



GRAPEVINE

The Newsletter of the South Shropshire Green Party

Election Issue (85)

Spring 2015

Greetings to all our readers, and welcome to this Election Issue of Grapevine.

We have all been very busy on the election campaign and are very grateful to all those people who have given us their time and money – but of course we still need more - of both! If each of our supporters would donate time (e.g. delivering leaflets, canvassing, putting up posters in their windows) and/or money (cash collection points in Ludlow, Bishop's Castle and Church Stretton so far, see later in this issue for details), we could be sure of delivering a successful campaign, giving everyone in South Shropshire the informed opportunity to VOTE GREEN! This election is wide open and with your help we can really bring the Green Party to people's attention.

Update from our Prospective Parliament Candidate, Janet Helen Phillips

Our campaign so far....

I'm standing in this election because I want to help bring about improvements in the quality of life of all those who live in this area and to take local issues to the national level to create a fairer and more equal society where vulnerable people are protected.

Local issues include a call to reverse the cuts to Home-Start funding, escalating use of food banks, rural fuel poverty, the urgency of having solar photovoltaic panels on public buildings and car parks, the damage an out of town supermarket will do to Ludlow businesses, the cuts to library services, the Council's neglect of housing regulations for people with disabilities, inadequate rural bus services, local connections to the direct train to London, rural broadband connectivity, and the Council's neglect of Bridgnorth's air quality hot spot.

On the NHS, we want better ambulance response times, a stronger degree of public accountability, the retention of Shrewsbury and Telford A&E units, and the elimination of private sector provision.

*Green Party economic policies offer real change, and alternatives to austerity which isn't working. They include a living wage, and jobs in renewables. **The Green Party is the only political party with robust policies addressing climate change.***

Janet is a VERY busy lady and is working amazingly hard to reach out to people in the area.

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE???? Don't lose your opportunity to

Vote Green! The last date to register for a Postal vote is Tuesday 21st April, and the last date to register for a Polling Station vote is Monday 20th April. Please make sure that you are on the Electoral Register. It is easy to register: either telephone 0345 678 9015 or register online with Shropshire Council at their website, www.shropshire.gov.uk

We humans are part of the natural environment and, at the same time, are dependent upon the natural environment.

The Green Party understands that living within the limits of our environment requires fundamental reform of social, cultural and political structures. This sets our Party apart from not just the "major" parties and UKIP, but from single issue environmental groups.

Our Green understanding of our interdependence and our respect for the equality of individuals (so vital because all must play their part in creating a genuinely sustainable society), drives the need for social policies which are interlinked with environmental and economic policies. This approach puts us far ahead of all the other political parties in terms of intelligent, solution-driven thinking.

So, for example, the Green Party does not oppose the privatisation of the NHS just because a free-at-the-point-of-use National Health Service is a "good thing", but because it is a consequence of our philosophy. We do not need to enter into a bidding war (like the other parties) as to who will pump the most money into the NHS because we want a National **Health** System not the current National **Illness** System! So our interlinked and principle-driven policies will reduce NHS demand and create much happiness!

For example:

- Transport policy - fewer accidents through urban 20mph speed limits; fitter people as we encourage walking and cycling; fewer respiratory problems as we reduce transport-induced air pollution.
- Food and Agriculture policy - no agrochemicals getting into our food; no additives and less food processing; all leading to healthier diets and less obesity.
- Energy policy – well-insulated (but properly ventilated) homes, reducing the blight of asthma and chest complaints.

And by the way, all these policies reduce carbon dioxide emissions too!

To help get these kinds of messages across to voters during this General Election **we, unashamedly, NEED YOUR MONEY**. We have not yet sold the £500 of Election Bonds needed for our Green Party candidate's deposit, despite two members buying £260 of Bonds between them. Another three members have also been very generous, donating £1400 between them for the election fund, but otherwise election donations are just £90. **If all SSGP members donated just £5, we would raise £1000, as our membership has now doubled to (almost) 200.**

To buy Election Bonds (in units of £10), please contact Dr Graham Lambert at Myriad Organics, 22 Corve Street, Ludlow, email myriadorganics@gmail.com, Tel 01548 874888.

