

Green Matters

in Bridport

Community News from your Local Green Party - February 2017



Greens fight cuts to local NHS Services



Green campaigners with Town Cllrs Kelvin Clayton and Julian Jones protest against the proposed NHS cuts

Kelvin Clayton and local Green campaigners are standing up against the proposed cuts in local NHS services. They attended the public consultation on service changes in Bridport on 9th January to inform people of the very real impact of the proposals, and to protest over the cuts.

Kelvin is deeply concerned that the current review of health services in Dorset is being dressed in language that makes it seem like services will be improved. They are not being improved, **they are in fact being cut**. Local NHS Services are being cut because the **government are not investing the necessary money to keep them fit for purpose**. At risk across Dorset are the **closure or downsizing** of GP Surgeries and Health Centres, A&E Departments, Emergency Maternity, Children's Services and Community Hospitals.

Of greatest concern to people in West Dorset, particularly in the Bridport area, is the **transfer of emergency maternity services and hospital beds for children to Bournemouth and Poole**. This is a distance of almost 50 miles, approx. 1 hour 15 minutes journey by car.

In an emergency or critical care situation **lives are saved by accessing treatment within the 'golden hour'**. Kelvin doubts this journey time can be met and questions the travel time proposed in the consultation document. "Currently 95% of people in Dorset are within a 30 minute journey of acute services, but this will change if the proposed cuts go ahead" warns Kelvin. **"With our ambulance service already under huge pressure, the time it will take to reach the scene and transport the patient to Bournemouth hospital even with a 'blue-light' will put lives at risk"**.

As a community we need to say "enough!" As part of the campaign to save our local services the Green Party is helping to organise a **public meeting on 8th February**. We urge you to make your concerns heard before the consultation closes on 28th February. Go to: www.csr.dorsetsvision.nhs.uk and click on CSR Questionnaire.

PUBLIC MEETING

Our Local NHS - What's at risk?

Weds 8th February

7:30pm (doors open 7pm)

Bridport Town Hall

Speakers include:

- **Dr. Jon Orrell**, Local GP & Green Councillor
- **Claudia Sorrin**, Labour Party & Save Kingfisher Ward Campaigner
- (invited) Clinical Commissioning Group

All Welcome.

Please come along and join the debate.



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Sensible outcome for Rampisham Solar Farm

We welcome the news that Rampisham Down, a rare precious grassland and wildlife site, has been protected without stopping the solar development. We need such opportunities to create local jobs.

The 25MW Rampisham Solar Farm had been planned for Rampisham Down threatening a Site of Special Scientific Interest. However, the developers have put forward an **alternative more suitable site** across the road which will safeguard the wildlife on the original site. This decision is a **winning outcome for our local environment** – protecting our wonderful Dorset wildlife and securing much needed renewable energy.

Activist and Green Town Councillor Kelvin Clayton is pleased with the outcome and really welcomes investment in our local economy. And Kelvin says more needs to be done, “**There are so many more opportunities in renewable energy that the Conservative government and our local Councils are missing.** We know renewables bring highly-skilled, well paid jobs to the area, yet the **Conservatives blocked opportunities by prematurely cutting solar subsidies.**”



Saved: Rare and precious grasslands at Rampisham Down

“They have done everything they can to stop the development of onshore wind which is actually the **cheapest source of electricity** in the UK and **helps to reduce household energy bills.** These industries are our future. **We need decision-makers in the County Council who will lead on this,** not stand in the way of progress.” If you agree with Kelvin please get in touch: westandsouthdorset@greenparty.org.uk

“What goes up must come down” The damaging effects of Sky Lantern and Balloon release



Fun at first, but misery for animals

A recent report from a Cornish Pollution group highlights the problems associated with the release of sky lanterns and helium balloons. They recorded debris collected on beaches in Cornwall over a 6 month period in 2016 and found 2000 pieces of balloon large enough to present a danger to **wildlife and the environment.** Seabirds can get **tangled up** in the debris and animals such as turtles can **mistake them for food sources.**

The Marine Conservation Society say that **livestock are also at risk.** They are being killed from eating degraded lanterns which are accidentally picked up by harvest machinery and put into winter feeds. They also pose a **fire hazard to crops in summer months and to thatched roof properties.** In April 2016 a sky lantern landed on a Dorset Nature reserve near Wareham starting a **major gorse fire.** We need to raise awareness.

Green Town Councillor, Julian Jones said “We used to kill animals for entertainment, but now, indirectly, we are doing it in pursuit of a short thrill. Many local Councils have banned these releases and we should follow suit to **protect wildlife and farm animals**”.



