

# Cabot News

Serving Kingsdown, Cotham, Brandon Hill, Redcliffe and the City Centre

Edited by Cllr Anne White

## WINTER 2003



Thirty years of service!

# Axe the Tax!



**THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS** are campaigning for a fair alternative to the Council Tax. We want to see a local Income Tax that is charged according to someone's ability to pay.

**Stephen Williams**, Lib Dem Parliamentary Candidate for Bristol West said, "The Council Tax is grossly unfair. A pensioner couple with a low income and modest savings could be paying exactly the same Council Tax as the high-earning dual-income young couple next door, just because they live in similar properties. Our alternative of local Income Tax would **SLASH** the bills of most pensioners and others on low incomes."



Council Tax was introduced by the Conservative government in 1992 as a rush replacement for the Poll Tax, the hated tax that had been brought in a few years earlier by Michael Howard! In the last ten years, Council Tax bills have rocketed, with Bristol having one of the highest taxes in the country. Paying the tax has caused real hardship for those with modest incomes. A local Income Tax would tax a percentage of a person's income so the burden would be spread more fairly. The poorest in society would pay little or no local Income Tax and would not be caught up in the bureaucratic nightmare of the current Council Tax Benefit system.

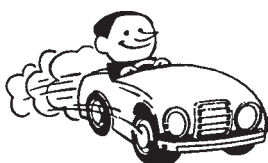
**Cllr Anne White** said, "In my time as a councillor I have helped dozens of people who have had difficulty with the Council Tax system. Bristol City Council made matters worse by running up an enormous backlog of Council Tax Benefit claims. Cllr Barry Dodd, the new Lib Dem Executive Member in charge of city finances is working hard to improve the service."

**Stephen Williams** concluded, "Council Tax is unfairly charged, cumbersome to collect and enforcement can be unduly oppressive. It must go and local Income Tax is the fair and efficient alternative."

**JOIN THE CAMPAIGN - RETURN THE PETITION SLIP OVERLEAF!**

## Kingsdown residents parking scheme update

The details of the Kingsdown residents parking scheme will be advertised in the New Year. Residents will have 6 weeks in which to make comments. If council officers are not able to resolve objections the scheme will come back before the Council Cabinet to decide whether it should be implemented or abandoned. The charges will be as previously advertised, at £50 for the first car and £100 for the second.



↑ **Axe the Tax!** Cllr Anne White (right) with Cllr Barry Dodd (Cotham Ward), Bristol City Council Leader Cllr Barbara Janke (Clifton Ward) and Bristol West Parliamentary Candidate, Stephen Williams. The Liberal Democrats want to replace the unfair Council Tax with a local Income Tax, related to ability to pay.

## In at the deep end...



**SINCE LABOUR LOST POWER** in May 2003, Bristol City Council has been run by a three-party coalition. No one party has a majority and decisions can only be reached by consensus between at least two political parties. The current rainbow Cabinet has three Lib Dem, three Labour and two Conservative members. Lib Dem Cllr Anne White was selected by the Liberal Democrats to take over the environment, transport and leisure portfolio.

Anne says, "It is quite a challenge as the department provides a diverse range of services including libraries, transport, crematoria, allotments, museums, parks and the youth service. The position however has no key decision making powers because no one party has a majority. Every significant issue has to come before the eight member Cabinet. This is a marked difference to before May when each Cabinet member was responsible for a portfolio and could make major strategic decisions without reference to anyone else."

"The greatest test of the three-party cabinet will be the setting of the Council's Budget. The Government are laying down strict rules about how much money is spent on Education and Social Services, meaning less for other valuable services and less flexibility to manage the budget and keep Council Tax rises to a minimum."

Cabinet meets monthly in public at 4.00pm and anyone can attend these meetings and speak. Papers are available on the Council website ([www.bristol-city.gov.uk](http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk)). Hard copies of the reports are available from the Council House and the Central Library.

**Lib Dems... the only realistic alternative to Labour**

# Liberal Democrats - Action for Bristol



↑ Cllr Anne White in Cotham Road where residents and school children will benefit from new road safety measures

## Boost for road safety

CLLR ANNE WHITE, Bristol Cabinet member responsible for roads and transport, has won approval for an extra £0.5 million to be spent on road safety measures. The funds will be spread across the city at sites where there have been serious injuries over a three year period.

Meanwhile, work has been approved at **Cotham Road** where where speeding cars are a danger to pedestrians and where there has been a fatality. Work will begin soon on a 'build-out' to narrow the road near the junction with **Oxford Street** and the rear entrance to **Cotham School**.

Anne is also working with local residents and neighbouring Lib Dem Cllr Barry Dodd to see whether a 20 mile an hour zone can be introduced at the main entrance of **Cotham School** and also near **Ss. Peter and Paul Primary School** in Aberdeen Road.



