

County does U-turn on crossing

The County Council has decided not to upgrade the zebra crossing on Meeting House Lane to a Puffin crossing (with lights). This was despite this being the top priority of a committee of Lancaster City Councillors. County Councillor Gina Dowding said:

“There were four accidents reported to the Police in just over six years – but many near-misses that didn’t get reported. I believe that upgrading the crossing would have made it safer, and I fear that there could be a severe accident soon.”

Hedge laying success



Around 30 volunteers helped to lay the hedge alongside the Girls’ Grammar School field in Fairfield last month. The event was organised by Green Cllrs Jon Barry and Dave Brookes and the County Council, with help from the Fairfield Association. Funding came from Lancaster Green Spaces and the University’s Wind Turbine Fund. The new hedge should be better for wildlife.

Can we have our shelter back please?

After complaints from local residents, Cllr Jon Barry contacted Council officers about replacing the bus shelter on Willow Lane which was hit by a Stagecoach bus (and then removed because it was unsafe). It will be replaced by the City Council in April (paid for by Stagecoach).

Solar Farm at Middleton?

The City Council has agreed to a detailed study to place a solar farm on 32 acres of former industrial land at Middleton. Marsh Ward activist Rebecca Joy Novell explained: *“Initial reports suggest that the 5 MW farm could provide electricity for 1500 houses and bring in £4m to the City Council over 20 years.”* It is intended to manage the farm in a wildlife-friendly manner to complement the birds and amphibians that live in the area.

- Solar panels on council buildings already produce £55k per year, and are expected to pay for themselves after around 8 years of their 25 year life.

City Council Budget

The City Council has set a budget with a Council Tax increase of 1.99%, equivalent to £3.98 per year on a band D property. Important services have been retained despite a £1.7m funding cut from central government, although £1m has been contributed from balances to achieve this. Council officers are advising that a further £3.5m of savings must be found by 2018. Green councillors supported retention of additional funding for Police Community Support Officers and reducing the number of empty homes in the district, plus a small increase in street cleansing budgets.

Green mayor not to use limo

Cllr Jon Barry has been in the news after he revealed that he will not be using a limousine and chauffeur to ferry him to engagements if he becomes mayor. Cllr Barry is due to become mayor if he is elected as councillor for Marsh Ward in May. Cllr Barry said: *“I take the role of mayor very seriously. However, especially in the current funding crisis, I would rather that the City Council spent money on real services rather than ferrying me around in a big car.”*

Quay cycle track extension

The County Council is proposing to extend the existing cycle path on St Georges Quay along the north side of New Quay Road to the new Riverside Meadows housing development and Luneside Cottages. It is proposed to widen the section of the footway to 3 metres, from the east end of the development to Lune Road using a £21,000 contribution from the developer, to enable it to be converted to a cycle track. Pedestrians will have sole use of the pavement on the other side of the road.

- Green Councillors have finally succeeded in getting a bin on the existing Quay cycle track, next to the river.

West Road Centre

The new hostel on West Road is nearing completion. An open day is taking place on **Thursday 2nd April, 1-3pm**. residents can raise concerns about how the centre will be run. The unit is for residents over the age of 24. There are 6 short-term rooms, 4 medium term cluster-flats and 5 self-contained apartments. The idea is that residents will be supported so that they can learn to live on their own. The centre will always be staffed by at least two people.

Westbourne Road Parking

Councillors have been trying to get the County Council to introduce measures to sort out dangerous parking on Westbourne Road, after overspill from the residents' parking scheme in Fairfield. However, progress is very slow. If you would like to add weight to this issue you may wish to email the County council highways service lhscustomerservice@lancashire.gov.uk or write to the District Lead Officer, County Highways Lancaster, Palatine Hall, Dalton Square.

Support for NHS

Green Party general election candidate Chris Coates (right) is supporting an NHS bill that is designed to restore the NHS as an accountable public service. This would include abolishing the purchaser-provider split and joining-up health and social care services. For more details see www.nhsbill2015.org.

Meeting House Paving

Loose paving stones on Meeting House Lane have been reported numerous times by councillors and the public. Councillors are pressing for action.

Anyone for tennis?

Lancaster Tennis Club in Lune Road is holding an Open Day on Saturday April 11th (2pm – 4pm) for anyone interested in trying out tennis.

There will be special coaching sessions on Thursday April 2nd followed by regular after-school coaching sessions starting on Monday April 13th.

Anyone interested in junior tennis should contact Pat Clelland on 311737 or patriciaclelland@gmail.com



City Council Elections and General Election on May 7th

On May 7th, voters will have 2 ballot papers. One is for the General Election, to elect your MP. The other is to elect 2 City Councillors for Marsh Ward. You don't have to vote for the same party in both elections.

The Green Party candidates for the local elections in Marsh Ward are Jon Barry and Rebecca Joy Novell.

Jon lives on Willow Lane and has represented the Marsh area for the last 16 years. He has been responsible for many local initiatives. For example, he was prominent in raising funds to build the Marsh Community Centre in 2002, and is still a trustee today. He fought hard to preserve the embankment on Long Marsh Lane and the green space around Furness St.



Rebecca was born in Lancaster and now lives part of the time on West Road. She is a qualified social worker and has worked with homeless children, young people who offend, and victims of sexual exploitation. She is passionate about reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour. She also works with kids at the Marsh Community Centre, a job which she really enjoys.



Marsh Community Centre Fundraiser

Samantha Brand will be running the Great North Run in September, in aid of the MCC. Please support her at: www.justgiving.com/Samantha-Brand

Sycamore Grove Play Area

After a meeting between Jon Barry and Council Housing officers, the play area at Sycamore Grove on the Marsh Estate is to be improved. Some of the broken equipment will be replaced, the remaining equipment is to be painted. Weeds will be removed from the area.

How to contact us

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