

Cabot News

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

Edited by Cabot Cllr Anne White

MARCH 2004

Thirty years of service!



LABOUR KILL THE TRAM



£1.5million was set aside from the sale of the airport to progress works on the tram. All three political parties in the cabinet agreed to delay spending any further monies until agreement was reached with the surrounding local authorities. As traffic congestion affects greater Bristol and with a large proportion of the commuters living outside the city boundary this made prudent sense. However, Labour proposed using all the money to make a one off reduction in next year's Council Tax; the Conservatives failed to oppose them. **Labour's actions make it quite clear that they no longer support a light rail network for the City.** Meanwhile Nottingham's new tram has just opened for business!

Museum of Bristol to get the go ahead

In February 2004, the Heritage Lottery Fund approved an initial development grant of £853,000 and set aside £10 Million to fund the project. The Industrial Museum will be converted into the Museum of Bristol, and will tell the story of the city's fascinating history. The total cost will be in the region of £18 Million, and the Council will have to show how it will provide this shortfall. Some funds will come from a leisure levy on the Wapping Wharf development site.

Wapping Wharf Development

Local residents and the Council have made it quite clear to the new owners of the Old Gaol site that 8 storey residential blocks will not be acceptable and stray beyond the Planning brief for the area. The owners, Umberslade, have been asked to come back with some different options for public consultation. "I hope that a scheme can be agreed which meets the Brief and satisfies the local community", says Cabot Councillor **Anne White**, "especially now that the Heritage Lottery Fund have given the go ahead to work up a viable scheme for the Industrial Museum to become the Museum of Bristol."

Hostel on St Georges Road

Jepson Housing Association have put in a planning application to create a young persons hostel at St Georges House. Residents and Councillor Anne White have objected to the hostel. However, the Housing Association are denying that a hostel is a change of use from the current status as Council owned flats. St George's House consists of one bed flats for single people and is badly in need of renovation. "Thankfully, the Planning Department agree that this is a change use" says Anne White, "which means that unless the Housing Association put in a fresh application they will not be allowed to set up a hostel."



↑ **No to university Fees!** Bristol students campaigning with Bath MP Don Foster (centre-left) and Bristol West parliamentary candidate Stephen Williams (centre-right)

Fees pledge betrayal by Labour MP

BRISTOL WEST'S LABOUR MP ABSTAINED IN THE KEY VOTE ON STUDENT TOP UP FEES. Despite being trailed as a potential rebel, Valerie Davey declined to join the 73 Labour MPs who rebelled against the government. The government scraped home with a majority of just five. All 54 Liberal Democrat MPs voted against the government's plans.

Stephen Williams, the runner up to Mrs Davey at the 2001 general election and now Lib Dem Prospective MP for Bristol West, is angry about her voting record. "At the last election Mrs Davey accused me of scare mongering when I expressed scepticism at Labour's manifesto pledge not to bring in top up fees. Well now Labour have broken that pledge and Mrs Davey has let down thousands of students in Bristol West by not standing up for them."

Tuition fees will now triple to £3,000 a year. It is estimated that students will leave university with debts in excess of £20,000. Bristol University already has a problem attracting students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The perception that Bristol is an expensive and elitist place to study will make this worse. Stephen Williams is a Bristol University graduate himself. He knows that an excellent university like Bristol needs extra resources if it is to thrive in the future. But he doesn't think fees are the answer.

"Why impose a flat rate tax on all new graduates just because they have a degree? This breaks an important principle that education at all levels should be open to everyone who has the intellectual ability to benefit, rather than the financial ability to fund the cost. Fees also take no account of the huge variations in incomes post graduation, for instance between a teacher and a banker. A fairer solution would be an extra tax on those with incomes in excess of £100,000. Most are graduates and all of them can afford to pay."

Lib Dems... the only realistic alternative to Labour

Liberal Democrats - Action for Bristol



↑ Cllr Anne White and Bristol West candidate Stephen Williams discuss Bristol General Hospital's move to South Bristol.

All change for the Bristol General Hospital

This large imposing institution will be sold in the near future to fund a new community hospital in South Bristol. The new hospital is good news for South Bristol residents who at the moment do not have easy access to hospital services. It is very likely that this building will be converted into residential accommodation and we will keep local residents informed. There is a Bristol Health Services Plan out now with the opportunity for public comment.

If you want details ring Freephone no. 0800 015 5127. There is also a website: www.avon.nhs.uk/bhsp

Meanwhile we are still concerned about the concentration on the BRI site of so many facilities, bringing ever more pressure on car parking both for NHS employees and visitors. **Councillor Anne White** says: "it is irresponsible of the UBHT not to include parking provision for visitors on this City centre site. The only nearby multi storey car park on Trenchard Street is already full to capacity. The pressure on parking means that local traders suffer as customers cannot park within the area. I will continue to lobby the Hospital to build a car park for visitors. The land in Hospital ownership is very large and there are still empty sites suitable for a multi storey car park."

