

## Camels' Eye



A hundred years on it seems absurd that anyone ever opposed votes for women but the poster poses another, harder question. Who should decide how we are governed? The respectable classes such as qualified professionals of course, but what about unfortunates like ex-offenders, alcoholics and people with mental and other disabilities?

Big Brother

*Elitism* is now a dirty word so politicians won't declare openly that political decisions

are too important to be left to ordinary voters, but they can't always disguise their disdain.

The problem is not the 'deplorables' (people with bad views) so much as the gullible who are nice but dim and so easily misled by 'populists' (politicians with bad views). It was clearly a mistake to let them vote on their country's future status and relationship with its neighbours because these are difficult, weighty matters and not for mere Proles to determine. *Big Brother knows best!*

We're all in this together!

*Community* is a very different kind of word, not cold or snooty but warm and inclusive: it signals generosity, togetherness and being down with the people in spirit if not in fact. And used as an adjective its effect can be transformative, almost magical: include it in the name of your organisation - group, centre, college, school, trust or whatever - and you tell the world, *We're not about us, we're about You!* What's not to like?!

That road

The trouble is, individual people are real and can tell you what they want but communities are abstractions and they can't, and this brings us back to the A303 (sorry!). Parish Councillors try very hard to work out what their electors want and need, and public spirited residents and groups do the same for their fellow residents, but they all come up with different answers so how can you know which is the right one? It's a judgement call. Those residents who are really interested and care will attend meetings and respond to surveys and consultations, often expressing their views forcefully, but what about the majority who don't attend and don't respond? Silent they may be but don't they count too? And what about our fellow citizens, the ones who are actually paying for the road? We know the Camels count but we don't get to call trumps and it is the national interest which will prevail. And isn't that as it should be? It's all very muddling.

P.P-C.