

# Cabot News

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Edited by Mark Wright & Anne White

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## SUMMER 2006



## Lib Dems Advance in Council Elections

**IN THE BRISTOL LOCAL ELECTIONS** in May this year the Liberal Democrats gained a seat and extended their lead as the largest party in the Council. The Labour Party took a beating, losing 4 seats overall in Bristol, and a whopping 320 nationally.

Lib Dem Cllr Barbara Janke was re-elected Council leader, and all the Executive Members keep the same jobs as last year. **Cabot Councillor Anne White** will continue as Executive Member for Regeneration. Anne says "I am delighted that I will be able to continue my work from last year. I have put my best efforts into ensuring that Bristol is regenerated in a sustainable manner that brings jobs, prosperity and improved living standards for all, not just the few. Independent auditors have said that Bristol is finally being turned around under the Lib Dems, but there is more to be done."



↑ Liberal Democrat Council Leader Barbara Janke (centre) celebrates advancing as the largest party in the City in the May local elections, with Bristol West MP Stephen Williams (centre-left)

## Labour and Conservatives form "Un-holy" Alliance

**IN A CHILLING SIGN OF THINGS TO COME**, Labour joined forces with the Conservatives in an alliance to give the Conservative Lord Mayor an unprecedented second consecutive year in the Chair. Liberal Democrat Councillors were outraged when the Conservative leader ripped up a written agreement to alternate the Lord Mayor's position fairly between the parties and made a secret deal with Labour instead. The ditched written agreement from the Tory leader ended with the lines: "I gladly reaffirm on behalf of my Group our readiness to support Cllr Dodd or any other Lib Dem nomination for 2006/07. I trust that you find this assurance to be satisfactory" - giving an indication of the lack of integrity of the Tory leader! Lib Dems noted: "This just reinforces the perception that politicians can't be trusted."

And it wasn't just the position of Lord Mayor that the unofficial alliance covered: Over the weeks following the election, in committee after committee, Labour and the Conservatives nominated and voted each other into every single position of Chairman or Vice Chairman in order to deny any positions to the Lib Dems - who are the largest party by a big margin.

**Cllr Mark Wright** comments: "I am not at all surprised that the Conservatives would do this, as they are such a small group on the Council they will do absolutely anything to get more exposure. However, I really am surprised that Labour are so inclined to nourish the Conservative party, given that nationally the Conservatives gave Labour a real beating in the Local Elections. But Bristol Labour are so consumed by their rage at losing control of the Council to us that they would rather aid the recovery of the Conservatives than help Liberal Democrats take Bristol forward."

### Bristol City Council results:

Lib Dems	33 Seats (+1)
Labour	23 Seats (-4)
Conservatives	13 Seats (+2)
Others	1 Seat (+1)

Lib Dems are by far the largest party, but are 3 seats short of a majority in the voting chamber.



↑ Cabot Councillors Mark Wright and Anne White using the new kitchen waste recycler

## Bristol Leading the Way in Recycling

**Households in North Bristol are the first to benefit from new enhanced recycling collections.** There will be in addition to the black box a food-waste and cardboard collection, and the option of a garden-waste bin. These will all be collected weekly. The removal of over 70% of the main black bin contents means that the waste in the black bin will now be collected fortnightly.

The rest of the city joins in August, apart from a few thousand homes that have no storage space. Special arrangements are being consulted on for these homes. Lib Dem Executive Member for Environment, Gary Hopkins said "When we took over the administration from Labour last year our recycling rate was just 12% and we were in the bottom quarter of councils nationally. Our rate is now over 20% and these improvements will make us the leading UK city for recycling by the end of this year."

The 28 new plastic recycling points at supermarkets and shopping centres have proved a big hit and plastic recycling is up by 140% over last year. **Two new plastic recycling points have opened in the Cabot Area:** Proctor House on Prewett Street, Redcliff; and Clifton Down Train Station Car Park, Clifton Down.

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

# Liberal Democrats - Action for Bristol



↑ Cabot Councillors Anne White and Mark Wright with former docks engineer David Neale at Brunel's Bridge

## Calls to Reopen Brunel's Harbour Bridge

A little known engineering work of Brunel is back in the spotlight as a campaign has been launched to restore it to use. The bridge, known as Brunel's Swivel Bridge is in the Cumberland basin, underneath the flyover, and has been out of use since 1968.

