

Thirsk, Malton & Filey Times

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MISSING £15 MILLION

We all know that the pot holes need to be repaired. Howard Keal claims that this could have been paid for by taking money from the North Yorkshire County Council £15 million reserves. He claimed paying for the repairs out of Council Tax was a 'snow tax'. Could he please let me know where it is? As a County Councillor I know of no £15million reserve. Had there been a £15 million reserve I would have voted to use some of that rather than increase the Council Tax.

Thirsk, Malton and Filey will elect an MP. We cannot change the government. We can vote for the policies we want and the MP who will shout loudest for the people of Thirsk, Malton and Filey.

- The General Election was predicted to produce a hung parliament. It did.
- The General Election did not predict the resignation of Gordon Brown.
- The General Election did not predict the three London Based Parties fighting like 'cats in a dustbin'.

We, the Liberal party, have often been confused with the Liberal Democrats. This is now unlikely. How many of the nearly 7 million people who voted Liberal Democrat wanted a Tory government? For that is what they have got. The Tory promise of 'cuts now' and the Liberal Democrat promise of 'savage cuts' could combine to give 'savage cuts now'.

Compare this with the position

of the Liberal Party.

"We will never lean towards Labour or Tory but rather we will stick to Liberalism."

As a result the voting logic is:-

Vote Conservative if you want a Tory MP.

Vote Liberal Democrat if you want to support the Tory government.

If you want an MP who will stand up for Thirsk, Malton and Filey against this

government, that no-one voted for, then support the **LIBERAL CANDIDATE JOHN CLARK**

On the evening Cameron and Clegg took the levers of power, John Clark said:

"To those Liberal Democrats who have a strong commitment to creating a radical, green, Liberal non Tory society please make contact.

We will never sell out to the 'perks of power'.

Education and the future

Education is in a mess because there is too much red tape strangling the ambitions and hopes of both the educators and those being taught.

INSTEAD of being educators in the widest sense, teachers are tied to targets, league tables, a national curriculum and paperwork which restricts their ability to respond to their pupils needs.

That is why the Thirsk, Malton and Filey Liberal candidate John Clark believes the national curriculum should be replaced by a far less prescriptive framework which local authorities and individual schools could use to build on to suit the needs of their pupils.

He argues that, of course, there must be standards set across the country that schools should aim for to safeguard the interest of their pupils but education should be a lifelong process – not something that is just ‘done to children’.

Learning should be serious but also fun for those involved. It should also aim to equip children with the skills they need to face adult life with confidence.

It must stop being a series of hoops to jump through and hurdles to clear nor should it be a commodity that can be bought and sold.

Of course parents ought to help children with their education and take an interest in what they are doing and what the school is planning for the future.

They do so from the moment the baby is born but parents should not have to spend money to get better ‘results’.

They should not have to pay for extra tutoring to get through SATS or GCSE's and A levels

SATS should be abolished because they hinder rather than help progress

John Clark would also abolish league tables because they do not give a true picture of what may be taking place in a school -only a picture of what has supposedly been achieved.

“There is a ridiculous amount

of teachers’ time and effort spent on SATS and Ofsted inspections and in trying to achieve targets instead of trying to help children understand how education in all its forms can enrich their lives,” says John Clark.

It may be understandable, given the current situation, that some parents want to buy a house in an expensive area near to a ‘good’ school because, as they perceive it, they desire to give their children the opportunity to have the best start in life that is possible.

That should not have to be the case if all schools are encouraged to maintain proper standards and discipline to the point they are all regarded as “good”.

This would also provide more flexibility and ease the concerns of parents who may have to move to another area because of their jobs or to be nearer to elderly relatives who require help in their care.

Parents need to know that

standards and discipline are universal - rather than targets which do not mean the same thing. Easing their concerns.

There should also be more opportunity to youngsters to carry out vocational studies.

They should not be seen - as happens in some quarters - as not being the same level as academic studies.

Of course every pupil should achieve at least a basic standard of education. It should be recognised that not everyone is academic. If pupils can be encouraged to be interested in vocational work which keeps them interested - rather than being bored at the back of a class in a subject that does not interest them - then surely that is better for the individual and the school in terms of managing their pupils. Remember how technical schools produced some of our finest engineers.

Pupils should be taught more about life and the world outside.

Although that does happen in secondary schools there should be more emphasis on, say, how to handle money, what the world of work has to offer.

It is essential that schools must stay in the public sector.

The Conservative policy of

parents setting up their own school has one massive problem. Money to build these ‘free schools’ would come from the other surrounding schools. The new schools would thus benefit at the cost of others.

This would widen the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’ - just the opposite of what is needed.

Public schools have, like private medicine, no relevance to most people.

Public schools must be made redundant by raising the level of the state schools with education at a high standard for all, not just the very well off.

Liberals are totally opposed to money buying better education.

Just like other public services there should be no cuts in education.

Unless we invest in our people we will not compete in the modern world.

Universities

Student loans and top-up fees should be abolished immediately.

The vast majority of the present high earners, cabinet ministers and others with their hands on the levers of power all had free university education and student grants.

At that time taxes were used to pay for their university education.

It meant the students could concentrate on their studies and hope to obtain a decent job with a meaningful income which meant they could repay the grants back through their taxes which, in turn, enabled grants to be paid to those who followed them into university.

Now those same politicians and others want to keep income tax down for themselves and make the students pay. A full-blown case of ‘I’m all right Jack’.

But how can those students repay those loans if they are unable to find a decent job as is happening at the present time?

Labour and Conservatives are happy with the philosophy of making the students pay fees. Fees which are likely to go up.

The Liberal Democrats say they are not happy and would phase out the loans over six years.

I believe that scrapping student loans and top-up fees right away would not cost the taxpayer a penny.

It may cost a small amount of money to us in four years time when the students would have started to pay back.

Do the Liberal Democrats believe we will be in a recession in four years time?

The Liberals would restore student grants to a “living wage” level which would be fair for all.

Education must not depend on the ability to pay because an educated population is a national asset which benefits not only the individual but also the nation as a whole.

