

Green View



News and views from the Green Party in Scotforth East & West. Summer 2011.

Greens demand action to make Ashton Road safer

Following another serious accident near the railway bridge on Ashton Road in April (pictured), residents and local councillors have called for urgent action to be taken 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.

Scotforth Green Party is pushing for the whole length of Ashton Road - from the Pointer Roundabout to the end of the 30 mph limit by Pinewood Close - to be included in the new residential 20 mph area (see p2).

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
Morecambe 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 in Scotforth

The County Council has earmarked part of Scotforth to be in the first phase of the County-wide roll-out of 20 mph speed restrictions in all residential areas and outside all schools. The ‘Greaves Area’ scheme will include all roads *between* the A6 and Ashton Road, 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.

Former Green Councillor Emily Heath said *“We have been campaigning for 20mph limits for a number of years, so I am really pleased that it is now happening. It will make a real difference to road safety in the area.”*



The ‘Greaves Area’ scheme will be followed by other schemes across the Lancaster district, with the whole of the County due to be covered by the end of 2013. The Police have agreed to enforce the limit in the same way as they have done for 30 mph limits. It is proposed that ‘major roads’ (including the A6 and Ashton Road) 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 provision of the cheapest, rather than the best quality, services.
- **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.

Lancaster Hit Hard by Arts Cuts

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.”*

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.

Wind Turbine for Uni

Lancaster University has been given the go ahead to erect a wind turbine on land next to the M6. Green Councillors received and replied to over 40 letters of support for the turbine from residents in Scotforth West - thank you to everyone who took the time to write to us.

Street Pride

York Road, Newsham Road, Avondale Road, and Wellington Road have been selected as part of this year's Street Pride service

after local Councillors nominated them for the scheme.

Street Pride complements the Council's normal programme of street cleansing with additional services - including deep cleaning, gully emptying, minor highway repairs, weeding and tree pruning, and sometimes planting of shrubs.

Street Pride involves a partnership between the Council, Police, Probation Service (Community Payback), and local volunteers.

Thank You ...

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

Cllr Chris Coates said: *"I was very pleased to be elected in Scotforth West - an area I already know well through my County Councillor role.*

If anyone has any issues that they would like me to follow up, please do not hesitate to contact me."

Your Scotforth Green Team



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