured by Maidstone mums having to travel this journey while in a dangerous stage of labour."

Helen, the Conservative prospective Parliamentary candidate for Maidstone and Weald and an active member of MASH (Maidstone Again for Services in Hospital), said not enough was being done to highlight the effects of plans to close the consultant-led full maternity facility at Maidstone Hospital and replace it with a midwife-run birthing unit in 2011. The area's main maternity unit would then be based at the new Pembury Hospital.

She added: "We must continue to apply pressure and seek a review of the decision by the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust."

Mrs Grant was joined on her six-hour trek by Maidstone councillor John Wilson.

He said that towards the finish Mrs Grant, tired but undaunted, tackled a couple of inclines with him pushing her - as she pushed the pram!

The pair had set off with the cheers of well-wishers ringing in their ears. A convoy of lorries from Marden businesses had turned out in support. Former BBC South East Today presenter Geoff Clark counted down to the off with a loudhailer.



Helen with Maidstone Borough Councillor John Wilson arriving at the end of their 17 mile Pram Push From Maidstone Hospital to Pembury Hospital on 27th September 2009



HELEN LAUNCHES HER BUSINESS FORUM

Your Maidstone 8th April 2009

RECESSION can breed success for bold entrepreneurs, says Dragons' Den star Theo Paphitis.

He came to the county town to talk to 150 local businessmen and politicians at the launch of the Maidstone and Weald Business Forum.

Mr Paphitis, who made an unsuccessful attempt to keep Woolworths operating, says sharp businessmen should look out for the chance to fill a gap in the market.

The former Millwall FC chairman, who runs the Ryman stationery chain, said: "There are opportunities out there for the taking. Many companies are not going bust because of the recession. Their downfall is often due to other factors, such as over capacity in the market or poor management."

"For every firm that goes bust there is a customer list looking for a new supplier."

The forum is the brainchild of Helen Grant, the Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate for Maidstone and the Weald, who is a lawyer and businesswoman.

She believes the forum, which met for the first time on Tuesday evening last week, can be a crucial link between business, local government and the shadow cabinet.

The Tory frontbench was represented by industry spokesman Eric Pickles. Mrs Grant claims Labour's front bench lacks business experience and doesn't understand the problems faced by small businesses.

She said: "There aren't enough ministers who have firsthand experience of creating wealth."

Mrs Grant said: "I am delighted with the feedback the forum has received. I am sure the forum will deliver some great ideas for business as it develops."

Tough-talking Mr Paphitis has become a household name since joining the panel of popular BBC Two show Dragons' Den.

The show sees budding entrepreneurs offer a share of their business in return for funding and input from one of the five dragons, who are all successful operators in their chosen fields of business.



BY IAN READ

Conservatives

ARE YOU FEELING THE CRUNCH?

Debt & insolvency
Family breakdown
Employment threats
Welfare Benefits issues

HELEN CAN HELP

Free practical advice & guidance for the people of Maidstone & The Weald



Would-be MP offers help

Kent Messenger, 26th September 2008

THE woman hoping to step into Ann Widdecombe's shoes is offering advice to people suffering from debt or facing redundancy.

Helen Grant, the Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate for Maidstone and the Weald, is launching a weekly surgery starting on Thursday.

Mrs Grant, a family and community solicitor of 20 years' standing, will offer advice by appointment to any residents of the constituency to help them deal with the pressures of the economic downturn, including debt, benefits, employment issues and fam-

ily breakdown. She said "Ann Widdecombe already helps many people at her weekly surgeries. I will be providing this extra surgery on Thursdays to help the many additional people who are now suffering the direct and indirect effects of the economic downturn. I will be referring those in need of ongoing specialist help to the relevant local agencies."

■ The surgeries will be at the Conservative offices at 3 Albion Place, Maidstone. To make an appointment, call 01622 752463, 10am-3pm Tuesdays to Thursdays, or email helengrant@helengrant.org

KENT MESSSENGER

'Downright cruel' to move services



Helen with jubilant members of MASH and other campaigners upon hearing of victory outside Maidstone's County Hall

Victory for MASH but fight goes on

MASH chairman Dennis Fowie said the group was delighted by the decision and had offered assistance to KCC to present the case to the government.

He added: "MASH members working with the Maidstone BMA have been at the heart of this for about six years, which includes attending every trust and PCT board meeting in the past four years, and have built up a wealth of knowledge from many sources."

"The reasons the health minister must think again include the powerful public opposition, transport, the transfer rate from birthing units, poor consultation in 2004 and that the current trend is away from maternity reconfigurations in other areas of the South East."

Helen Grant, Conservative's prospective parliamentary candidate for Maidstone and a member of MASH, said: "I am absolutely delighted with this decision and I congratulate the rest of our MASH team for their work in preparing and presenting our report for the committee to consider."

"The Secretary of State has executive powers and can review and overturn the trust's plans. He has the power to give the people of Maidstone what they need and deserve: let's hope he now does that."

HELEN NEEDS YOUR HELP

Please help Helen and the Conservatives to win

- I will be voting for Helen Grant and the Conservatives
- I would like a postal vote
- I am willing to deliver a few leaflets in my area
- I can display a poster
- I would like to make a donation or send in a few stamps

YOUR DETAILS

Name

Address

Postcode

E-Mail

Tel/Mobile

PLEASE POST BACK TO:

Maidstone & The Weald Conservative Association,
3 Albion Place, Maidstone, Kent ME14 5DY

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