

Update

From
Richard
Howitt



March / April 2009

Your Labour Euro MP for the East of England

Please distribute at your General Committee meeting and to other interested party members

COUNTDOWN TO JUNE ELECTIONS

Preparations for the European, County and Unitary council elections on June 4th are moving towards their final phase, as Richard and his fellow European candidates joined a national campaign day in London, (see picture). The European team have rallied support by attending CLP annual meetings around the region. Richard has spoken at party events in **Great Yarmouth, Stevenage, Basildon, Thetford, Cambridge, Hertford and Stortford** and with the **Essex County Group**. "These elections are important in their own right, and come just months before the General Election," says Richard. "I ask every Labour activist to do everything possible to get the best result for Labour." Please make sure details of your local campaigning are being e-mailed regularly to Richard's constituency office and to the Labour East Regional Office.



(Left to right); Chris Ostrowski, Sherma Batson, Richard Howitt MEP, Beth Kelly, Nigel Gardner and James Valentine.

FAIRNESS NOT FEAR

Richard opened a regional day school organised by the "Hope not Hate" campaign, to coordinate local campaigning to prevent the BNP being elected at the European Elections, held in **Cambridge**, with further events planned in **Norwich, Luton and Thurrock**. "The way to defeat the BNP is to drive turnout up, so they do not reach the required threshold to get an MEP elected," Richard said. "It is not simply about campaigning against the BNP but in getting people to vote positively for Labour." Hope not Hate have designated Friday 15 May as "Union Friday", calling on trade union branches to hold special campaign events, and Tuesday 2 June as "Turnout Tuesday" to organise mass leafletting warning of the dangers of a BNP victory.

OBAMA SHOWS LABOUR THE WAY



Daniel Zeichner, Cambridge PPC and Rt Hon John Prescott MP join Richard Howitt MEP in front of the big screen for the Obama Inauguration.

"The election of President Obama has put confidence in the step of progressive politics everywhere, and opened up new possibilities for change in the world," Richard told more than 200 Labour activists from across the region at a public showing of the U.S. Presidential Inauguration organised by Labour East and hosted at the **Cambridge Guildhall**.

EQUAL TREATMENT FOR ALL WORKERS

National protests about the subcontracting of jobs to foreign based companies, reaffirm the need to change European law to make sure this is not aimed at undercutting the wages and conditions of local workers, according to Richard Howitt MEP. Richard made the call at a trade union rally to protest against the out-sourcing of 150 jobs likely to go abroad at **Cambridge University Press**, and spoke at a workplace meeting for Unite members at the Port of **Felixstowe**.



Helping Asian women at **Ipswich CSV** find local jobs thanks to one of the first grants from the European Integration Fund.

THE REAL TORY AGENDA

David Cameron says he is in favour of Labour's proposal at Westminster to introduce equal pay audits in the public sector to help narrow the gender pay gap - but Tory MEPs voted against the very same proposal when put to the European Parliament. Tory attacks on Labour's civil liberties record also ring hollow when two of our three Tory Eastern MEPs voted against Parliament's Annual Report on fundamental rights - the third simply abstained!

WORKING FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

Richard took part in an MEP delegation to meet Palestinian and Israeli leaders in the wake of the Gaza conflict and the likely formation of a new right-wing Israeli Government. He spoke at a Middle East peace rally organised by the Labour's **Peterborough** PPC (see picture), and welcomed the Palestinian Authority Ambassador to a public meeting held in **Watford**.



Richard warned that criticism of Israeli Government actions should not turn in to anti-Semitism, and underlined his message by attending Holocaust Memorial Day events at the **Harlow** Synagogue and at the University of **Essex** in **Colchester**. As Labour's Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, Richard spoke in a Parliamentary debate on the Gaza conflict, also in debates calling for a memorial to the Srebrenica massacre, and for the return of Guantanamo detainees.

COMBATING THE WORLD DOWNTURN

Richard joined Labour Euro MPs in supporting new EU regulation for the investment fund market, calling for lower VAT rates for local services and backing new investment to improve energy efficiency by 20 per cent Europe-wide. Also in the European Parliament, Labour MEPs voted to:-

- allow police forces, for the first time, to chase up drivers who have committed offences abroad.
- criminalise internet 'grooming' for child sex abuse.
- close the scientific loophole which threatens the global ban on commercial whaling.
- ban carcinogens being used in paint-strippers.
- intensify efforts to meet EU child care targets.

ALSO IN THE CONSTITUENCY RICHARD...



- Backed a **Lowestoft** charity threatened with closure after attempts to reclaim European funds because its financial records were lost in a flood, (picture above).
- Undertook Fair Trade fortnight events in **Chelmsford**, **Leighton Buzzard** and **Hitchin**.
- Unveiled plans for an environmentally friendly house constructed from hemp in **Watford**.
- Launched a new £4 million 'cluster' to promote research and investment in leading European regions for renewable energy in **Lowestoft**.
- Joined **Hertfordshire** 'Kids Count' campaigners to promote EU-wide action to combat knife-crime.
- Spoke at two twinning events in **Bedford**.
- Met the campaign group set up by Equitable Life pensioners in **Norfolk**.
- Backed plans for a new European bid to further improve East-West rail links in the region.
- Called on a **Woodbridge** farmer to drop a legal case against tying European CAP payments to keeping footpaths open.
- Welcomed **Cambridge** and **Chelmsford** students visiting Brussels.
- Took part in an East of England Regional Assembly general meeting held in **Norwich** and in its Europe Panel meeting in **Bury St Edmunds**.



Taking part in a world record attempt for eating Fair trade bananas at a High Street stall in **Chelmsford**.

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