

Bradford on Avon

Spring 2023

FOCUS



From your **Liberal Democrat team**
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LIB DEM push for action on sewage waste

Wiltshire Conservative MPs recently voted through a new target which allows water companies to dump harmful substances into rivers until 2038. Under the Environment Act the government is obliged to bring forward new binding environmental targets. However, the Conservative government, which includes Chippenham's MP, Michelle Donelan, chose to give water companies 15 more years to reduce harmful phosphates being dumped in Britain's rivers.

Phosphates are naturally occurring minerals found in human waste and can seriously harm the health of our rivers. In the last two years water companies in England dumped raw sewage 775,568 times. They now have until 2038 to reduce the phosphates dumped by 80%.

Liberal Democrat MPs voted against these weak targets in an attempt to force the government to set far stronger targets. Lib Dem

Parliamentary candidate Sarah Gibson (right) said, *"This is a pathetic target which allows Wessex Water, as our local water company, to continue dumping sewage into the Avon and its tributaries in Chippenham, Corsham, Lacock, Bradford on Avon and Box. This is a betrayal of people right across the Chippenham constituency who value our rivers and rightly want tougher action to ensure clean water. I have written to the Executive Director of Operations at Wessex Water to ask about breaches in their current environmental permits at these points."*

Please back Sarah's "Stop the Sewage Dumping" petition at:
www.chippenhamlibdems.org.uk/campaigns/sewage



Supporting our town centre

Lib Dem town councillors have led the effort by the town council to support our valuable town centre independent businesses through the difficult winter months.

This initiative involved:

- ✎ A flyer to every house promoting our independent shops and the revived 'Shop Local' scheme,
- ✎ Saturday morning buskers in the Shambles and Lamb Yard,

- ✎ Improved signage to help visitors explore our town centre,
- ✎ Keeping the Christmas lights on longer, making the town more inviting through the dark winter evenings.

Town Councillor Katie Vigar pictured with new signage said: *"Residents and visitors alike love our town centre with its independent shops which have so much to offer. We all know times are tough and that if we want to keep our shops, we need to back them. These initiatives show our determination to do more to help."*

Spending your money wisely

In January, the Lib Dem led town council voted unanimously to approve a 6% increase in the precept (the tax paid to the town council) for the 2023-24 financial year. Lib Dem Councillor Sam Blackwell, chair of the Resources Committee, said *"In light of the current cost of living crisis, we have sought to minimise any additional burden on household finances while responding to increases in overheads and progressing key projects to improve our town. One area of growth in the budget relates to a programme of upgrades to play areas across the town, ensuring these are the engaging and exciting places that our young residents deserve"*.

ON CONSERVATIVE RUN WILTSHIRE COUNCIL...

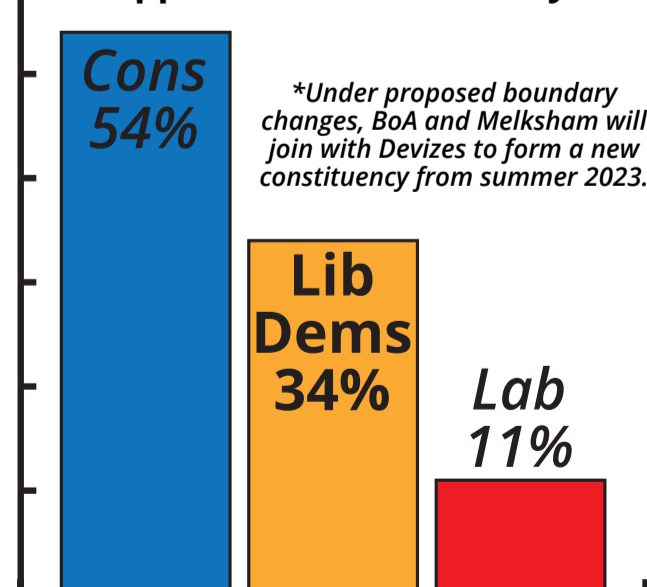
Lib Dem councillors have opposed Conservative plans to cut key services affecting lonely and vulnerable people in Wiltshire Council's latest budget. Wiltshire Conservatives have added to the cost-of-living crisis by rejecting Liberal Democrat proposals to;

- ✎ Allow free parking for disabled drivers with blue badges,
- ✎ Set up locally controlled funds for volunteer-run lunch clubs for elderly residents and friendship clubs for disabled people to help those that really need it,
- ✎ Invest in the Council's pot to support those cannot pay their council tax.