Special education

Children with ‘special needs’ have traditionally been placed into Special Schools but the modern trend is to move pupils into mainstream education.

In many cases this may be the best route but for others it is not.

The best education for each individual pupil must be chosen and the funding provided to go with it to ensure that all individuals are regarded and respected at the same level as everyone else.

Above all the authorities must listen to parents.



Environment

No more production for productions sake.
No more designing things not to last – ‘planned obsolescence’.

Britain must stop growth for growth’s sake.

We must produce what we need using as little as possible of finite resources: metals and of course fossil fuels.

So as to assist in the above

Britain must maximise re-use and repair. Then everything must be recycled. The ultimate aim for waste must be to reduce it to zero.

Energy

Liberals were the first to highlight the problems of acid rain and climate change. We call for the economical use of energy in transport, power

generation, and buildings including domestic homes. There must be a massive investment into renewable energy; thermal, solar, wind, tidal, ocean currents, heat pumps etc.

This will create jobs and manufacturing as well as reducing the use of fossil fuels. Liberals believe that large scale electricity and gas production and their distribution must be under democratic control. They are too important for profit making and competition. These vital ingredients of our society

must be part of a co-ordinated Energy Policy.

There must be a review of the British finite resources. These must be viewed as part of Britain’s ‘capital’.

Food and farming

There is a massive link between the way and where our food is produced, used and wasted on one hand, and the environment. Importing out of season fruit and vegetables by aircraft and then throwing a large fraction away is wrong for a whole raft of environmental reasons:

Observing the ‘Law of return’ (recycling food to feed pigs and make compost) is vital to producing healthy food, saving money and reducing damage to the environment.

GM

There is not the space here to expand on the GM debate. However the public have said a loud and clear ‘No to GM’. It will NOT bring more profit to farmers. Risk to the environment and humans are the two main environmental reasons why Britain must not grow GM crops.

Who is this man John Clark?

"If I am elected as your representative I will whisper in the ears of other MPs so loudly that the rest of the country can hear me."

THAT is the firm promise made by the man who is standing for the Liberal Party - John Clark.

John was born in Appleton-le-Moors near the North York Moors, into a farming family. He attended Lady Lumley's School at Pickering.

The family farm was 100 acres and, as he puts it, at the best of times small family farms struggled then to support one family and could not attempt to support two. That applies even more so today.

As a result he moved south and cut his political teeth at Slough in Berkshire and did a variety of jobs to pay the bills. He joined the Liberal party in 1973, was a member of both Slough Council and Berkshire County Council where he was chairman of the county's youth services.

In 1990 he bought the family farm and returned to his roots at Cropton.

He sits on Ryedale District Council as a Liberal and is a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Last year he uncovered a £300,000 overspend at the district council but when he argued for a private inquiry into the allegation his move

was blocked by the Lib-Dems and the Conservatives.

He is the leader of the Liberal group on the council which saw a third Liberal elected last year.

He was also elected to North Yorkshire County Council last year taking one of the few seats that the Conservatives lost throughout the country.

He was the northern representative of the Small Farms Association and is a committee member of Family Farms Association

He is a firm believer in the role of the individual. This was and is, one of the traditional values of the original Liberal Party. He is persistent as has been shown by campaigns that have been as short as five days through to one that lasted 13 years.

"I believe the party lost its way when it combined with the SDP. The SDP were in favour of issues such as nuclear weapons and VAT on books and food.

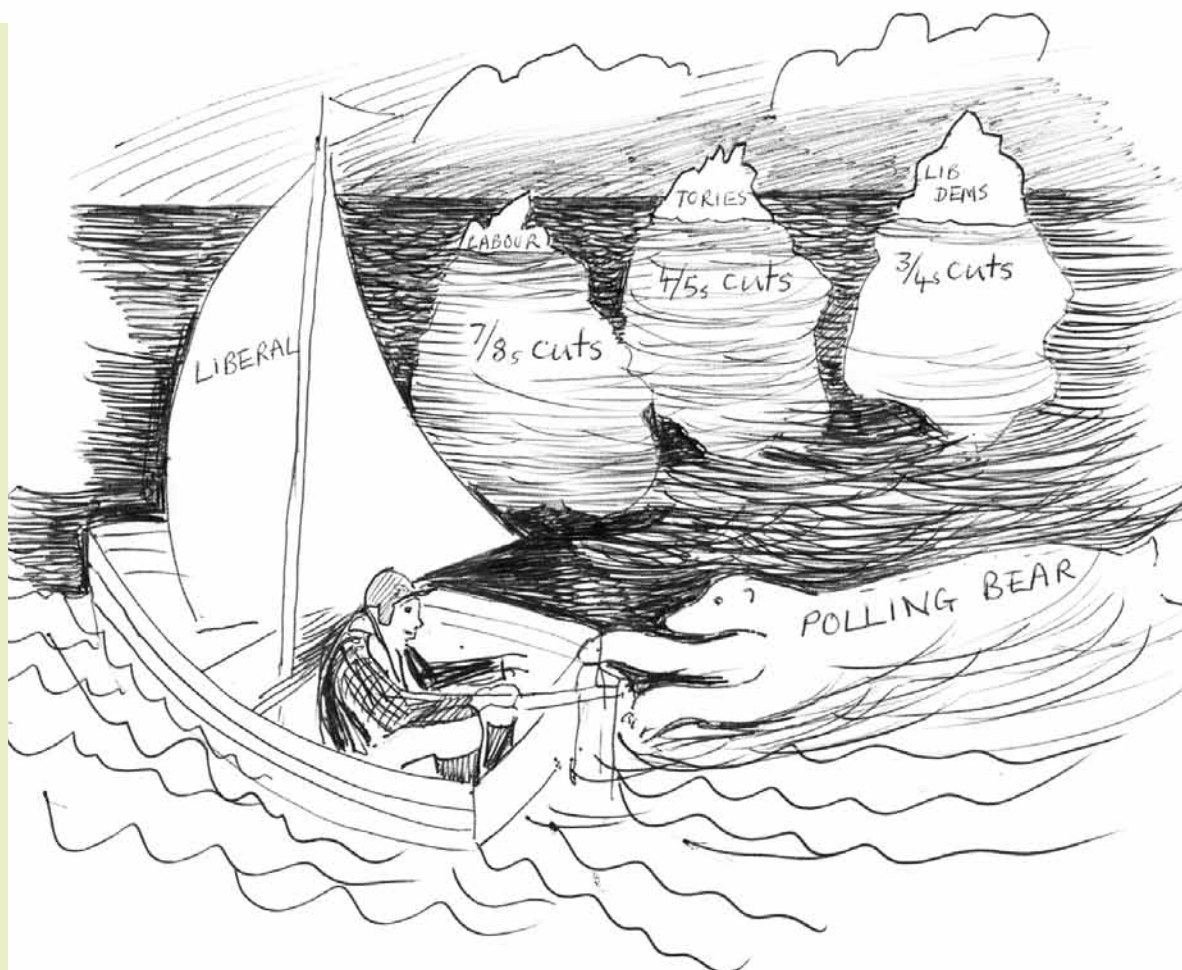
"The Liberals, though, were and continue to be community based..