## New city bus centre routes

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL is planning major improvements to bus services linking different parts of the City Centre.

Once all the funding agreements have been finalised, the current services 905 and 500 will be enhanced. The 905 will provide a new 'figure-of-eight' service running from Tollgate Car Park at the bottom of the M32 to Harbourside with stops at Broadmead, the Bus Station, Bristol Royal Infirmary, City of Bristol College, the @Bristol Centre, College Green and The Centre. The 500 service will have more buses and take in an extended route around the Harbour from Baltic Wharf to Temple Meads, The Centre and Hotwells.

Cllr Anne White is delighted with the proposed services, "These will make a major contribution to a 21st century sustainable city. An integrated public transport system is a major aim for the Lib Dems, both locally and nationally."



↑ Cllr Anne White with Baltic Wharf residents, Lena and Mark Wright, looking forward to a better bus service soon

## Museum of Bristol on the way?

A BID has gone into the Heritage Lottery Fund for £14 million, to contribute to the cost of a new Museum of Bristol. The museum will be located in the building that currently houses the Industrial Museum.

The Lib Dems have always been keen that there should be a 'warts-and-all' portrayal of Bristol's contribution to the world, including issues such as slavery and the harsh conditions under which ordinary Bristolians worked in order to power the city's wealth creation. The outcome of the bid will be known early in 2004.

## Harbourside Horror!

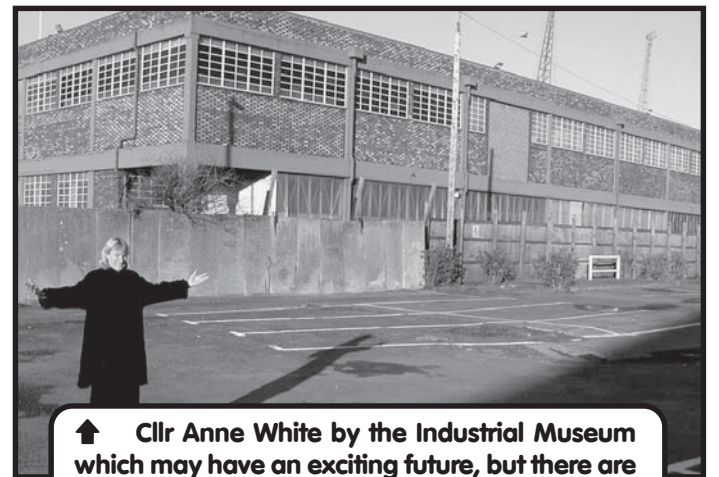
RESIDENTS ON SPIKE ISLAND have been shown a model for the proposed development on the land behind the Industrial Museum. The former railway land was sold earlier this year to a Birmingham developer. They have appointed consultants to engage with key stakeholders including residents before making a formal planning application. The model will be on display in the Architecture Centre (next to the Arnolfini) from 15th December 2003 to 18th January 2004.

The model includes a mixed development with houses, retail and commercial use. However, the buildings are nearly twice the height recommended in the Harbourside Brief. The model includes a ten storey block with other eight storey

buildings when the Brief says a maximum of three at the waterfront then four and five storeys. The density of the development is also nearly double that recommended with 650 units proposed rather than 360. Bristol residents fought hard to prevent this scale of development on the adjacent site, Merchants Landing, which has been built to a human scale.

Anne White says, "A scheme of this intensity will be overbearing and totally out of keeping with the Docks Conservation area. Not only will it impair the landscape but it will create a massive increase in pressure in demand for car parking and undoubtedly generate much more traffic on and off Spike Island."

Please write to Anne White using the tear-off slip below and tell her what you think of the Wapping Wharf development.



↑ Cllr Anne White by the Industrial Museum which may have an exciting future, but there are also other controversial plans for Wapping Wharf

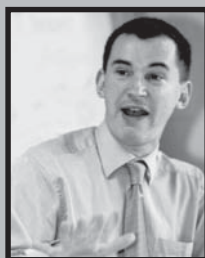
## Contacting your local Cabot Lib Dem Team...

[www.bristolwest-libdems.org.uk](http://www.bristolwest-libdems.org.uk)



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## My problem, query or suggestion is :



NAME ..... TEL .....

ADDRESS .....

E-MAIL .....

I want to help Anne make a difference in Cabot by...

Delivering Cabot News

Making a donation

Joining the Lib Dems

Helping in other ways

## AXE THE COUNCIL TAX

Council Tax is unfair because it is not based on ability to pay. We call upon the Labour Government to :

- 1) SCRAP THE COUNCIL TAX
- 2) REPLACE IT WITH A FAIR LOCAL TAX, RELATED TO ABILITY TO PAY.

Name :

Address :

Cabot Lib Dems, FREEPOST NAT4305, Bristol, BS2 8FA

Please return to Cabot Lib Dems, FREEPOST NAT4305, Bristol, BS2 8FA

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