



Guildford Greenbelt Group (GGG) Press announcement Tuesday 24 February 2015

KAREN STEVENS TO STAND FOR GUILDFORD GREENBELT GROUP (GGG)

Guildford Greenbelt Group is pleased to announce that Karen Stevens will be standing as a GGG candidate for borough councillor in Onslow Ward.

Karen Stevens is perhaps best known for leading the Save Hog's Back campaign, which is seeking to protect the nationally important area of Blackwell Farm, with its iconic views from the Hog's Back ridge into and from the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Karen and the Save Hog's Back campaign have been part of GGG since it was founded in 2013.

Originally from Lancashire, Karen has lived in the Guildford area for more than 25 years and Onslow Village is on her doorstep.

When she is not campaigning, Karen runs a children's book publishing company, which she set up with her husband in 2010, following a career in medical and corporate publishing.

Susan Parker, Leader of GGG, said:

"GGG is delighted that Karen will be standing for Onslow Ward. She will be an excellent councillor. Everyone who has met Karen will have been impressed by her courage, integrity, decency and persistence. She is a passionate campaigner for the countryside she loves and for the community of which she forms a part. She commits herself completely to everything she undertakes. Despite considerable provocation (and at times personal abuse or threat) she always shows balance and real command of the details of any argument, with considerable grace under fire. The voters in Onslow are fortunate to have such a strong candidate seeking to represent them."

Karen Stevens said:

"I've decided to stand as a candidate in the local election because I care about Guildford and I believe that the Guildford Greenbelt Party has the ideas and the vision to make Guildford a better and more prosperous place to live, whilst retaining what is best about it."

I don't want to see the borough ruined by recent proposals in the draft Local Plan – proposals that have been supported by most of our current councillors.

“We've heard environmental groups quite rightly express their concerns about the draft Local Plan and about the harm in rolling back the green belt. We've heard residents and businesses question how our roads, our medical services and our schools will cope with another 15,000 households in the borough in the next 20 years. And we've heard many groups put forward proposals to minimise harm and reduce congestion by building on brownfield sites, using land occupied by surface car parks more efficiently, increasing density of offices on business parks, and proposals for improved accommodation for future students on campus – rather than in the town.

“Despite thousands of residents voicing their opposition to the draft Plan, these concerns have been brushed aside; these questions have not been answered; and these ideas have been ignored. Why? Because of party politics and the apparent need to drive the national economy by building thousands of new houses for the overflow from London and for overseas property investors. I feel it's now time to stand for Council to put a stop to this agenda and to shape the Local Plan so that Guildford is fit for our community and for the future.

“We need to improve and not destroy our environment by encouraging appropriate investment in our infrastructure and by regenerating the parts of the town that need it so that Guildford continues to attract top businesses, which we know are drawn here by our location and our natural environment. This approach will result in continued and sustainable economic growth – rather than uncontrolled, inappropriate and wasteful economic activity resulting from squeezing more people into the already overcrowded South East and by building on the green belt.

“The vision presented by the Guildford Greenbelt Party is better for Guildford, better for the environment and better for the country as a whole.”

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