"We believe in the traditions and beliefs of the original foundations of the party and are against the monopoly power of the state.

"As a community-based party we support individuals, especially the downtrodden individual, who are all too often overlooked by Labour and the Lib-Dems, who claim that they are the champions of the poor.

He is "very grateful" for the support of his family but is adamant that they should remain private when it comes to the hurly burly of politics.

"People are voting for me, not my family," he says.



'Cuts' – conned again

WE were conned by the bankers. They were eventually persuaded/forced to apologise. We, the public, paid for this abuse.

We were conned by the MPs. They were eventually persuaded/forced to apologise. We, the public, paid for the abuse.

We are now being conned again.

The main political parties do not tell the public where the services cuts will come; the cuts 'not now' of the Labour Party, 'cuts now' of the Conservatives and the 'savage cuts' of the Liberal Democrats.

This is underlined by the Institute of Fiscal Studies who said "None of the parties had made it clear where the public spending cuts would fall"; and "The Conservatives were planning

the biggest squeeze on public spending since World War II".

The Institute of Fiscal Studies estimates that:

Labour have only told us 1/8th of their cuts

Conservatives have only told us 1/5th of their cuts

Liberal Democrats have only told us 1/4 of their cuts

The Liberals would not make cuts in Public services.

Just like the bankers deception and then the MPs, there are hints of the cuts, but not a clear vision.

- The Tories opposed the Winter Fuel Allowance – now they say they will support it.
- Liberal Democrats said that removing Child Benefit from the better off was a slip of the

tongue. Now they say they may introduce means testing for Child Benefit. What's the difference?

- The Labour Party 'solemnly promised' it would restore the earnings to the State Pension. The link is still broken after 13 years. We have been conned again.

It may be possible in the future, just like the bankers and MPs, to persuade/force them to apologise. The public will still pay for the abuse. The Liberals would make no cuts. Instead of cuts Liberals would;

- Tax those that can afford.
- Make savings in other areas (see page 4 for Honesty in Taxation).

Expenses

The expenses scandal highlighted the need for a clean sweep of the political system.

THE electorate was, and continues, to be appalled about what they read and how their taxes had been squandered by too many so-called honourable members - as they are addressed when in debates - or even in some cases Right Honourable.

Honourable. Don't make me laugh.

John Clark, the Liberal candidate in the Thirsk, Malton

and Filey constituency, said: "Let me be fair - because that is what I am - and say that there were many MPs who did not indulge themselves at the expense of hard working taxpayers.

But what was even more galling is that many of those who were caught out had the temerity to claim that what they were doing was legitimate because the rules allowed it and that it was unfair they should have been exposed.

The irony is that if any other sector of life had indulged themselves in the way the MPs did then they would probably have brought in new laws to ban the practice."

So what would the Liberal Party and its representatives do?

We believe firmly that the current re-writing of the rules about expenses and what the MPs can claim are a start but do not go far enough.

It is quite straightforward. Any expense claimed should be solely in connection with their work and not their lifestyles.

What did cleaning out a moat, for example, have to do with the particular MP's work? Nothing.

More importantly there should be strict rules about their housing requirements - as was featured recently on TV from one Scandinavian country.

The way certain MPs "flipped"

their choice of second homes after doing the first one up - at the taxpayers' expense - quite rightly had the country's electorate seething.

Those who represent a constituency that is within reasonable commuting distance of London should have no need for a second home.

And why shouldn't they pay their fares out of their own pockets in the way that vast majority of commuters do up and down the country

Of course, those whose constituencies are a considerable distance from London should be able to live there as it would be impracticable to expect them to commute long distances each day.

But the public does not expect them to be provided with such generous allowances that they can take out a mortgage on a house or flat and then, when it is sold, be

allowed to pocket the difference.

How outrageous that public money was allowed to become a silk purse for those who knew what to do.

No, my view is that they should be provided with accommodation in say, blocks of flats, or areas selected by those in charge of the system - as happens when students first start at university.

To those who squeal that they could not carry out their work properly if put into a one-room accommodation are being disingenuous because that is not what I am suggesting

Of course it must be decent and have proper facilities.

Of course it must have sufficient room for them to do their work when away from the House of Commons.

But it must not be seen as a feather bed at the expense of the taxpayers purse or wallet.

WORST DIVIDE

The gap between rich and poor

In his latest book Daniel Dorling describes Britain measured by wage inequality. He estimates that the last time the wage gap was as large was in 1854 when Charles Dickens was writing about poverty. What a disgrace that both the major parties have allowed this

unacceptable state to arise. None of the election material of the three London Based parties has recognised this crisis: let alone propose a solution.

A few examples are:
• Students massively in debt.
• Pensioners on half the state

pension of those in Europe.
• A minimum wage that doesn't cover the cost of living

• at the other end of the scale the richest 1000 see their fortunes rise by 30% in one year.
• Tony Blair charges £2,000 a minute.