Residents: Improving local public transport is a top priority



Residents are concerned about cuts to bus services

Even for those who have a car (and 26% of households in Bridport don't), we should **have the choice to drive or not, to reduce pollution and dependency on our cars.**

Green Town Councillor Julian Jones said **“Our bus network is vital to keep our towns and villages connected. What the Conservatives disregard are the hidden costs when people can't get to work, get to hospital appointments, or just get out in the evening to enjoy our local nightlife.”** Julian explains that nationally the Green Party stands for public ownership of our trains and buses, and this is gaining a lot of public support. But thinking locally Julian suggests **“Even under the current system of bus operation Dorset County Council must do more to improve access and availability.”**

Traffic-free progress

Some readers may be aware that Green Town Councillors started a campaign to **pedestrianise top of South Street, Bridport.** A residents' survey conducted by Green Cllr Julian Jones in September found that **72% of respondents supported an initial six-month trial of the traffic-free scheme.**

Many people **recognise the benefits** of a town centre where it is safe and pleasant to walk, cycle, shop and socialise, **where the car is not king.** If implemented, we also believe the scheme will be a **boost for local businesses,** when people are better able to spend leisure time in and around South Street.



More business and pleasure when South St is car-free

County Council Highways Department attended a meeting with Town Councillors on Thursday 19th Jan to **discuss the options for the scheme.** Implementation will require the **cooperation of other political parties on the Council which Julian and Kelvin are working to achieve.** We'll keep you posted!

Did you Know?

Bridport elected its 1st Green Party Town Councillors, **Kelvin Clayton** and **Julian Jones** in May 2015.

They are very **active Councillors,** represent residents' interests and **work hard to improve life in our community.** **Want to raise a concern or tell us about an idea?**

Please let us know if there is **something you want to share or a campaign you are interested in.** You can contact us at: westandsouthdorset@greenparty.org.uk Or, contact one of your Green Town Councillors with any issue that you think they could help you with.

Kelvin Clayton: kelvin.clayton@icloud.com Tel: 07952 179850

Julian Jones: julian.jsl@phonecoop.coop Tel: (01308) 428346

Kelvin shares his thoughts on Green matters in his blog: <https://greenthoughts.me>

Why Bridport needs a County Councillor like Kelvin Clayton



Youth Centre campaigner Kelvin Clayton

The most recent Dorset Citizen's Panel survey of Bridport residents found that **only 16% of us feel we can influence the County Council's decisions**. Kelvin really believes this needs to change and better decisions that affect our lives need to be made.

Kelvin strongly believes in **more opportunities for young people**. He has been **central to the campaign to save the Bridport Youth Centre** after Dorset County Council decided to cut funding for it last year. He is a co-founder and **trustee of the newly formed charity that has kept the Youth Centre running**. He organises the 100 Club that raises funds to help pay for the youth centre's operations.

However, there is much more to be done to **improve the prospects in our local area**, especially for young people. Kelvin says "I know from working with local young people as a careers adviser that sadly there are very few opportunities for them here. **We need to boost the development of Bridport's entrepreneurial local economy**, including support for start-up options and small web-based businesses. I **will**

fight to get training and apprenticeship opportunities into the area; I will fight to make Bridport a place where young people want to stay or return to, for example after university." Kelvin also **volunteers at the Bridport Job Club**. He uses his Careers Adviser experience to **help local people back into work**, and to deal with the harsh realities of the system.

An alternative voice on the County Council

Greens are not like the other main parties; we are an **alternative fresh voice standing up for people and the community**. We need Councillors who will **challenge decisions like the one to close the Youth Centre**. If you elect Kelvin he and the local Green Party will make themselves as accessible as possible to influence the County Council on your behalf. At the May election **please vote for Kelvin so that he can continue his work fighting hard for the services and facilities Bridport deserves**.

Vote Green, Get Green

Greens are becoming a popular choice in Dorset and Weymouth has shown **if you vote Green you can get Green**. Weymouth's Rodwell residents voted for a Green County Councillor in November 2015 and elected a Green Borough Councillor last May.

In December **Conservative Councillor Claudia Moore took the decision to move to the Greens**. Claudia said "I became increasingly impressed with the **hard work of the local Green Party, the determination of their Councillors and their continuous campaigning for residents**. I felt a closer alignment to their core values".



Weymouth: Green Party members welcome Cllr Moore

Green Matters in Agriculture Open Meeting

Tues 28th February, 7.30pm Mountfield, Bridport

Organic Farmer and Green Party Agriculture spokesperson Oliver Dowding will give a talk at our next open monthly meeting.

The Green Party believes **far more support for local and rural business is needed**. This is **not being delivered by the current government who are focused on propping up big business** in every sector.

Oliver says "The Green Party has a **long history of support for family farmers**, who are currently struggling with the turmoil resulting from **extreme retail pressures**, made worse by both highly volatile international finance and commodity markets."

If you are interested in learning more about our approach to agriculture or Oliver's experience as an organic farmer please contact us to reserve a seat!