

People power saves off-peak bus services

- ⌚ County council proposal to cut subsidies on evening, Sunday and bank holiday bus services from May is withdrawn.
- ⌚ Freehold and Ridge no.10 service unchanged for time being.

Green councillors would like to thank all those who responded to the county council consultation in January. Such was the strength of feeling that proposals to reduce off-peak services across the district and county have been withdrawn for further consideration with a promise to negotiate better deals with the bus companies.

Cllr Caroline Jackson commented: "Whilst some will point to less than full buses, the

relatively small savings for the County would have massively raised the travel costs of poorer people including workers doing unsocial hours and young people, and especially for pensioners who currently use the bus for free."



Ridge school crossing patrol to be reinstated

Lancashire county council has advertised for a new school crossing warden on Keswick Rd. Cllr Tim Hamilton-Cox, who has worked to get the council to reverse its earlier decision to withdraw the patrol, commented: "*I'm really pleased that the county council is encouraging parents and their children to take the healthy option and walk to school.*" At the time of writing the vacancy is unfilled: call the council on 01772 535355.



Will nowhere be safe?...City council to consult on greenfield housing land allocation

City council planners are to consult on housing development of open land on the Ridge north of Honister Rd. and Crag Rd., despite Newton Beck being a biological heritage site. This is in addition to consultations on more sites in east and south Lancaster.

The background to the ever-wider attempt to identify land for new housing is a proposed target to build 12,200 new homes by 2031.

Greens say that such a target would create a ‘developers’ free-for-all’ and allow piecemeal destruction of the countryside around Lancaster. Cllr Tim Hamilton-Cox explained:

“Consultants engaged by the city council recommended the 12,200 target. However, in the Green party’s view, it is very difficult to predict demand for the next few years, let alone 20 years. And, if you make different (and we’d argue more realistic) assumptions about population growth, job creation and household size, then you get a different target.”

“Lancaster district’s population grew by 3,800 between the 2001 and 2011 censuses. The assumption used in the target calculations is that it will grow by another 20,000 over 20 years. There were 2,513 houses built in the ten years from 2002-03 to 2012-13. Now the recommended target is to build 6,100 houses every 10 years.”

“We think that housing policy should focus on the need for more affordable housing - and address the council house waiting list - rather than delivering executive homes on greenfield sites.”

Contact Tim (email timhc@gmx.com) if you want to have updates on the Land Allocation process.

Ambleside Rd allotment plot vacancies

Diane Richards, vice-chair of the allotment association, writes: *‘We have some vacant plots available on a lovely site.’* Call her on 60781 or email: amblesideroadallotments@gmail.com

Want to get involved?

Do you want to help with Green party campaigns in your community? By delivering leaflets, helping with litter-picks, or chatting with people you make a valuable contribution. Please contact Caroline - **07958 434549**.

Green councillors press for safe and sustainable transport priorities

Barratt Homes has now indicated that it intends to build 128 homes at the former Nightingale Hall rendering plant, to add to the 320 or so homes planned for the Moor Hospital site. Cllr Andrew Kay said that, *"Greens welcome these brownfield housing developments but their impact on the wider community has to be mitigated by adequate investment in a regular bus service, new off-road walking/cycling route and improved road safety measures - such as new pedestrian crossings of Quernmore Rd. and East Rd."*



Residents' parking scheme visitor permits

In the face of understandable complaints about the way visitor permits are administered and enforced, Cllr Tim Hamilton-Cox

has been pressing for the system to be reviewed to make life easier for residents. *"Changes are being negotiated - I'll let residents know details when I know them."*

Why does Europe matter for a greener future?

Hear from the top two candidates on the Green Euro MEP list, Peter Cranie and Gina Dowding (both pictured above), and ask them your questions. Public Meeting, Tues 8th April, 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House near railway station.

Green action for a better environment

Bulk ward councillors (Caroline and Tim are pictured right) have been out and about over the winter alongside local residents: litter-picking (in Ambleside Rd. woods); helping with tree planting on the Ridge community orchard; and bulb planting at Glebe Court, Langdale Place and Highfield. We've set our sights next on the waste accumulating in the canal rushes. And we're encouraging the dog wardens to issue more fixed penalties for fouling...



Ridge residents form committee to expand work of community centre

Green councillors and Council Housing have worked with residents to form a committee with a focus on expanding the work of the community centre and on improvements to Ridge Square. Cllr Caroline Jackson, who is secretary of the committee, said: "We've already got promises that the shutters on the square will be repainted, as will the interior of the centre. Lighting improvements in the square are coming soon. There are plans to extend the hours the centre is open for young people and the committee intends that the community centre will reach out to all residents."



Greens criticise loss of Altham Meadows beds

The NHS has confirmed its decision to remove the inpatient service for people with severe dementia at Altham Meadows in Morecambe at the end of March and to centralise the service, in 2015, at Blackpool. Cllr Andrew Kay said: "*We are very worried that relatives will be less able to visit patients as the service is moved out of the district. At one point provision of transport for relatives was said to be a possibility but it has been made clear that there is no obligation to provide it.*" NHS managers say that they are investing in better community services so that more people remain in their homes for as long as possible.

County council rethinks disabled parking

A new Traffic Regulation Order for Lancaster's city centre that would have meant the loss of disabled parking spaces behind the museum will not be implemented before further consultation has happened. Cllr Gina Dowding said: "*I welcome the initiative to reduce traffic in the pedestrian zone; but we must make sure that there are suitable parking places for people with limited mobility.*"

Contact your Green councillors on any issue.

Cllr Tim Hamilton-Cox 34223

thamiltoncox@lancaster.gov.uk

Cllr Caroline Jackson 07958 434549

cjackson@lancaster.gov.uk

Cllr Andrew Kay 62788

akay@lancaster.gov.uk