The blue and red dots on this page represent the widening gap between rich and poor over the last four decades

Honesty in taxation

The Institute of Fiscal Studies said that:

- Tory cuts/tax increase only one fifth was visible.
- Labour cuts/tax increase only one eighth was visible
- Liberal Democrat cuts/tax increase only one quarter was visible

Now how much is it? The following covers 100%:

- Raise the single person allowance to £12,000
- Raise Capital Gains Tax to the same level as Income Tax.
- Why should these taxes be lower than the tax paid by someone earning £12,000+?
- Scrap Trident – replace with nothing. Saves £2billion per year.
- this would save £100 billion compared with the Labour and Tory proposals
- This would save £billions compared with an unknown Liberal democrat unknown replacement. Presumably they are now going for the £100billion option.
- Remove Family Tax Credit for

Why should people on £50,000 pay less National Insurance per £1,000 more earned than someone on £12,000?

- Lower the 50% Tax Threshold from £150,000 to £100,000.
- Introduce increasing higher rates of Tax for those on £150,000 upwards.
- Remove the Upper Earnings Limit for National Insurance Contributions.
- Remove the higher levels of tax relief from Pension contributions
- All tax relief on pension contributions would be at the basic rate
- Raise Inheritance tax
- No 21D cards, therefore no money spent
- Introduce the Tobin Tax. This is a tax of 0.05% on all International financial transactions. It was designed by Professor Tobin in 1972. No politician has tried to put this in place in the last 40 years. This is estimated to raise over £100billion.

- Raise the Basic Rate of Income Tax by 6% subject to future variations as the UK comes out of recession to reduce the National Debt. At £30,000 income or less people would pay less tax.

• I WOULD NOT VOTE TO RAISE VAT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES

• I WOULD VOTE TO REDUCE VAT ON NON-LUXURY ITEMS, WHEN THE FINANCES PERMITTED

• I WILL NOT RAISE INCOME TAXES, JUST RAISE MONEY

• TAXES MUST BE INCREASED TO LOWER THE NATIONAL DEBT AND MAINTAIN SERVICES

Tony Blair at £2,000 a minute

- £500,000 annually from Zurich Financial Services.
- £4.6million for his memoirs.
- Hundreds of thousands of pounds from Lansdowne Partners - a Hedge Fund betting against British Financial Stability.
- £180,000 for a 90 minute speech.

Prime Minister:
John Major
1990-1997
Conservative

Prime Minister:
Tony Blair
1997-2007
Labour

The wages of living

It is only reasonable and right that people should be entitled, at the very least, to a living wage.

BEFORE the introduction of the minimum wage businesses throughout Britain yelled that "The minimum wage will put hundreds of thousands of people on the dole." It didn't. Instead it gave some dignity and respect back to those who had been abused by having to work for a measly £1 per hour and in some cases even less while their bosses kept what should have been given to their employees. Derisory wages meant that people had to claim benefits which effectively meant the state was

supporting people so they could provide cheap labour for employers. If a company cannot exist without abusing its workers then it should not be in business. The minimum wage has been a success. However, it is still a 'minimal' wage. It is not possible to live on this level of pay which means many workers still need to claim benefits. All employees should be paid at least at a rate that is liveable and the Liberal Party believes this would need to be in excess of £10 per hour.

Before long this would feed its way through the system which would stop the need for such workers to claim benefits. This in turn will help to keep taxes down because less would have to be paid out from the costly benefits bill and the administrative costs of those worker-related benefits, which is also a costly exercise, would become unnecessary. The minimum wage must be lifted for all adults to the 'living wage' immediately. It is morally right and therefore must be politically right as well. Those businessmen who oppose such a move need to think of another area of abuse. If an item of clothing is for sale at only £1, then logic indicates that someone must have been abused in terms of their "wage" to produce this item for sale at such a low price.

Exporting British manufacturing jobs to low wage economies is wrong for Britain, wrong for British firms and wrong for British workers. Low wages are also wrong for the overseas workers. When Labour came to power in 1997 it promised an 'Ethical Foreign Policy' but we don't seem to hear much, if at all, about that any more. Imports must be scrutinised more carefully. In the words of Abraham Lincoln "Nothing is politically right that is morally wrong". John Clark, the Liberal candidate in Thirsk, Malton and Filey, also believes that along with the living minimum wage there should be changes in the tax regime to allow more people to keep more of their hard-earned money.

Liberal policy would see personal allowances being raised so that no-one earning under £12,000 a year would pay income tax. Coupled with this would be a raising of the basic rate of tax by six per cent which would still leave anyone earning up to £30,000 better off. The Liberal Party would increase the tax levied on very high earners. John Clark said: "It is ridiculous that those paid over £1 million a year should pay the same 51 per cent rate on the top money while those on £45,000 are paying the same rate. "There is a clear need for an increase for the very wealthy on incomes measured in hundreds of thousands of pounds. "Such a move would help to maintain services and provide the glue to hold our society together."

Pensions

People who have worked hard all their life and who reach retirement age after paying their taxes and National Insurance expect, quite rightly, to receive something back from the state in the form of a pension.

But the state pension system is another example of how the electorate is deceived by glossy promises which do not fit the facts. The average European state pension is 60 per cent of average earnings. In the UK, though, it is just 30 per cent. Tony Blair "solemnly promised" to restore the link broken by Mrs Thatcher when she became prime minister more than 30 years ago. That promise was conveniently overlooked - and remains so to

this today which is a disgrace on those who perpetrate it and disgraceful for those who suffer because of it. Taken altogether it means that not only do many citizens suffer a drop in income after they retire they are also well behind their counterparts in many European countries - a double whammy. The Liberal Democrats say they will restore the earnings link. Sounds good but that step does not increase the pension - it merely freezes it at half of what is really needed and should be

