

# Green View



Election Special from Scotforth West Green Party. No. 48, April 2011.

## Elect us to keep Scotforth Green!



**Chris Coates**

Tel: 840530

Chris originally trained as a carpenter, and now works as a construction project manager – most recently working on the eco-refurbishment of old industrial buildings in Halton. Since 2005 he has represented the Scotforth area on the County Council, as well as being a City Councillor for the neighbouring Castle Ward. He has played a leading role in many innovative local projects including the Marsh Community Centre, LESS and Lancaster Cohousing. Chris said: *“I am committed to working with local people to create better housing and community facilities.”*



**Zoe Jones**

Tel: 39675

Zoe is 35 and has lived in Lancaster for 11 years. She is a qualified literacy teacher, and worked as a Professional Development Manager, organising training at the Adult College, before being made redundant due to cuts last year. She has previously worked at Lancaster University and for the TUC. She is now caring full-time for her two children, aged 1 and 3. Zoe said: *“I am passionate about creating a better world for all children to grow up in. I want to make a positive difference to my local area, and feel that I have the skills, commitment and enthusiasm to do this.”*



**Andy Yuille**

Tel: 389915

Andy is 37, and has lived in Lancaster since 2004. He works for the Campaign to Protect Rural England, and has previously worked for Citizens' Advice, and the homelessness charity Crisis. He also chairs North West Environment Link, a network of environmental NGOs that works to get environmental issues taken seriously by decision-makers in the North West. Andy said: *“The Green Party is the only party which has the policies, vision and commitment to deal with the serious challenges we face today – such as climate change, economic recession and scarce natural resources.”*

Councillor Emily Heath is standing in Scotforth East this time, and Councillor Jane Fletcher has decided not to stand for re-election due to pressure of work commitments.

## About the Local Elections

- Polling hours are 7am until 10pm on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May.
- You have 3 votes to elect 3 councillors to represent you for the next 4 years.
- You can split your votes between different parties if you want to.
- If you only want to give the Green Party one or two of your votes, please vote for Chris Coates and Zoe Jones.
- Your polling card tells you where to vote.
- If you would like to help the Green Party or display a poster in your window, please phone us on 01524 380169 or email: [info@lancastergreenparty.org.uk](mailto:info@lancastergreenparty.org.uk) .
- For general questions about the elections please ring the Council on 582905.

## Why I'm voting Green

*"I was a Labour Party member for many years, but have recently come to realise that the Green Party is the only party that truly understands the real world and its future, both locally and globally. It's not just about the so-called "green" issues - it's also about bread-and-butter issues like regenerating the economy, where the Green Party's ideas are the only ones that make sense." Mike Wright, Ashton Road*



## SAY YES TO FAIRER VOTES!

Also happening on 5<sup>th</sup> May is a referendum on whether the voting system in general (Westminster) elections should change from First Past The Post (FPTP) to the Alternative Vote (AV) system.

### How is AV different to the current system?

In a general election you currently vote for a single candidate. In an AV election you can place candidates in order of preference, i.e. 1 for first choice, 2 for second choice, etc. But if you want to vote for only one candidate then you can still do so.

### What are the advantages of the AV system?

AV allows you to vote for who you WANT, even if that party might not win. If your first choice does badly then your second preference vote is used - so your vote is never wasted. In the past, people have voted tactically on the basis of who they DON'T want rather than who they would really prefer. AV allows you to say "I'd like X to win ... but if X doesn't win then I'd like Y to represent me."

### What does the Green Party think about AV?

We would prefer a truly proportional system (so that, for example, if the Green Party won 15% of the vote - as it did in the 1989 European Elections - it would get around 15% of the seats in Parliament). However, we think AV is fairer than FPTP, so we are supporting a YES vote.

### Why should I care?

Referendums don't come round very often - the last UK one was 1975 - so don't let this opportunity pass! A fairer voting system is better for democracy.



**Elect Chris Coates, Zoe Jones and Andy Yuille**

# Green Achievements on the Council

For the past 4 years, Lancaster City Council has had 12 Green Councillors (out of 60). Most of the important decisions are made by a cabinet of 10 councillors from 5 different parties. The Greens have played a very active role on the cabinet, whereas the Conservatives have refused to take up their seats for the past 2 years. Here are a few examples of our recent achievements:

## SAFER STREETS

- Green Councillors have worked hard for many years to get 20 mph speed limits on all residential streets. The County Council now plans to introduce these throughout the whole county from 2013.
- Greens also played their part in ensuring that community police officers (PCSOs) will continue to be funded.

