

Green View



News and views from the Green Party in Glasson & Cockerham, Summer 2011.

Greens demand action on A588

Following another serious accident (pictured) near the railway bridge on Ashton Road at the Lancaster-end of the A588 in April, residents and local councillors have called for urgent action to address the problem of speeding.



Green Cllr Chris Coates said: *“We have a school, a nursery, two old peoples’ homes, a blind bridge and a bend, all within 800 m of each other - and no real traffic calming measures, or signs to warn motorists of the dangers.”*

Cllr Coates referred the incident to the County Highways Road Safety Group who agreed to look at measures to reduce traffic speed, including a speed indication sign, other signage, and alterations to road markings. The Police have also agreed to increase speed checks at the bridge.

The Green Party would like to see the whole length of Ashton Road - from the Pointer Roundabout to the end of the 30 mph limit - included in the new residential 20 mph area (see story on page 2).

RSPCA Close ‘Puppy Farm’

A suspected dog breeding facility in an agricultural building off Ashton Road has been closed down, following concerns about the welfare of the dogs expressed by Green Councillors, along with many local residents and animal lovers.

Cllr Melanie Forrest raised the issue at a meeting with the Police on July 5th. The issue was then taken up by a Community Police Support Officer, who arranged an unannounced visit with the RSPCA and a vet.

37 dogs were found, and all had some sort of health problems. The dogs will be kept at rescue centres across the North West until the case goes to court. The RSPCA is confident that they will all be rehomed.

Partnership on City Council Cabinet

The results from the May elections were that no party had an overall majority of the 60 seats. After discussions between group leaders, it was agreed to form a cabinet of Green and Labour councillors.

Seats on the City Council	
Labour	24
Green	8
Conservative	16
Moercambe Bay Ind.	10
Free Independent	2

Cllr Jon Barry said: *“Unlike the national coalition, there is no collective responsibility on the cabinet. That means that councillors are free to vote against and comment publicly on decisions that they do not like. We felt that this was important to preserve our independence as the Green Party.*”

The two groups have drawn up a list of policies to be considered in more detail throughout the summer. These include issues such as: more provision of social housing; renewable energy generation on Council houses; new allotment sites; and protection of heritage on the canal corridor site.

However, the first priority will be to make sure that the Council can set a budget without making major cuts.

Twenty’s Plenty for Lancashire

Lancashire County Council has started the first phase of its roll-out of 20 mph speed restrictions in all residential areas and outside all schools. The whole of the County is due to be covered by the end of 2013.

One of the first schemes, called the ‘Greaves Area’, will include all roads between the A6 and Ashton Road in Lancaster, all the way from the Pointer Roundabout to Ray’s Drive at the edge of the city. Consultation will start in August with the scheme due to be implemented in the autumn.

Green County Councillor Chris Coates said *“We have been campaigning for this for a number of years, so I am really pleased that it is now happening - it will make a real difference to road safety. I have asked for residential roads in Glasson Dock and Cockerham to be looked at as soon as possible.”*



The police have agreed to enforce the limit in the same way as they had done for 30 mph limits. Major roads will remain at 30 mph.

Greens Oppose NHS Reforms

The Green Party is campaigning against Government plans that will break up the NHS and allow private companies to take over NHS services. The Government is planning to get rid of Primary Care Trusts and put groups of GPs in charge of purchasing care from private companies and public health care providers. The Government has back-tracked on some aspects of the plans but the following proposals still remain in place:

**Patient Choice?
Always choose the**



- **Privatisation:** Private companies will be allowed to bid for NHS work. This could result in private companies creaming off the most profitable work, leaving the NHS under greater financial strain.
- **Quality of care:** There will be competition between private and public health care providers as they bid to supply services. This could result in the cheapest, rather than the best quality, services being provided.
- **Not a national service:** The NHS will become a market of competing private and public health care providers, rather than a single public health service. The Government will no longer have to ensure that comprehensive healthcare is available throughout the country.

Cllr Chris Coates said. *“A better direction would be for the Government to scrap the internal ‘Health Market’, saving around £5 billion per year, and spend this money on improving services. This is exactly what has happened in Scotland and Wales.”*

For more information see: www.keepourNHSpublic.com.

Arts Cuts Hit City

The Dukes Theatre’s nationally renowned walkabout plays in Williamson Park will cease from next year, after The Dukes was hit by funding cuts of £100,000 - mainly from the Arts Council. Other local arts organisations have also suffered big cuts, including Ludus, Storey Gallery, Folly and Litfest.

Cllr Chris Coates said: *“Lancashire has been hit hard by Arts Council cuts. Spending is now down to just 60p per head of population in the County, compared to £4.26 per head in Cumbria and £4.18 in Greater Manchester. I am worried that this might mean not only cutbacks to events and programs offered, but that some local companies may be forced to shut down. This would be a tragic loss to the City.”*

Fairtrade Centre to open soon

The world's first international Fairtrade Centre will open in Garstang this summer after a change of heart by Wyre Borough Council, who own the building.

It is hoped the opening will coincide with the town's arts festival in late August.

The opening of the 'Fairtrade In Garstang' (FIG) centre and café at the former Discovery Centre will mean that, after 10 years as the world's first Fairtrade town, Garstang will have a physical focus to show to the many visitors who are encouraged to visit the town by its Fairtrade status.

News of the go-ahead for the Centre follows months of frustration for the town's Fairtrade activists, who have seen opposition from established traders, café owners, some town councillors and the Council's estates department.

Booths gets go ahead

Lancaster City Council's Planning Committee has approved the application by Booths for a new supermarket on the Lawson's Bridge fields, just off the A6 as you come into Lancaster from the south.

However the application CEP for a much larger supermarket

and a hotel on the adjacent fields was refused on the grounds of traffic impacts, prejudicing the delivery of other planned developments in south Lancaster (such as Bailrigg Science Park), loss of trees, and poor design.

CEP has appealed against the refusal, so an independent planning inspector will review the decision in the next few months.

Local Member Grants

Each County Councillor has an annual budget to award grants (ranging from £100 to £3,000) to community groups that benefit residents within their division.



**County Cllr
Chris Coates**

In order to be considered for such a grant, a group must meet some very basic criteria and submit a simple application.

For further information please contact County Cllr Chris Coates on 01524 840530 or email: info@lancastergreenparty.org.uk.

Thank You ...

... to everyone who voted Green at the City Council elections in May!