provided to those who have been diligent in their daily working lives. And let us not forget that appalling blow some years ago for pensioners when Gordon Brown, in his then role as Chancellor, raised pensions by a measly 75p. Let us take another example of how senior citizens are thwarted in their desire to maintain their standards, dignity and self-respect. In opposition Labour made it quite clear it was opposed to means testing. Yet, in Government they extended means testing for pensioners - another U-turn they seem to have conveniently forgotten. A living, decent pension should be a right - not something to beg for on forms often complicated enough to test the best of brains never mind the fact that people feel insulted they have to plead for what they consider are their just dues. Labour also championed the fact they introduced the winter fuel allowance. The Labour candidate claims to be the only one to support that. It may sound good but even with inflation at a relatively low level fuel bills have been at an all time high - and guess who needs to

maintain a steady flow of warmth and comfort in their homes - yes, that's right, senior citizens who, unlike others who go out to work are often stuck in their homes because their pensions - and the winter fuel allowance - will not stretch to the "luxuries" they deserve and hope for and which many others take for granted. What happened to Labour's promise of increasing the pension by £5,000 ? The Liberal Democrats say they would freeze the state pension but those aged between 60 and 65 would lose the current winter fuel allowance - a cut on what those in that age range currently receive never mind what they were hoping to expect if Labour's promises had been delivered. The Conservative candidate says she will help the elderly but there is no mention in their glossy leaflets of increasing the pension. The Liberals would not keep the winter fuel allowance. However, we believe that if you increase the state pension to double what it is now - and bring this country more into line with others in Europe - you would not need the bureaucracy and costs required to administer the £250 which, if it is not being increased, is at the very least being eroded in real terms.

Prime Minister:
Harold Wilson
1974-76
Labour

Prime Minister:
James Callaghan
1976-79
Labour

Prime Minister:
Margaret Thatcher
1979-1990
Conservative

Picture by Laura Barnes



Food for thought

When people visit the countryside they will admire the views and the scenery - especially in this part of Britain

HOW many people stop to think that it is those farms that produce much of the food they see on the supermarket shelves.

But for decades now those farms, many of them small and family farms, are struggling to make a living.

Instead they are being driven out to be replaced by agribusiness in similar fashion to the way small independent shops have had to give up the struggle to compete with the giant supermarkets.

Those same supermarkets have, what Tony Blair used to call, farmers in an armlock dictating the prices that farmers receive.

Many older farmers cannot afford to retire so they struggle to keep going even though, in the case of dairy farmers, the price they receive is below the cost of production.

What about all those subsidies that farmers are supposed to receive from their Governments via Brussels.

The Common Agricultural Policy was designed to support farmers, keep the price of food down and help the environment.

Many of those direct subsidies to guarantee a fair price to farmers have all but disappeared and even when they did they did not exist not all sectors - pigs and poultry, for example, were excluded.

Instead, it has become a support system for a massive EU bureaucracy and agribusiness

Subsidies or support are targeted towards protecting the environment and landscape and ensuring that fields are set aside for wildlife and so on thus losing sight of the original purpose of the subsidies

to help production in the vital and important industry of farming

The problem is that the vast majority of that money goes to the big estates that can afford to provide the initial outlay in the first place.

Figures obtained by farmsubsidy.org show that out of 21 billion euros of farm subsidies paid in the UK between 2000 and 2007 316,594,592 euros went to the Thirsk and Malton constituency.

A look at those figures show that 25 agribusiness and estates, such as Farmcare Ltd and Castle Howard Estate, Thirsk Hall Farms and Scampston Farming Company Ltd - to name just a few benefited - not the small farmers, many of them hill farmers, who not only need to make a living but help to make up and care for the landscape that people enjoy.

Such payments need to be capped because the amount being dished out detracts from what efforts should be made to help small farmers.

The money would also be better used to support the less well off to be able to buy the food they need.

The CAP's support would be far better put into providing a guaranteed farmgate price. Last time round this produced food mountains which maybe not a problem today with an increasing world population.

Without the small and family farms the landscape would not be what it is - instead it would become deserted and uncared for.

John Clark, the Liberal candidate in Thirsk, Malton and Filey, argues that the cheap food policy enjoyed by consumers over the past decades has failed.

Young people are struggling to get into farming or give up an idea of joining in because they have seen their parents struggle to make a living.

During the past 13 years the Labour Government mouthed support for farmers - when they remembered to do so - but did little or nothing to alleviate the bullying tactics of the supermarkets.

As far as John Clark is

concerned the simple and logical answer is to put back in place a guaranteed farmgate price system

Opponents of this approach say; how would it be decided? How would it be phased? It is against the 'free market'.

These are exactly the arguments used against the 'minimum wage'. Critics of that claimed the minimum wage would put hundreds of thousands on the dole queue. It didn't.

A guaranteed farmgate price would be agreed between farmers and the government each year - as used to happen and it worked.

Farmers knew they could make a reasonable living and consumers also knew that their food supplies were grown in the UK - not from thousands of miles away adding to our country's vast import bill both financially and in terms of the environmental costs.

If farmers were so inefficient that they couldn't produce for this price, they would at least know where they were.

It would stop the bullying and the armlock by supermarkets.

The other parties support an ombudsman but that would not make paying less than the cost of production illegal while a guaranteed farmgate price would make it illegal.

Family farms should be able to make a reasonable income from what they produce - not by an increase in the value of their farm.

At present, when a small farm gives up the struggle the usual path is for the farmhouse to be sold with a 'paddock' while the majority of the land is then sold to a larger farm.

In the pub trade planning permission is needed to convert a pub into a domestic house.

Therefore two similar laws are needed for farming:

- Planning permission should be needed to turn a farmhouse into a domestic dwelling
- Any land sold from a farm would have to be sold to a farm smaller than the farm that was selling.

These policies would keep smaller and family farms in existence.

It would also mean that the bottom rungs of the ladder would remain for people to enter farming - as used to happen when local authorities were able to provide smallholdings for people to start their career in farming. Those have all but disappeared. These ideas need to be campaigned for. If they are not achieved farming will continue in the relentless move from family farming to agribusiness.

Health

THE National Health Service is justifiably the pride of this country

So it is essential that it remains as a national service which is true to the principles that led to it being set up after the Second World War - and it must be publicly funded.