Council Tax set at 3.8%

Despite no overall control by one political party, all parties finally agreed on a budget for the next municipal year. The increase from April 5th means an average Band D council tax bill will be £1,064. When police and fire precepts are added, the average total bill householders will pay is £1,235. Councils do not have direct control over these precepts now and **Liberal Democrats** are calling on the Government to make these bodies more democratic and accountable.

Bristol Ferry Boats gain new grant for Docks Commuter Route

We have in **Cabot** one of the greenest forms of transport available in Bristol. The Bristol Ferry Boat Company run their ferries over an extensive part of the docks, allowing people to get between **Temple Meads**, the **City centre**, and the **Cumberland Basin** without being stuck in traffic or adding to the already congested and polluted city roads. Their boats support commuters during the week and also pleasure trips and shoppers at weekends.

The company was bought by its present owners two years ago after the previous owner (of 25 years) decided to sell. The current owners approached the council for additional funding to support the valuable transport service they provide. The Ferry

Company were successful again this year in their tender, with **Cllr Barbara Janke** (Liberal Democrat leader of Bristol Council) and **Cllr Anne White** being part of the council committee overseeing tender selection. The ferries now have commuter carrying status, and the fares are subsidised by the council so that they cost just 50p during commuter hours.

This tender is reviewed every two years and is not guaranteed. The criteria for the tender includes ecology (the boats have low wash and adhere to the docks speed limit), responsibility for waste (disposal and procedures in place if there were ever a crash or leak of fuel), fuel efficiency (they only use 5 litres of fuel a day per boat), and harmful emissions from the boat engines must be low.

Cabot Liberal Democrats urge you to save time and money, swap the dreary

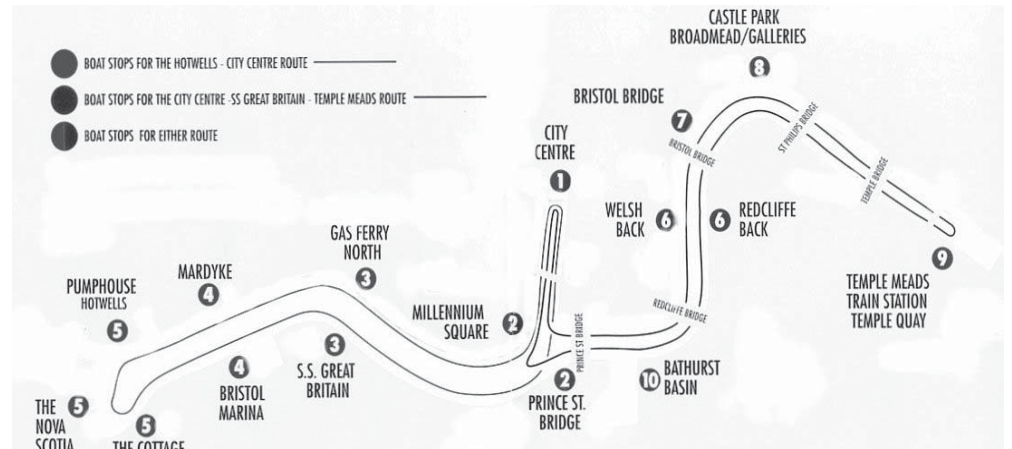


↑ Cllr Anne White on the soon to be fixed weak road bridge on Cumberland Road

Bridges to be strengthened

Cumberland Road and Seaton Road bridges have had weight restrictions for some time due to their poor condition. After protracted negotiations with British Rail, they have paid £284,500 towards the repair costs of over £700,000. The rainbow Council Cabinet agreed to fund these repairs and work should commence in the Spring. "I am pleased that the money has been found because heavy vehicles have been diverted through Avon Crescent causing noise and vibration on a road with poor visibility and a high accident record", said **Cabot Councillor Anne White**.

traffic jams for Bristol's historic waterways, and help protect the environment by using Bristol's ferry services. For more information on the Bristol Ferry Boat company you can go to their web page at www.bristolferryboat.co.uk or call their office on 9273416.



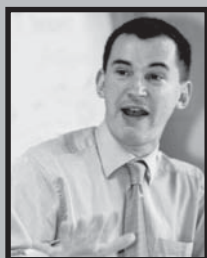
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Published and promoted by Anne White, 42 Logan Road, Bristol, BS7 8DR. Printed by Kingprint, 20 Clarendon Road, Bristol, BS6

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.

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