## FREEZING COUNCIL TAX

Green Councillors have played a big part in reducing spending by the Council, resulting in a freeze in Council Tax for this year and very few cuts in services.

For example:

- £400,000 was saved by changing the way recycling is collected;
- The number of highly-paid directors was reduced from four to two;
- Energy use has been reduced by 30% at Salt Ayre sports centre, saving us all money.

## A HEALTHY SOCIETY

Green Councillors have played leading roles in many social and community projects. For example:

- Anne Chapman chairs the Friendship Centre – a meeting place for older people on Robert Street.
- Jude Towers chaired the local Women's Aid group;
- Chris Coates chairs the Marsh Community Centre;
- John Whitelegg chairs the Homelessness Forum – which is pushing the Council to be more active in sorting out the problems of homeless people.

## MONEY AND JOBS INTO THE DISTRICT

Green Councillors Anne Chapman and Chris Coates helped to set up and run LESS – a not-for-profit organization that helps people reduce their energy use and produce their own food.

- LESS now employs 9 people and brought in nearly £300,000 for a new allotment site on the Ridge;
- Jon Barry helped to write the successful lottery bid for £285,000 to run the Marsh Community Centre. The centre now employs 18 people;
- Green Councillors worked hard to ensure that indoor market traders were not turfed out of the market hall to make way for ASCO - who were declared bankrupt just a few weeks later!

## LITTER AND RECYCLING

Green Councillor Jon Barry has had responsibility for litter and recycling as part of his cabinet role.

- Recycling rates have risen from 25% in 2007 to around 40% in 2011;
- The introduction of barrow cleaners has kept streets cleaner in urban areas;
- Greens have cleaned up many grot spots, including Lancaster Canal;
- Unlike in many other areas, none of Lancashire's waste is incinerated – instead it is processed at new 'MBT' plants. These maximise the amount of waste that is recycled and composted, and generate electricity from the methane produced by the decomposition of the remaining waste.



## Want to know more?

The Green Party is (as far as we know!) the only local party that publishes a local manifesto – so you can find out more about our principles, policies and future priorities.

Please ask us if you would like a copy, or read it online at:

**[www.lancastergreenparty.org.uk](http://www.lancastergreenparty.org.uk)**



# Scotforth West: Lots done ...

Here are a few examples of our achievements in this ward since 2007:



Chris Coates, Zoe Jones and a few helpers collected 12 bags of rubbish in a litter pick of Greaves Park last month.



Emily Heath chaired an Allotments Task Group, which resulted in more funding and support for allotments – including the new boundary fencing for Scotforth Allotments.



Green Councillors have made lots of small improvements to the area - such as new benches on the canal. More of these will be installed soon!



We set up and worked with the Friends of Greaves Park to create a new play area, orchard, wildflower meadow and other improvements in the park.



Emily Heath and Jane Fletcher objected to, and have raised awareness of, proposals to build two huge new supermarkets on fields at Lawson's Bridge, south of Scotforth.



Chris Coates helped to secure the new zebra crossing by the Pointer roundabout, as well as road safety improvements on Ashton Road.

## Lots to do ... We will continue to:

- Fight to protect Scotforth's countryside from unnecessary and unwanted development.
- Ensure that high quality play areas are provided around the ward.
- Lobby the City and County Councils to provide more land for allotments, to alleviate long waiting lists. For example, Scotforth Allotments could be extended into the City Council-owned field to the south.
- Consult residents on issues that affect you.
- Liaise with both Councils and the police to tackle anti-social behavior, e.g. speeding, vandalism, fly-tipping and dog-fouling.
- Support the new Fairfield Nature Reserve (off Aldcliffe Road).
- Work with residents to improve the area behind Arcon House.
- Carry out litter picks to keep our ward looking clean and green.

## Keeping you informed

- Since 1998, we've delivered our Green View newsletter to every household, 4 times each year.
- We let you know what is happening in our local area and in the city, how you can have your say or get involved, and how you can contact us if you want to discuss any issues.
- Other political parties only publish their leaflets at election time. We work hard all year, every year.