Although it was introduced by a Labour Government, the whole concept of the National

Health Service was drawn up by a Liberal.

It was a wholly public and paid for service, free at the point of delivery.

Slowly and sadly, charging has crept in for prescriptions, eye tests and dentists and as always happens, those charges continue to go up because they are seen by the mainstream politicians, whether Conservative or Labour, as a means of raising revenue whilst maintaining their promises not to push up the tax rates

So, not only are people squeezed through their main

taxes they then have to fork out even more to get the treatment they deserve.

Through private finance initiative and paying the private sector to undertake simple operations, privatisation has more than begun.

The next stage in the private direction may well be to give NHS Trusts the right, in effect, to opt out of the NHS.

John Clark, the Thirsk, Malton and Filey candidate is adamant that the Liberals would:

- halt and reverse any creeping privatisation.
- abolish the Strategic Health

Authorities they are not needed.

- bring Health Authorities under the democratic control of local councils
- instil a greater co-operation between health, social services and housing.
- protect the terms and conditions of all employees.

Training doctors, nurses and dentists

Britain must train ALL the medical people we need.

In 2003 Britain recruited 60 nurses from Malawi.

This was as many nurses that Malawi had trained in a year.

It is an international disgrace that a wealthy country should recruit a whole year's worth of trained nurses from one of the poorest countries in the world.

The other side of the coin is that people who have medically trained in Britain must work for the NHS for an agreed period of time.

Beyond that period their salaries should be sufficient to retain the rather than be lured to other countries holding out the prospect of better wages.

Transport

BRITAIN lacks a co-ordinated transport system. Such a system should provide environmentally friendly links. Liberal policy would produce a democratically controlled integrated system. Local bus services must link with trains so that the timetables mesh together. Equally the 'need to travel' should be reduced. Home working should be encouraged. Out of town retail and leisure facilities must be discouraged.

Cycles

Increased cycle track provision.

Buses

Liberals opposed deregulation of bus services. Deregulation has resulted in a loss of evening and Sunday services. All public transport must be wheelchair, bicycle and shopping friendly.

Railways

Liberals opposed the privatisation of the railways. They were right. Railways must

be publically owned as a national network. Liberals believe that rail fares should be pegged at half the cost of running a small car. A large proportion of freight must be transferred from road to rail. A nationwide introduction of the Automatic Train Protection system (ATP).

Roads

Liberals do not believe Britain should have more major road building. The other side of the coin

is that Public Transport must be comfortable, secure, reliable and very competitively priced. This combined with a massive reduction of freight on the roads will lead to a reduction in road traffic. 'User friendly' Public Transport' needs to be in place and working well so that it becomes the obvious choice for travellers.

Air travel

At present an aircraft full of people collects vastly more tax than the same aircraft flying nearly empty. This is the exact opposite of what is needed. The logic is to tax aircraft fuel in the same way as motor fuel is taxed. There is a strong case for a new generation of air ships. Yes, they would be much slower but the fuel use would be much reduced.



Looking for a home

John Clark writes:

HOUSING for local people is almost non-existent in Thirsk, Malton and Filey.

Anybody who is on the average income falls well short of the money required to buy a house. The income needed is £40,000 per year (in Ryedale it is over £50,000).

This results in a 'need' of over 1,000 affordable houses in the constituency each year. The average number of affordable houses actually built each year is under 200.

There are, as a result, 800 families each year who remain without a home of their own. They have to face either living in below standard accommodation or having to move to an area where houses are cheaper. This means that the poor and young families are driven out.

A POSITIVE APPROACH is needed. There are a range of ways of providing housing for those that cannot afford the market price. After

World War II Council House building provided a massive number of houses. It was done at a time when the country was 'broke', more 'broke' than today.

Investment in housing after the war paid dividends and led to in part to the stable economy of the 50s and 60s. Councils should be given the means to do it again now.

Landowners should be allowed to build 'affordable housing' on their land and have the 'nomination rights' for people moving in. The next occupiers would need to be on the affordable housing list and again could be nominated by the landowner. Self build groups could be supported by the housing authorities. Land could be compulsory purchased at say up to 3 times agricultural land price.

This would give the farmer a very good return on the land. It would of course stop the property speculators from abusing the families within the Thirsk and Malton Constituency who are in desperate need of a home.

Puzzles

Scrabble

The game below shows four rows of letters, use each row to form a word 2-7 letters and write it below in the blank squares. Then add up the score, for each row add a 50 point bonus for every seven letter word.

G ²	N ¹	S ¹	H ⁴	I ¹	U ¹	O ¹	<div style="background-color: #d4edda; width: 20px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> Par score 160-180
B ³	E ¹	R ¹	L ¹	A ¹	L ¹	I ¹	<div style="background-color: #d4edda; width: 20px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> Four rack total time limite: 20 minutes
R ¹	N ¹	A ¹	T ¹	O ¹	O ¹	D ²	<div style="background-color: #d4edda; width: 20px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div>
L ¹	K ⁵	Q ¹⁰	R ¹	C ³	A ¹	Z ¹⁰	<div style="background-color: #d4edda; width: 20px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div>

Wordsearch

Can you find the words in the grid?

