

“Coalition is a breath of fresh air – putting national interest ahead of party interest”



Award winning author Michael Dobbs returns to interview new Winchester & Chandler's Ford MP Steve Brine.

What are your reflections on this year's General Election and the coalition?

We always said if people voted for me they could change the Government AND elect a new MP who would work hard for the area. I am obviously pleased that as a result of the election we have a dynamic new Prime Minister in David Cameron and while it is for others to judge my record in five years time, I am staying true to my word and making sure I am first and foremost a constituency MP.

As I have said many times, I think the coalition is a breath of fresh air. I am aware the Conservatives won the election by securing the most votes and the most seats and of course I know the Liberal Democrats came third and actually reduced their number of MPs but we didn't do well enough to govern as a single party and our system is pretty clear what has to happen in that eventuality. So we have two parties working together, in a grown up and sensible way - putting national interest firmly ahead of party interest. That is refreshing to see and I think the vast majority of my constituents are comfortable with the new Government and wish it well. I certainly do and am enjoying getting to know my new colleagues - Conservative, Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green! I think people would be surprised to learn just how much we do work together in Westminster, rather like football clubs it tends to be the supporters who dislike each other far more than the players.

What are your highlights from the first few months?

Personally it has been an amazing experience; both challenging and rewarding in ways I didn't think possible. 2010 was the culmination of more than 10 years' work for me so it was very exciting to finally take my seat in the House of Commons. Every day that I walk into work I feel the hairs stand up on the back of neck and I am very aware of how lucky I am to be able to say that.

Locally, it has been great to be able to deliver already on some of the things for which I campaigned. We have revoked regional planning and central housing targets, changed the rules to make 'garden grabbing' much harder and abolished Labour's silly density targets that did so much damage to Winchester and Chandler's Ford. The effect of these changes puts the future of large scale developments, including Barton Farm, back in the hands of our local councillors and that is all down to swift action from the new Government.

Have you held any 'surgeries' yet?

Yes of course! I held my first surgery within a week of being elected and have had one every Friday since in either Winchester or Chandler's Ford. They are very much in demand at the moment and I love doing them. People come to see me, or contact the office needing help, and we do our best for them. It's a sad fact of the life of an MP that your constituents only get to see half of the work we do because so much of it is confidential casework. Anyway, I have had some real successes already and that feels pretty good. It's why I do the job and the day I stop getting a buzz from that is the day I will walk away.

Life has changed a fair bit in recent months then?

Yes, you could say that! A new job, a new office, 649 new colleagues and the huge responsibility of being Winchester's MP. Being away some nights in the week is hard on Susie and Emily at times, but they are great and know I am doing the job I always wanted to do and can see how much I relish the challenge. We don't go for an easy life mind you; baby number two is due this November so it will be back to sleepless nights and nappies before Christmas. Like the job though, I wouldn't have it any other way!

You can see a fuller version of this interview and much more via www.stevebrine.com



■ **Top:** Many local people visit Steve in Parliament while on an official tour; Jamie Scott and his family from Stanmore did just that in late July.

■ **Middle:** Coalition politics is nothing new in Winchester; Steve had a positive working relationship with outgoing MP Mark Oaten. *Picture courtesy Hampshire Chronicle*

■ **Bottom:** Steve and his daughter Emily (now two and-a-half) at the first Alresford Music Festival in June.



STEVE BRINE'S POST

Summer 2010

Produced at no cost to the taxpayer by local MP Steve Brine and delivered by volunteers across Winchester, Alresford and surrounding villages, including Chandler's Ford & Hittingbury.

2 Steve Brine holds Government to its word over housing targets

3 Our local MP already working across the area

4 "Coalition is breath of fresh air" – early reflections from new MP

FLYING START FOR NEW LOCAL MP

Steve Brine reports back on a busy first three months

This year's historic General Election may have only taken place three months ago but local MP Steve Brine has wasted no time in settling into his new role.

"I said during the campaign that I would, first and foremost, try to be a good constituency MP and that has been my focus," he told The Post. Steve has established a busy Friday surgery and is already handling several hundred enquiries each week from local residents.

Steve made his maiden speech in Parliament on 21st June which paid tribute to many local organisations across Winchester and Chandler's Ford and can be viewed by visiting www.stevebrine.com.

Steve's health focus has remained; he has spoken in several important health debates and met with local health bosses as well as Health Secretary Andrew Lansley. He is the new Chair of the Breast Cancer All Party Group and Vice Chair of the Autism as well as Parkinson's group of MPs

For full news of Steve's first few months as our local MP, see www.stevebrine.com



■ Our local MP on his feet in the House of Commons – Steve Brine was among the first to put a question to the Prime Minister in the new Parliament.

