



No 118W: Liberal Democrats - keeping in touch with you *all year round*

Flawed County and District Budgets

Gloucestershire

Liberal Democrats have exposed the County Council's Tory budget as a sham. Whilst on the surface it appears to invest an additional £16M in services, in fact it cuts £13M and reinvests only £4M. In the face of Liberal Democrat pressure the Tories scrapped plans to raise the price of Meals on Wheels and to charge for internet use in libraries. A manifesto pledge to invest an extra £4M in road maintenance every year has been broken, said local county councillor John Cordwell, with work on highways down by well over £1M in the coming year. There is also a damaging cut of £230k in the Fire and Rescue service.

Whilst Adult Care is the county's poorest performing service, investment to improve it has been set at less than a one per cent increase in spending.

Stroud

District Councillor Paul Smith has told local parish and town councils that Liberal Democrats on the District Council opposed any increase in council tax this year saying that this could be avoided if the council spent some of the money it had squirreled away in recent years.

CCTV is to be introduced into Wotton Town Centre. The Town Council has decided on a contractor and will soon be approaching owners of buildings and District Council planners to get permission to site the cameras. It should be in place in the summer.

Village Agents

In a pilot project set up by the County Council and the Rural Community Council, locally recruited Village Agents are intended to provide older people in our rural communities with high-quality information, promote access to a wide range of services, carry out a series of practical checks and identify unmet needs within the community.

The Village Agent for North Nibley is Richard Bellis who can be contacted on 07798 837582 or via the county helpdesk on 01452 426868.

Working for You



Paul Smith is defending his place on Stroud District Council on May 3rd.



Paul Smith

Chair of the District Council's Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, Paul is also well known for his work on the Wotton Community Sports Foundation committee, developing the site at New Road. He chairs the Synwell Playing Fields Management Committee, and serves on the Blue Coat School Governors, the Swimming Pool Redevelopment Working Party and the Wotton Youth Liaison

Committee. He is a Trustee of the Stroud Citizens' Advice Bureau with responsibility for IT.

Paul is also a member of the Town Council working party to introduce CCTV into the town centre. He was also very much involved in retaining Wotton Post Office after Tesco closed the branch.

Living and working in the local community Paul is on hand to deal with problems from residents in North Nibley and Wotton.

Paul looks forward to our support in May to allow his work for us to continue.

Town and Parish Elections

All 13 places on Wotton Town Council and all 7 in North Nibley are also up for election on May 3rd.

Postal Votes

● If you are an existing postal voter, this year you need to fill in a new application form. The District Council should have sent you one. If not, apply now!

● Anyone can have a postal vote. If you may not be able to get to the polling station — a last-minute holiday, illness, disability or bad weather on the day perhaps - apply now. We know of a number of people who couldn't vote last year for these reasons and could easily have changed the result.

Forms for postal and proxy votes are available from Stroud District Council, including via their website, and from us: either ring 01453 842439 or go to www.cordwell.clara.net



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Kerbing at Well Hill makes a significant improvement to the appearance of Tresham.

SPORTS FOUNDATION

A well-attended public meeting was held last month by the Wotton Community Sports Foundation at KLB School. Its purpose was to publicise the significant progress made to date and to let people know what was planned for the future and seek their views. Outline planning permission has been granted for the whole scheme and the first rugby pitch has been completed. Fund-raising is going well. The next stage of the project will include construction of the access road, a community room and changing rooms, football pitches, a sports training ground and a BMX track.



- Keep up to date with the project on:
<http://www.wcsf.org.uk>

Watch Your Speed!

We are told the new vehicle actuated sign (VAS) in Wickwar Road will soon be working. In a change of plan it is to be solar powered, which will be good for the environment both in terms of using renewable electricity and in not having to dig up the road to lay a cable.



- Most children hit by vehicles travelling at 30 mph die; at 20 mph most survive; slow down!

CCTV

A CCTV system is to be introduced into Wotton Town Centre. The Town Council has decided on a contractor and will soon be approaching owners of buildings and District Council planners to get permission to site the cameras. It is hoped to have it in place during the summer.

Village Agents

In a pilot project set up by the County Council and the Rural Community Council, locally recruited Village Agents are intended to provide older people in our rural communities with high-quality information, promote access to a wide range of services, carry out a series of practical checks and identify unmet needs within the community.

Your local Village Agent is Marion who can be contacted on 07810630134 or via the county helpdesk on 01452 426868.

Lorry Problems

Concern over large lorries trying to drive through Tresham was raised at a recent meeting of Hillesley and Tresham Parish Council. County Councillor John Cordwell has taken up the problem with Gloucestershire Highways who hope to provide signs to discourage drivers from using this route.

GREEN QUIZ

1. Recycling one aluminium can saves enough energy to provide power to your television for how long?
2. True or false: Two 50-watt bulbs produce the same amount of light as one 100-watt bulb.
3. Who sang the words "It's Not Easy Being Green"?
4. A typical British family of four emits 4.2 tonnes of CO₂ from their house each year and 4.4 tonnes from their car. How much is emitted from the production, packaging and distribution of the food they eat?

For answers: e-mail us, visit John's website or phone us on 01453 842439.

ENERGY AUDIT

On the proposal of John Cordwell, Wotton Town Council's Special Purposes Committee is to consider ways in which the council can reduce its energy use.

LOCAL HEROES

The annual search is on for people eligible for the Gloucestershire Medal for Courage. Usually one medal is awarded for an act of bravery and the other for moral courage in the face of severe personal disability or illness. Several local people have previously received awards. Telephone 01452 425094 for a nomination form. The closing date for their return is 14th May.

THE FUTURE OF POST OFFICES

A Liberal Democrat motion to the County Council called on the County to respond to Government consultation on the future of the Post Office network. The Conservatives were going to refer the motion to a committee, missing the consultation deadline, but this was stopped. A unanimous vote underlined the council's concern at the negative effect any closures would have on local communities and on the provision of services to the county as a whole.

⊗ The Government is proposing that 95% of the population in rural areas should be within 3 miles of a post office. Not much use to someone without transport and not very sustainable for those with!

Resurfacing The Rope Walk

This highly-used route will be closed for the work to be done. It will take up to two days and is planned to happen during the school summer holidays.

BOOK FAIR

We are holding our 10th book fair on March 17th at the Chipping Clubroom, Wotton, between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. If you have any books, videos, CDs, or DVDs you wish to dispose of, please get in touch; we will collect. Please ring June on 842439.

Thank you to everyone who has given us books previously or supported our sales.

ACTION SHEET - Tell us what needs doing!

If you know of a local problem which needs attention, if you have a good idea for our area, or want to comment on something you have read here, please get in touch with your local Liberal Democrat action team, using this space to have your say, or by e-mailing us.

Name.....

Address.....

Phone..... e-mail.....

Your opinion:

CAN YOU HELP US?

helping deliver Focus (just a few helps!)

displaying a poster at elections

making a donation

join the ever-growing number of local members (minimum £6)

TO HELP YOU

Please return to John Cordwell,
13 Haw Street, Wotton-under-Edge
or to Cotswold Liberal Democrats
Freepost SWC 5108, Cirencester GL7 2ZZ



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Liberal Democrats

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