PICKERING

LIBERAL

WESTMINSTER

NORTON

EXPENSES

GMFOODS

MALTON

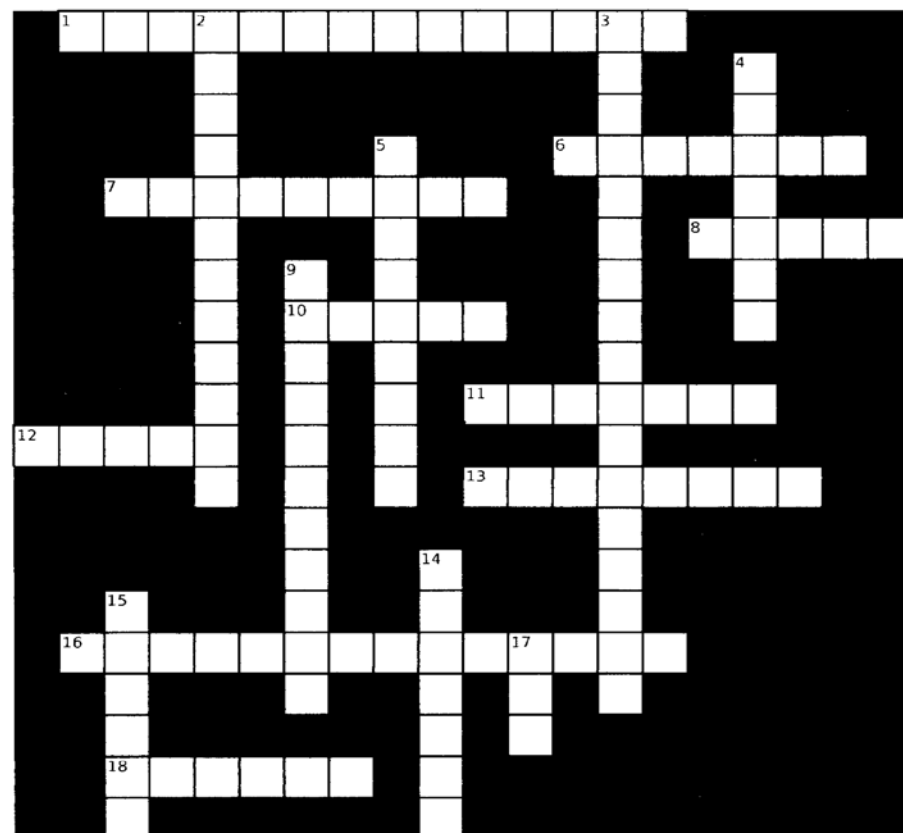
BALLOT

THIRSK

E	N	P	G	D	Q	N	E	H	O	V	O	W	N	C	X	W	W	M	R
N	A	J	Q	E	N	W	I	M	E	L	E	D	D	L	M	A	I	I	L
N	C	M	M	W	X	M	B	B	S	Z	F	R	P	C	H	D	E	D	
G	M	F	O	O	D	S	F	U	T	O	A	S	F	B	Q	M	O	B	
V	D	B	H	H	T	N	N	M	X	O	H	T	P	Q	H	Q	X	N	
R	I	H	U	R	J	Y	I	Q	W	I	Q	Z	D	N	W	J	K	O	
M	R	C	C	I	F	N	O	L	N	R	O	H	S	V	Q	R	C	R	
D	T	H	I	R	S	K	F	M	A	E	F	T	T	E	P	R	F	T	
T	V	Q	I	T	U	Y	E	A	O	R	I	S	K	Y	T	Y	K	O	
Z	U	D	E	M	W	M	B	S	Z	M	E	U	N	I	C	O	W	N	
W	Z	R	X	R	W	M	Y	D	O	J	V	B	N	T	H	O	H	U	
M	B	Q	M	U	Z	V	S	F	C	P	H	O	I	O	W	B	V	D	
N	Y	G	P	T	V	E	J	M	C	I	W	S	N	L	T	Y	S	E	
G	U	X	E	Z	S	V	F	P	C	C	N	S	M	L	C	L	Q	D	
D	U	O	E	N	I	G	G	L	U	K	W	L	R	A	L	X	A	Q	
A	S	J	E	C	D	H	G	W	G	E	R	Z	O	B	J	O	E	M	
A	N	P	T	G	X	Q	J	H	T	R	D	C	Z	I	U	Q	T	A	
B	X	M	J	R	O	I	I	F	D	I	F	U	X	W	A	Y	T	L	
E	R	A	T	P	Y	W	L	C	Q	N	T	N	V	A	P	I	D	F	
U	A	C	E	Z	C	Z	Y	J	T	G	Y	B	H	V	R	Y	L	X	

Crossword

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Across</p> <p>1 Bill left by will in unfinished cab (11,3)</p> <p>6 Sounds like unripe town next to Thirsk (7)</p> <p>7 Little peoples mixed up race, for mums who work (9)</p> <p>8 Meeting of traction engines (5)</p> <p>10 A towns life mixed? (5)</p> <p>11 In braille so even the blind can see its the way to vote? (7)</p> <p>12 Take it to the trash can with this tax (5)</p> <p>13 More than all the others (8)</p> <p>16 Strung up at Westminster (4,10)</p> <p>18 Post Office starts to make the boys in blue itch (6)</p> | <p>Down</p> <p>2 Wages from part of a chain (8,4)</p> <p>3 Enough cash to make a home (10,7)</p> <p>4 Rip a party for this storm (7)</p> <p>5 Playschools girl was heavyweight for this district (9)</p> <p>9 Foreign breed of dog is tan (11)</p> <p>14 Triple ding for a nuclear deterrent (7)</p> <p>15 Puree a whole one for this continent (6)</p> <p>17 Amy gets muddled up with the month (3)</p> |
|---|---|



War and peace

Scrap Trident and ban all arms sales

There is absolutely no reason for Britain to continue with the Trident weapon system.

Why on earth should hard-pressed taxpayers be made to fork out for a more updated version when we don't need it?

Trident was a weapon designed to join in a war alongside the USA against the USSR in the mutual destruction of the planet.

Russia and the US are now negotiating to reduce their nuclear arsenals.

One argument for possessing nuclear weapons is that having them gives us influence over stopping or restraining other countries from developing their own similar arsenals.

What influence? During the time that Britain has had nuclear weapons the nuclear "club" has been joined by China, India, Pakistan and Israel.

The policy just has not worked and it is time we faced reality and admitted that it is far too costly to go on pretending that we need to have such weapons as a deterrent.

We simply cannot afford them and we simply do not need them.

The real threat is from dirty bombs transported across borders by terrorists.

So what use would Trident, or the son of Trident, be against that?

Scrapping Trident would save £2 billion a year - think what could be done with that kind of money in putting our country right from the economic mess we find ourselves in.

Not replacing it would save a further £100 billion compared with Tory and Labour updating costs.

It would also save billions of pounds compared with the unknown Liberal Democrat policy of replacing it with an unknown nuclear weapon.