Retired docks engineer David Neale contacted Cabot Councillor Mark Wright with his ideas, and is now hoping to see it restored and reopened. Mark said "This is a little-known gem of Brunel's - despite living just 300 yards away from the bridge for 8 years I had never heard of it! But restoring it to use in the year of Brunel 200 is a great idea and I have given it my full support."

David Neale commented "If it were recommissioned it would be an extremely useful link, especially for linking the Portway cycle route to the national cycle route near the Create Centre. At the moment, if you're walking round the docks, you have either got to walk across the lock gates or climb a spiral staircase onto the flyover."

## Number 500 Bus Improvements

More improvements to the 500 Bus are on their way. The Council is aiming to make as many bus-stops as possible accessible to disabled people by installing raised kerbs. These kerbs rise up to the door level on new lowered buses and allow wheelchairs and push-chairs to roll straight on, and end the need to take a big step up to board the bus.

Cllr Mark Wright has been campaigning for improvements to this vital service since before he was elected, and was delighted that more progress is being made. "There will be nine enhanced stops with raised kerbs installed on the route of the 500 bus in the near future. This will make the service truly accessible to all residents. The 500 bus is growing from a service that was very nearly abolished into one of the best services in Bristol, and I intend that more will come" said Mark.



↑ Cllr Anne White wants your ideas for the middle of St James Barton Roundabout

## University "Masterplan" Finalised

The University's "Masterplan" - a blue-print for the large-scale redevelopment of the University precinct over the next decade - is being finalised. The progress of the masterplan was reported in Cabot News last year, and now the results of the public consultation have been analysed.

After discussions with Cllr Mark Wright, the University has announced that a consultation group will be set up that will be open to local residents, which will discuss and seek solutions to some of the problems arising from large numbers of students concentrated in the area.

## What Future for the "Bear Pit"?

With Broadmead in the middle of a great redevelopment that will be very attractive when finished, one nearby area will stick out like a sore thumb: St James Barton Roundabout by the bus station - known also as the "Bear Pit".

This dirty, ugly roundabout with its dank subways, vagrants and anti-social feel has been left out by all the redevelopments in the area. Now Cllr Anne White is launching a campaign to collect ideas of what could be done with the forgotten middle area. Anne says "It's such an odd and difficult location, it's proving difficult to solve. If you have any ideas of what might be done down there, send them to me by email or letter."

## Harbour Festival to be Biggest Yet

The Council has made special arrangements for this year's Harbour Festival to be even bigger than before. Last year, improved planning combined with great weather to produce the biggest crowds ever for the festival. This year the festival is 28-30th July - hope for sun and don't miss out on the fun!

## Tidal Power Rethink Urged

Bristol Council has urged the Government to look again at the possibility of extracting green renewable energy from the huge tides in the Severn Estuary. Cabot's Councillor Mark Wright proposed the motion to Council that was passed, calling on the Government to include the idea in its Energy Review. Mark said, "It's shameful that we have the second highest tides in the world on our doorstep - sloshing absolutely vast amounts of completely free and everlasting energy around the estuary, and we have done nothing to extract that energy despite the cost of oil and nuclear soaring in recent years."

Bristol West MP Stephen Williams has also tabled a similarly worded "Early Day Motion" in Parliament to highlight the issue to fellow MPs. The motion further calls upon the Government to include an environmental impact study to examine the substantial implications of a barrage.

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

[www.cabot-liberals.org](http://www.cabot-liberals.org)



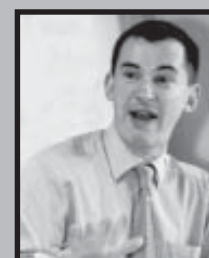
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## My problem, query or suggestion is :



I think ...

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

ADDRESS .....

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Please return to: Cabot Liberal Democrats, FREEPOST NAT4305, Bristol, BS2 8FA

If you return this slip the Liberal Democrats may use the information to contact you from time to time about issues we think you may find of interest. You can opt out of this by ticking this box:

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