



# **Bromsgrove Independent Conservative Party Candidate**

## POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE

I am a Bromsgrove based podiatrist and entrepreneur and have lived and worked locally in Bromsgrove since 1983. I feel that the electorate is disillusioned by present party controls, the expenses scandal and the feeling that MPs "live in a different world".

Therefore I have decided to stand as Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Bromsgrove to give the people of Bromsgrove a real choice of a highly committed and dedicated local businessman. For too long our politics have been dominated by central office and most MPs have no choice following the party line rather than standing up for their constituents and speaking on their behalf. I believe that an MP is there to serve their constituents. All I seek is that opportunity to serve the people of Bromsgrove and give a voice back to the local citizens.

I believe that in the next General Election more Independents than ever will win seats and will be able to bring the much-needed impartiality to Parliament.

#### REGENERATING OUR BROMSGROVE

Bromsgrove is a vast and diverse constituency.

I pledge that I will engage with local members of ALL the Parish councils to bring their own issues to the forefront of any political agenda. I will be their voice in Parliament. I will never say that I have all the answers, but that I will endeavour to find somebody that will and have the determination to follow things through to the end.

# **The High Street**

I would like to see a return to the vibrant High Street we used to have. Diverse and interesting shops that make Bromsgrove Town a place to visit. The Market traders, having been moved into the High Street act as a deterrent to new local shops opening up. Due to high rents, rates and staffing costs they just are unable to compete with the market stalls. We need to increase the foot fall and throughput of people. I want to hold a full public consultation to propose making the High Street into a "slow traffic" one-way street offering free parking along one side.

The Council states that it has the power of "compulsory purchase". This, now that the fate of the Market Hall has been decided, should be used to buy up the land at the back of the High Street shops adjacent to the Bus station. New lock-up stalls could be positioned here under cover of a state of the art glass structure allowing direct access from Bus stops.

The old Market Hall site is a vast area and, should a national retailer not be found, it should be developed to become a major asset for the Town. By opening up the Spadesbourne, having an underground car park so that people can come out to a fountained plaza, it can be transformed into a square for open air cafes and places where people can meet after school or work in a safe and friendly environment.

Bromsgrove should be presented to people as "THE" place to visit.

Car parking for coaches and cars should be properly signposted and leaflets promoting Bromsgrove distributed countrywide.

I want to see shops that are open and busy with the whole local economy benefiting. Bring tourism to our region by selling ourselves as Webbs, Merry Hill or Stratford do, to their credit.

# **Car Parking**

Car parking is a necessity and not a privilege. The present structure has driven people away from the town and is seen as purely a revenue stream by the Council. I would fight for the re-instatement of the old charging periods. That is from 0900hrs to 1800hrs and free parking on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

The Recreation Road area was gifted to the residents of Bromsgrove by the Sanders sisters, and I believe that the Council are ultra vires to charge Bromsgrovians for parking in the area. I am committed to investigating the legality of these charges. I want to see all pensioners and disabled people benefit from free parking again, to ensure access to Bromsgrove and its amenities.

## State of our roads

Our roads are in an appalling state due to frost and poor maintenance. I will fight to get repairs carried out in real time.

Bromsgrove is far too often "gridlocked" with traffic. The A38 is a bypass yet bypasses are normally dual carriageways with roundabouts, not single carriageways with traffic signals, I will look to resolve this.

# **Creating jobs**

The effect of the minimum wage policy means that there are places outside of the UK, which have a lower cost base for manufacturing goods, as their wages are a fraction of ours. Consequently, too much of our manufacturing has gone abroad and too many UK jobs are being lost to overseas call centres or back office shared service centres. I want to see jobs come back to Bromsgrove. I will lobby major UK companies to create jobs here in Bromsgrove and not abroad. Only then can we start to rebuild our local and national economy, which has seen an inflow of people but an outflow of jobs and wealth over the recent years.

