

Green View
Spring 2011

***Duke's Ward Green Party
Election Special - No 35***

Keep Duke's Ward Green

Local resident Dave Brookes is standing for the Green Party in Duke's ward in the City Council elections on May 5th. Dave is hoping to continue the success since 2003 when the Green Party first won the newly created Duke's ward.

Dave said "Local Councils are under severe pressure from Government funding cuts. So far, Green councillors on the City Council have played a big part in ensuring that the cuts have had the minimum impact

possible. But we need to ensure that this work continues with measures such as reducing the Council's energy costs and generating its own electricity."

"In Duke's ward we need to make sure that we don't lose valuable local businesses, including those in the indoor market. We want Lancaster to thrive and lead the way in the new green economy of the future."



Duke's ward candidate Dave Brookes with current councillor Anne Chapman and former Duke's councillor Gina Dowding

Green MP Fighting for Fairness



Caroline Lucas, Green MP for Brighton and Hove since May 2010 visited Lancaster last month and talked to shoppers and traders in Market Square. Caroline is working hard in Parliament to fight public sector cuts. She also recently drafted a new bill to make companies like Barclays and TopShop declare their 'tax haven' profits when submitting their accounts in the UK.

"These elections are crucial for the future of Lancaster and Duke's Ward. We want to keep our area special. Please help us to do that."

Find out more about our candidates, achievements and policies at:
www.lancastergreenparty.org.uk

Your Duke's Ward Green Party Candidate



Dave Brookes has lived in Duke's Ward on Regent Street for ten years, and in Lancaster since 1995. He worked for local civil engineering contractor Askam Construction for thirteen years, on projects including reservoirs, treatment works, flood defences, and canal repairs, before leaving in 2009 to share parenting duties. He is married and has two small children.

Dave is an active member of the Fairfield Association, both as a regular volunteer at orchard maintenance sessions, and putting his knowledge to good use as Project Manager for the construction phase of the new Fairfield Nature Reserve.

Dave has already started making a difference in Duke's Ward - recently securing the County Council's agreement to deal with obstructive parking on the junction of Springfield Street and Tower Court.

Say YES to Fairer Votes

On 5th May, as well as the local elections, there will be a referendum on whether the voting system in general 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 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?

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

Keeping you informed

We publish 4 issues of our Green View newsletter per year, every year. We let you know what is happening in your local area and in the city.

Other political parties only publish their leaflets at election time. Green Councillors work hard all year round for their local communities.

About the elections

- ✓ The polling station is at St Thomas' Church Hall, Marton Street, opposite the entrance to the police station.
- ✓ Voting is from 7am to 10pm on Thursday May 5th.
- ✓ If you want to help the Green Party or put up a poster please call 07817 966949.

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

Duke's Ward: Lots done...

Anne Chapman was elected as Green Party councillor for Duke's Ward in 2007. These are some of the projects and activities in and around the ward that she and other Green councillors have been involved in:



Two new crossings on the one-way system improving routes into and across town for pedestrians and cyclists.



Safer, quieter streets, 20 mph, and better access for emergency vehicles, in new residents parking zones H and I.



New grit bin on the corner of Regent St and High St helping to keep routes to schools safe in winter weather.



3-stream recycling brought to flats, apartments, and hard to reach areas of the city centre.



New playground, orchard, and wildflower meadow in Greaves Park, enhancing one of our precious green spaces.



New benches on the canal and other small improvements to the area adding up to a better environment for all.

Lots to do...

- Produce a cost-effective scheme for revitalising Sun Square - council consultants want to spend millions!
- Provide community notice boards in the City Centre and Dallas Road Gardens.
- Keep working to ensure that residents parking works for all, including people living on Queen St and other areas of the city centre.
- Support small businesses, including thriving indoor and outdoor markets.
- Continue to fight for a development on the canal corridor that respects heritage, includes green space, and delivers what people really want.

The Green Party works hard all year, every year