Donations to the Election Fund, (cash, or cheques made payable to South Shropshire Green Party please) can be left at:

- Myriad Organics, 22 Corve Street, Ludlow,
- Textile Traders, 37 High Street, Bishop's Castle
- The Pink House, 41 Church Street, Church Stretton

We thank you in advance for what we know will be your generous support.

The Green Party fully supports the founding principles of the NHS, that high quality health services shall be available to all those who need them, free of charge at point of use.

We want to see high quality clinical services provided by a well-funded, non-privatised NHS at locations that are easily accessed by Shropshire’s residents.

The Green Party is aware that a major exercise is underway that may lead to changes in the location of hospital facilities and the provision of clinical services at those locations. We do not accept that this exercise should be motivated by cost cutting but must focus on the general improvement of accessible health care and clinical services for all age groups, serving the widespread rural geography of Shropshire.

We are committed to the following basic elements of health care provision in Shropshire:

- There shall be two well-equipped and well-staffed acute hospitals, one in Shrewsbury (RSH) and one in Telford (PRH), as at present, and both shall maintain a full-spectrum of A&E facilities.
- There shall be 6 community hospitals providing the full range of clinical services currently offered in Shropshire and these services shall also be available at the acute hospitals in Shrewsbury and Telford.

The South Shropshire Green Party is calling for a general, system-wide, default speed limit of 20mph on all residential roads in Shropshire.

This long-standing Green Party policy is supported by Directors of Public Health and by the World Health Organisation and will produce a significant increase in road safety on our roads.

At 20mph, someone involved in a collision with a vehicle has a 95% chance of survival. This falls to 45% at 30mph and 5% at 40mph.

Over 12 million people in the UK now live in areas covered by a 20mph speed limit and it is time this included Shropshire. The Green Party has written to the leader of Shropshire Council to request that this policy is fully implemented in the next 12 months.

South Shropshire Green Party policy on Solar Farms

Nationally and in Shropshire solar farms are being proposed as a renewable source of electricity and the Green Party fully supports the move away from oil, gas, coal and nuclear, and the move towards clean, green, non-polluting sources of energy.

The urgency associated with dealing with climate change and energy security brings with it a general presumption in favour of solar farms but the Green Party has specified the conditions that must be applied before a particular site is approved.

In South Shropshire these conditions are as follows:

- Solar farms shall normally not be developed on agricultural land classified as grade 1 (excellent), 2 (very good) or 3 (good to moderate). Land in these categories should be used for producing food for humans.
- Solar farms must include an element of community gain that recognises the importance of associating the development with a financial contribution to the local parish council, to be spent on community facilities that are prioritised by the parish council.
- Solar farms must be part of a comprehensive plan to promote biodiversity and ecology so that interested parties can see a tangible gain from measures that encourage plant, bird, insect and bee populations.

We will campaign for solar panels on as many new homes, schools and public buildings as possible. We will also campaign for community-owned solar farms so that local communities can see a direct link between the solar farm and community benefit.

Diary Dates: please check all hustings info with John or Janet Phillips before attending as some details still subject to confirmation.

27th March - Much Wenlock Priory 7.30pm "Sell Off" film about NHS privatisation

27th March - Ludlow Assembly Rooms (Oscars), "Shropshire Council Ltd.: Democracy for Sale?" This is not organised by the Green Party, but sounds very interesting.

7th April - Craven Arms Hotel 7.00pm South Shropshire Green Party business meeting

7th April - NFU Hustings Bridgnorth The Down Inn 7.00pm

9th April - Bishops Castle Hustings Three Tuns 7.30pm

14th April - Bridgnorth Hustings St Mary's Church 7.30pm

14th April - Radio Shropshire 6.15-6.55pm **Green Party candidates live on air**

16th April - Church Stretton Hustings Methodist Church 7.30-9.30pm

17th April - Bridgnorth Hustings Community Hall Low Town 2.00pm

21st April - Craven Arms Craven Arms Methodist Church 7.00pm

23rd April - Ludlow Hustings Ludlow C of E School 7.00pm

27th April - Radio Shropshire 10.00-11.00am **Ludlow Constituency debate live on air**

11th May - Church Stretton 10.30am Bucks Head, High Street Post-election semi-social Green Party meeting; All welcome.

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