# **Preserving our Greenbelt**

I want to preserve our greenbelt and the character of Bromsgrove and its villages. the people of Bromsgrove, b) that it does not interfere with the character of our rural surrounding, c) that it is supported by appropriate infrastructure, particularly public transport, schools and amenities and d) proper engagement is undertaken with local residents associations prior to planning submissions.

## TRANSPARENT MP EXPENSES

I strongly believe that MP expenses should be under Inland Revenue scrutiny. All expenses, wages and perks should be fully accounted for and subject to taxation if necessary. Expense claims should be reduced as far as possible.

Independent MPs, such as Dr Richard Taylor, have one of the lowest expenses claims reported by MPs (his are ranked 635th out of 647 MPs) MPs from main Political Parties have the highest.

## **BRINGING OUR TROOPS BACK**

I believe in strong UK armed forces defending this country's borders and interests. But I do not believe that we need to be in Iraq or Afghanistan any longer. Not withstanding the fact that we have lost many brave men and women, with hundreds injured. Our present economic climate simply cannot afford further expense as we do not get the financial backup from our NATO counterparts. We need to encourage Afghanistan's own neighbours to provide the peace-keeping troops that it needs. We should protect our country from terrorism by strengthening our border controls and ensuring illegal immigration and drug smuggling are handled robustly at the first port of call.

## GIVING BACK PRIDE TO OUR NHS

I believe in investing in local hospitals and health care. I will fight to retain and grow the level of healthcare we have in the Bromsgrove area, we cannot afford any more hospital cuts or closures. NHS spending should be diverted from paying for bureaucracy, red tape, external consultants and wasteful IT projects. It is time to put the money back to the front line nurses and doctors to once again provide a world-class health service to our people. We should consider introducing a paying system for those with no National Insurance Number to stop the health holidaymakers.

## EU

I support a free trade relationship with Europe, but I am against the Lisbon Treaty and want to see the return of these powers back to the British people. We continue to be a net contributor subsidising other countries to the tune of around £80 million a week of our money or £4 Billion per annum. We need to preserve our rights and establish a balance in our dealings with Europe.

# **EDUCATION**

We need to ensure our children, have a good understanding of the basics, reading, writing and arithmetic and re-establish a sense of competition. The responsibility of education does not just end at school and the parents of some children should have access to support to ensure good manners and social skills are followed up to enable the youth of today to become responsible parents of tomorrow. Over the recent years we have seen standards fall, a devaluing of achievements and a complete collapse in discipline and respect for authority. We need to improve standards, not just on paper, but in true levels of attainment to enable us to remain competitive in the current global market-place.

# **RULE OF LAW**

I believe in the rule of law and the importance of tackling crime on our streets so that we all feel safer both by day and by night. I would lobby strongly to have more police on the beat and more community officers. I believe in free speech and we should not be afraid or ashamed to say what we believe. We need to cut down on the volume of legislation and instead bring back simple family values and common sense.

We need to use community sentencing more to benefit the local community and not tied up in endless red tape.

# **BANKS**

We have put billions into certain banks, but we have no real control of them. Prior to the "credit crunch" the banks' differential between the Bank of England base rate and the mortgage rate was around 0.5%. Now that the Bank of England base rate is at its lowest rate ever, at 0.5%, the Banks have increased their differential rates by up to 6 times of what they used to charge prior to the recession, with a typical rate of 3% above the base rate. The banks are making more profit than ever. We, the tax payers' and savers are not seeing equal return.

The Government should have set up a new Bank guaranteeing the security to all investors and buying back toxic British debt from these private banks. In this way house-owners, who are at risk of having their house re-possessed would remain in their homes, which in effect would be owned by the tax payer. This could reduce the pressure on social housing. Undoubtedly, we, the tax payers, would have had to have housed them and those private banks would have become the owners of those properties. Bad judgement on American risks should not fall upon the shoulders of the British tax payer.