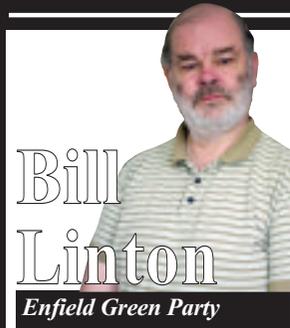


Columnist



Bill Linton
Enfield Green Party

IN my last column, I started on the subject of Universal Basic Income. Since then the Canadian province of Ontario has embarked on a pilot project to pay everyone \$1,320 a month (£773).

They see it as poverty alleviation and akin to paying old people a pension. Here are a few more advantages. It will:

- Eliminate benefit fraud at a stroke.
- Help those who are poor but too proud to claim benefits,
- Encourage employees to challenge poor working conditions, given the UBI safety net.
- Reduce inequality.
- Reduce working hours and distribute jobs better.
- Reward unpaid contributors such as carers.
- Give more options to women.
- Encourage entrepreneurship.
- Make the introduction of labour-saving automation less painful for those labourers "saved" – this is one of the strongest arguments, with the advent of driverless vehicles, 3D printing, smart robots etc.

The main arguments advanced against UBI are the disincentive to work – but pilot schemes have shown little or no evidence of "skiving" – and it would mean a major reform of the tax system and the rates of pay for workers. There would no doubt be much upheaval caused during the transition, but in the long term the reforms would be simplifying and advantageous.

UBI has had backing from respectable sources. It's not just a loony lefty idea. UBI is a policy that automation and growing inequality make urgent. It is an idea whose time has come.

Being a councillor is about more than attendance

FOLLOWING on from Terry Neville's column (*Advertiser*, November 16), over the last two years I have attended 87 per cent of overview and scrutiny meetings and its vital workstream meetings.

Regular attendance at meetings should be an expectation of all councillors, but I and my fellow Labour councillors believe that our responsibilities extend far beyond civic centre meetings, important as these are.

That is why you will see Labour councillors across Enfield holding

surgeries week in, week out, hosting ward forums, attending community events and knocking on doors to ask residents what they care and worry about.

Indeed, the scrutiny workstreams that I chair have not just involved civic centre meetings but also visits to residents' events, different schools across the borough and residents' homes.

On the Labour side, we believe that only by offering this kind of varied engagement with our communities can we offer people proper representation.

Silly statistical games and overly narrow measures of councillor activity do nothing to help Enfield residents or the process of engaging and representing them.

Surely a more positive way to represent our residents is by listening to them in as many different settings as possible.

Only in that way can the true diversity of communities across Enfield be represented and lives improved.

Katherine Chibah, Enfield Council, Turkey Street Ward

Academy's preferred site is green belt land

I'M writing in relation to the front-page article ("No site for school – yet", *Advertiser*, November 16).

Councillor Nick Dines states that councillor Ayfer Orhan is "letting down parents" by not communicating with the Wren Academy over the failure to secure a site for their new school to accommodate the places needed by 2018.

It is, as correctly pointed out by Ms Orhan, not the responsibility of Enfield Council to identify and procure the land, but that of the Education Funding Authority in conjunction with the Wren Academy. The involvement of the council comes at the later planning stage.

The Wren Academy website currently states that the school will be open to accommodate 240 year 7 pupils by 2018, with a fully operational school with eight forms of entry operating by 2024. This was to be achieved, I believe from what we were told at Wren and Fairview Homes open days, by operating the school initially from temporary accommodation. If this is still the case, tell us?

Wren Academy is quoted in your paper as saying its favoured spot is the "open space" in Enfield Road and the

article continues with "but to date neither the location nor selection criteria has been confirmed, leaving parents in the dark".

For clarification, this "open space" in Enfield Road is in fact valuable green belt land and an area of local special character. It is an area rich in habitat for wildlife and biodiversity and an important wildlife link between Trent Park and Boxers Lake.

I and thousands of other residents have signed a petition to protect this land from any development.

Why again are Wren Academy withholding the status of the land when pushing for this particular site?

Finally, I would like to mention that there are no unplaced secondary children right now. The council's schools report shows a plan to accommodate projected future secondary need throughout the borough which includes three approved free schools.

Over to you Wren Academy.
Keith Bilton
Netherby Gardens,
Enfield

New generation of energy meters are free, economical – and safe

IN response to your article about smart meters ("Not so smart", *Advertiser*, November 23)...

Smart meters are the new generation of gas and electricity meters being offered to everyone at no extra cost during the national rollout.

Water meters are not part of the rollout of smart meters.

Smart meters are replacing the traditional meters in homes. They show gas

and electricity use in pounds and pence and in near real time, on a handy in-home display. They mean an end to estimated bills and manual meter readings and, for prepayment customers, they provide new ways to top up on the go and easy ways to check credit.

Security has been at the heart of Britain's smart meter rollout since the very beginning. The smart meter system has been developed by some of the most respected experts in cyber security, including the government's security organisation GCHQ.

Smart Energy GB is the voice of Britain's smart meter rollout.

For more information, visit smartenergyGB.org.
Lucy Maggs
Smart Energy GB

YOUR LETTERS: GUIDELINES

Write to **Letters to the Editor, The Advertiser, 187 Baker Street, Enfield, EN1 3JT**, or email them to letters.enfield@nlhnews.co.uk. Please keep letters below 300 words. You must include your name and full address, though your house number and postcode will NOT be published. Names and addresses will only be withheld from publication in exceptional circumstances. Include a daytime phone number for verification. We reserve the right to edit letters.

Trump marks end of an era

DONALD Trump's victory is the final proof that it is game over for the political elite.

Corbyn, Brexit and now Trump – all add up to an attack on a system that is no longer fit for purpose.

However, this is not the beginning of the end for democracy, it is simply the end of the beginning.

After we won the vote, not much more than 100 years ago, we made a big mistake in abrogating our power to political parties. Politicians quickly set us at war with each other to further their own careers and the rest is history.

The political elite have marginalised and impoverished their constituents.

At the same time, failing education, healthcare and employment have created a downtrodden class whose hopes and dreams have been crushed.

Little wonder that people have tired of political tribalism and are now fighting back.

Our campaign, which has the backing of Lord Digby Jones, will help competent candidates overcome the big parties.

Independent MPs alone can put the needs and aspirations of their constituents ahead of the demands of a political party. We offer financial and logistical support and groups and individuals who agree with our aims are invited to get in touch.

The election of Donald Trump as president of the USA is without doubt a game changer and will help speed the reform we so badly need. For that reason alone, we welcome his success.
Martyn Greene.

Director
Free Parliament Campaign

Thanks for all the hard work

THE delightful raised flower bed, opposite St Stephen's Church at the Park Avenue junction, is no more – demolished to make way for Cycle Enfield. What a shame.

Christine Williams and her family maintained the bed for years at their own cost.

Through your column, may I thank them all for their public spirited commitment to the borough.

Dennis Stacey
Wellington Road,
Enfield

North London Slimming Clinic

CLINIC CLOSED SUNDAY 25TH DECEMBER 2016 - SUNDAY 8TH JANUARY 2017

- **Mondays 6-8pm**
16 Uvedale Road
Enfield, EN2 6HB
(off London Road by Bush Hill Petrol Station)
- **Thursdays 6-9pm**
Broxbourne Borough Office Buildings
Churchgate, Cheshunt, EN8 9XQ
- **Saturdays 9-11am**
16 Uvedale Road
Enfield, EN2 6HB

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