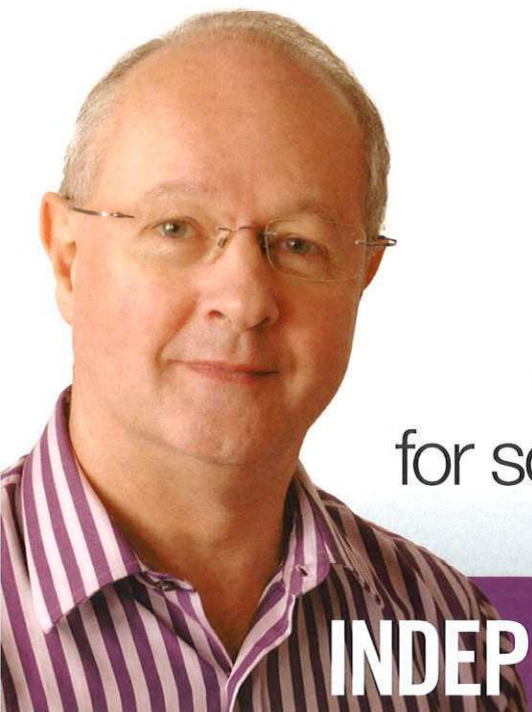


**THANK YOU FOR ELECTING
ME TO REPRESENT YOU ON
EAST HERTS COUNCIL**

**The Council now
pays me **£5,167**
to represent you:**



but I want to
use this money
for something else...

INDEPENDENT

independent
network **in**

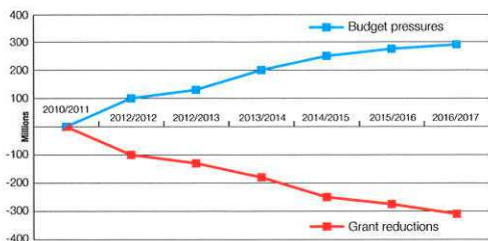
I WANT TO PAY SOME OF YOU TO HELP ME

I have been amazed at the downsizing at East Herts in the six years I have been off the Council

From the information I have been given and the discussions I have had, I believe the Council has actually served you quite well.

It is going to get tougher

At a LGiU (Local Government Information Unit) training day on Local Authority Finance, we were given this graph:



They called it *The Jaws of Doom*

- Over the next few years Councils' income will fall in real terms, even if taxpayers pay more business rates, council tax and fees and charges
- But councils' cost drivers will keep rising

What surprises everybody is how far Central Government has been able to squeeze Councils. None have yet gone bust like Detroit, and there has been no national revolt against cancelled services. But the writing is on the wall, and the LGiU believe something will have to give at some point.

So what do we do?

Nobody wants more tax or fewer services, but which do we choose? We could start a campaign (or a riot) to try and make the Coalition change its mind, **or we could think constructively and experiment** and see how much we could do for ourselves in Castle Ward.

Whatever "Localism" means, we are going to have to help each other more in the future

I want to hand over my allowance of £5,167 to some of you:

I want to pay some people to help facilitate more community action and activities in Castle Ward.

I want to pay some people to help improve communications among ourselves so we can help ourselves to help ourselves and each other.

I can pay people £6.50 an hour to deliver newsletters:

do you want a bit of exercise and get paid for it? I would also want you to keep your eyes open while delivering, and feed back issues and problems that need to be sorted out, like broken pavings or obscured road signs.

I can pay people £6.50 an hour to research issues, read Government and Council Papers, analyse options, write articles, suggest ideas, and get a discussion going:

I have set up an online newspaper called Ward Times at www.wardtimes.info. You will see it is a bit dated now, and we need to bring it up to speed.

If you can offer people babysitting, jam, ironing, repairs services, **you can put up a free advert in Ward Times** if you live in Castle Ward. It can include details of sports clubs, shared interest and community groups, events coming up, book clubs, neighbourhood watches; whatever we think 'community' is, Ward Times is a way of helping you know if any of the neighbours have the same interests that you have, or have special expertise that they are willing to share.

So we need to pay somebody £6.50 an hour to be an advertising manager:

If they can get companies to pay to advertise, then that puts more cash in the pot to pay for more hours to help our Ward.

Social Media is a way of bringing to you what interests you:

it saves you having to go and search for it. So if I know that you are interested in any planning permission within 500M of your house, or if you want to know about any proposed changes in disability benefits, or transport facilities, or car parking, or whatever, then I can tweet to you and others who have the same interest when there is something to report.

Twitter has its problems, and if you do not know what it is, there is a 'Grandparents Guide to Twitter' on www.hertfordindependents.org.

So I need to pay somebody £6.50 an hour to be a Twitter Manager:

On the current allowance, we would get nearly 800 hours of work to help each other.

Interested?

Then phone me on **01992 310097** or email me on **jim.thornton@eastherts.gov.uk**

"I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman: 'Where's the self-help section?' She said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose."

Honest Politics and the Common Good

What do Independents stand for? We try to do honest politics (the Bell Principles) and we work for the Common Good – not the greatest happiness of the greatest number, but the good of all our neighbours collectively. We do not work for our own benefit, but try to ensure that those in any sort of need are cared for by the community.

If more young people voted, we would have a different sort of politics

Politicians inevitably tilt towards older people, because they know they can be relied upon to vote. Nationally, only about one in three people voted in local elections in 2013. In 2011 in Castle Ward 43.6% voted, but in 2013 it was 27.8%. Somehow we have to find a way to make local politics more relevant as we navigate the Jaws of Doom.

The easiest way to vote is by Postal Vote

and we need somebody to mastermind a campaign to get as many people signed up as possible.

When the election comes, I will put up on the Hertford Independents website details of all the candidates in all the Hertford Wards, and what they say about themselves. You can go online, look carefully at each candidate, make a considered choice, and then post off your vote.

I find that many people are interested in politics, but few want to commit to any particular party. I will be organising every few months a ***Politics for All***

evening, and will circulate details of the first meeting where I hope we can invite a variety of speakers from different parties and hear what they have to say about such things as Local Government, Europe, Poverty, Immigration and the Middle East.

Early next year we will have open house at 25 Castle Street once a month on a Saturday morning, so you can drop in for a cup of coffee, talk about your concerns, and make suggestions about how we can work together in the Ward. I hope these proposals will lead to a whole range of new ideas and initiatives that will help us all to help each other enjoy life more, and also bring some relief to those who are having a tough time.

The Castle Ward area is quite large - from Hertingfordbury in the west to half way down the Ware Road on the east, and including virtually all the town commercial centre. We need people in all the localities to report on what is happening in their streets, and try and link together people with similar interests. Mangrove Road, Newlands Gardens, Hertingfordbury Village, Queens Road, Cecil Road, Fore Street, Mandeville, West Street, the Waterfront - it is pretty diverse.