What they already say about Steve!

"Thank you for your prompt reply... it's nice to know you are there to help your constituents."
Mr C, Compton.

"A great weight has been lifted from my shoulders and I much appreciate your assistance."
Mrs F, Winchester.

"You kindly agreed to take up my case for a new travel card which has now been issued. I don't know exactly what you did, but am eternally grateful that you did it!"
Mr D, Winchester City centre.

"Your letter appears to have worked. Thank you for your help."
Mr C, Colden Common.



Your MP ...here to help

Steve Brine runs a busy surgery every week in Winchester & Chandler's Ford – and is already among the most hard-working and accessible MPs.

steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk
Tel: 01962 791110 / www.stevebrine.com



Email: steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk
Website: www.stevebrine.com
Phone: London Office: 0207 219 7189
Constituency: 01962 791110
Address: House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA
Text: 07517 225 842

Have your say...

What do you think of the new Government so far and what would you like to see it focus on?

What would you like to see Steve Brine MP campaign on locally?

If you are able to help please tick the appropriate box:

I can deliver leaflets I'd like to stand as a local councillor I register my support for Steve

Please return to: Steve Brine MP c/o The Coach House, Worthy Park, Abbots Worthy, Winchester SO21 1AN or email your thoughts via steve@stevebrine.com

WORKING ACROSS WINCHESTER AND CHANDLER'S FORD



Barton Farm: Steve Brine has held the new Government to its word on the abolition of central housing targets. He spoke against the latest application from Cala Homes at a public planning meeting in June. The plans were thrown out by a cross-party group of city councillors. Pictured at Barton Farm with Cllr Eileen Berry.



One Big Lunch: Steve & family took part in Winchester's Big Lunch event in Abbey Gardens which brought many cultures (and foods) together. Pictured with organiser 'Miff'.



St Cross Cricket: Steve joined some of Hampshire's finest players when they came to St Cross for a fundraising sixes match. Pictured with Mike Adams from the club and Dimitri Mascarenhas. www.stcrosscc.co.uk



A very wet MP! On his first weekend as our MP, Steve went in the stocks to help The Parish of St. Matthew with St. Paul raise money for their church roof fund. www.stmatthewsandstpauls.org.uk



Micheldever: The Winchester Archery Club (www.haa.org.uk) was pleased to get a bow in Steve's hands as he opened the village fete in July.



Winchester: Steve kicked off Bike Week 2010 this Summer; pictured with Winchester's bike 'champion' Cllr Jacey Jackson. *Picture courtesy Hampshire Chronicle*



New Orthodontics Centre: Our new MP visited the opening of the brand new Winchester Orthodontics Centre in City Road. It will bring much needed NHS dentistry services to the heart of Winchester.



South Wonston: Steve is working with residents in South Wonston who want a new permanent allotment site on the edge of the village.



East Stratton: Steve opened the archetypal English Summer fete on the village green in June - they put him in the stocks there as well!



Twyford: They are celebrating 75 years of diesel at Twyford Waterworks. Steve popped along to the event in June and is supporting their lottery bid for the "Return to Steam" project. www.twyfordwaterworks.co.uk



Alesford: Steve holds a regular 'Street Surgery' in Broad Street with Cllr Ernie Jeffs and has recently taken up complaints from residents that our county council are not fixing dangerous potholes fast enough. Steve is pictured with NATC Cllr Ken Yeldham.



Itchen Valley: Easton finally got its new Village Hall in June; Steve and his family (who live in the village) were there. *Picture courtesy Hampshire Chronicle*



Kings Worthy: The issue of speed on Springvale Road has not gone away - and it still hasn't been resolved despite high profile campaigns. New MP Steve Brine is working with residents to put a renewed case to Hampshire County Council.



Fryern Arcade: The popular Chandler's Ford Farmer's Market is held at the Fryern Arcade every other month. Steve (and daughter Emily) met producers and shoppers at the May event. www.hampshirefarmersmarkets.co.uk



Chandler's Ford: Steve donated supplies for the Hope and Aid Direct mission to Kosovo www.hopeandaiddirect.org.uk. Pictured with organiser John Desty at the Dovetail Centre in Winchester Road after one of his weekly surgeries.

GET IN TOUCH

with Steve

Do you have an event you want Steve to attend or a local issue you would like him to look into? Please get in touch today;

steve.brine.mp@parliament.uk or call 01962 791110.