While cutting services, the Conservatives are also putting council taxpayers' money into a series of different "reserve pots" that are already at record highs.

"The Council spends our money. It needs to do so efficiently, wisely and well. Keeping enough cash in the bank to cover emergencies is good sense. I support that. But I cannot support hoarding money while reducing services that support vulnerable people who need our help now, it is just plain wrong," said Wiltshire Lib Dem Councillor Sarah Gibson.

General Election 2019 result in Chippenham Constituency*



JOIN THE LIB DEMS AT: libdems.org.uk/join-local

All things traffic...



Tim Trimble with the banner he asked the town council to put up to encourage motorists not to allow their engines to idle when they are stationary, thus reducing our air quality problems.

Modelling a new traffic system – modelling for a new traffic scheme for Bradford on Avon will begin shortly. Town councillors have agreed the funding for this following a visit to the town by the new Wiltshire Council cabinet member for Highways and Transport, Cllr Caroline Thomas on 17th February. She confirmed that the town council would be required to contribute two thirds of the total cost of £50,000 to perform traffic modelling, which Wiltshire Highways need to progress a new traffic management scheme. It was also confirmed that the town council will be involved in setting the specifications and that when the results are known, the town council will be responsible for consultation with residents and for making a recommendation on what measures to progress, when funding is available. Councillor Tim Trimble said, *“Modelling is crucial to ensure that any change addresses the priorities of our ‘Future of Transport’ consultation – improved pedestrian and cyclist safety, reduced traffic volume and reduced pollution. It is disappointing that the town council has to pay towards what is a Wiltshire Highways responsibility, but the key thing is that finally progress is being made and for the first time in many years, we have productive engagement with Wiltshire Council on this key issue.”*

The Co-Cars survey got, a very strong, 277 responses. Almost 70% showed a high level of interest (score 7 or over on a scale of 1 to 10) in the shared use electric car scheme, and 84% of respondents said yes or maybe to a shared use electric bike club. The most popular locations for both schemes were St. Margaret’s Hall or the Station Car Park. The town council now awaits a proposal from Co-Cars to see how we might be able to progress these schemes.

Better electric bus service - 228 responses to the survey. The most popular destinations within the town are the town centre, Sainsbury’s, the health centre/station, and most popular destinations outside the town are Bath, Trowbridge, Frome and Melksham. There were also some very positive comments about the possibility of bringing more regular, zero emission buses to the town. We are working to finalise the analysis of the results and continue to liaise with other West Wiltshire/Somerset stakeholders as well as Option247 and the Big Lemon bus company.

Marked footpath in St. Margaret’s car park – at the request of Tim Trimble, the marked footpath was added as part of the car park resurfacing work to improve pedestrian safety around the hall.



No Entry at top of Whitehill - this has recently been put in to prevent vehicles (cyclists can still use it) using Whitehill as a cut through to the town centre, a situation which had previously caused problems at the bottom of the hill, including some reported road-rage incidents.

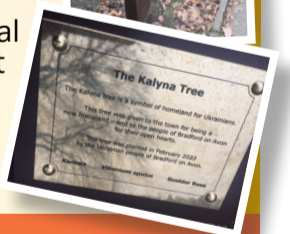
News in brief

A new town council noticeboard has now been installed at the top of Whitehill as well as one at Poulton playing field, as part of the Lib Dem led town council effort to help everyone hear about town council meetings and events. Another way to know more is to sign up for the new town council email newsletter



<https://bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk/bradford-on-avon-town-council-is-launching-a-new-email-newsletter/>

Town councillors Sam Blackwell and Katie Vigar supported the local Ukrainian community with their recent event to mark the anniversary of the Russian invasion including the planting of Kalyna trees given by the Ukrainian residents to thank the town for welcoming them. A choir sang the Ukrainian anthem and pancakes were served, with £1800 raised for charities supplying medical and protective equipment in Ukraine, as well as to provide social and educational activities for local Ukrainians.



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PLEASE FEEL WELCOME TO CONTACT US WITH ANY CONCERNS.

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Councillor Tim Trimble has worked with Wiltshire Council drainage officers to get the ditch alongside Leigh Park Road cleared of rubbish, overgrown vegetation and silt which had accumulated over the years and which had previously led to flooding of properties on the north side of the road.



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