The electorate has, yet again, been conned by the other three parties that there is no alternative.

There is - scrap the lot.

The arms trade

Selling arms is wrong - in the same way that selling slaves was wrong.

The slave trade was considered vital to the British economy and was regarded a cornerstone in the argument against abolition.

But eventually common sense and decency prevailed and the economic argument did not stand up against the humane argument against slavery.

Equally, I believe it is morally wrong to be involved in the arms trade.

The Iraq conflict

Whatever the mainstream politicians and diplomats say, I believe that Iraq was an illegal war that Britain should not have gone into.

It was also totally wrong to mislead us into believing that we should invade that country because it had weapons of mass destruction - another con inflicted on the electorate of the UK.

I just don't think he was the threat he was made out to be and we must not think that we can rule the world and topple others just because we don't agree with them.

Saddam Hussein was made out to be some kind of modern Hitler. Yes, he was evil and yes he killed many of his own people but he was not, in my opinion, a threat to this country.

The trouble is that the then Prime Minister appeared to be so infatuated with the USA President that he came across as little more than the American's poodle anxious to please the "master".

There is little evidence that all the bloodshed among the military and civilian can be justified.

The overthrow of Saddam Hussein may have been achieved but in practice can we really say we have restored democracy as we understand it to that war-torn country.

Of course not.

What was even worse than the actual conflict, and there are those prepared to admit it, is that little thought, if any, was given to the aftermath of the overthrow and how to help the civilians adjust to their new life.

It is my firm conviction that this escalated the violence among the civilian population.

The deaths of thousands of soldiers and hundreds of thousands of civilians has been a totally unacceptable price - and it is not over yet.

It was a war but 'not in my name'.

Afghanistan

Why are we continuing to lose soldiers in that country, says Liberal candidate John Clark? "Even a school child's basic history of that part of the world will show that this is a war that cannot be won.

"This is not a criticism of our military personnel, many of whom have laid down their lives for this country and its rulers" he said.

No, it is a statement of military fact. Many nations, including the British in decades past and again now as well as the USSR in the 1970s have gone to war in Afghanistan and come home with their tails between their legs.

When Britain last pulled out of Afghanistan we were told that the Taliban had been defeated.

Oh yes? Then why are we there yet again.

It is, I believe, a tribal country that wishes to be tribal.

Britain as the US poodle should not try to force Afghanistan to

become a western democracy in the way we know it and a 'single unified state'.

What Afghanistan really needs is financial support, trade and communications.

This is far more likely to create permanent change than the killing of Afghans, including many civilians, in the name of democracy.

I really must question the motives of countries such as the USA as to why it wants to have peace in Afghanistan.

Why are we trying to win it - I am still waiting for an answer.

I just find it difficult to swallow the claims that one of the reasons for being there is the fight against terrorism and to safeguard this country.

If that is the case why are we not doing more to counter terrorism in other countries nearby such as Pakistan?

Could it be that the real motive is the same as that of controlling Iraq both in the recent conflict and the one in the early 1990s - so as to make it easier to pipeline oil without fear of the pipelines being blown up?

Torture

We should not allow this country to use any torture or allow the use of any evidence obtained by torture.

Our men and women fought the Second World War to rid the world of perpetrators of evil on others and many of them suffered torture at their hands. We must not allow people, whatever they may have done, to be sent to another country where torture is routinely practised.

Any country that condones torture or uses evidence obtained by it must be publicly condemned.

Not only is torture wrong, any evidence obtained by it is extremely unreliable. There is no reason for its use whatsoever.

Co-operate not dictate

Liberals believe in co-operation between nations and nowhere is this more important than in Europe.

But we are critical of the EU in its present form because it does not serve the individual nations, businesses or people of Europe well.

What began as an agreement between relatively few nations covering iron, steel and coal and subsequently agriculture in the years after the Second World War - and was seen as a way to stop such nations fighting each other - has now developed into a bureaucratic "monster" covering vast swathes of both western and eastern Europe.

It takes no account of the differences in individual nations - and their regions - and their citizens' way of life but instead imposes a blanket presence on each and every country.

The present political and bureaucratic grasp of the EU extends too far.

The Liberals' policy is to reduce this grip but if the EU will not reform then we believe that Britain would be better off outside the EU.

We want a society that maintains friendly, business and social relations with the EU.

Britain must not be bullied by or be subordinate to the EU.

Justice

Justice must not only be done but be seen to be done.

THE recent move to have 'complex' fraud and criminal cases without a jury is the first step down a dangerous road.

One of the reasons given for this is that fraud cases are too difficult and jurors would have difficulty coping with such cases.

In terms of criminal cases the Crown Prosecution Service recently conducted a case involving robbery with just a judge because of fears of intimidation against witnesses.

At the time the CPS indicated that such a step was rare and would remain an unusual event.

Yet on the day when every constituency - bar Thirsk, Malton and Filey - was going to the



polls news came through that applications had been made for two other major criminal cases to be heard without a jury.

It has been argued that they have had trials without jury in Northern Ireland for many years because of the problems in that part of the UK.

That may be so but trial by jury has been the right of man for more than 300 years in this country and

in the vast majority of cases has worked well.

I acknowledge that miscarriages of justice have occurred when they should not have done.

But it is not a good enough excuse to refuse the right to have a trial with a jury.

Maybe a case could start with more than 12 jurors.

Whatever the situation it is only right and proper that the final decision must be made by 'fellow citizens'.

On the question that trials without juries should be heard when required because of the fear of intimidation this, too, could be addressed.

This could be resolved by changing the law so that if the accused is associated with "jury tampering" then they would be treated as if guilty of the original charge.

Further punishment for tampering could be imposed as well if appropriate.

The jury system has served Britain well. Like jurors, it must not be tampered with.

Please support the Liberal campaign



If you would like to support John Clark's Liberal campaign in Thirsk, Malton and Filey please fill in below

Name:

Address:

Tel. No: **Email:**

I would like to make a donation of £

I would like to deliver leaflets ☐

Please contact us...

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