

**‘In The Last Few Days’**

Welcome to 'In The Last Few Days' - our occasional communication to inform you of the mix of activities your Executive - and some Members - deliver to advance our Green Party agenda. We aim for brevity and, of course, welcome comments.

**But firstly…. An important reminder that our SSGP AGM is taking place in just one week (Sat 6th April). It starts at 12:00 with a free organic home-made soup lunch so please RSVP to let us know you are coming so that we can cater appropriately. If you could bring something for pudding, that would be wonderful!**

**The main agenda item will be the selection of a Ludlow Constituency candidate to contest a snap General Election should one be called…..**

So now, on to what we have been up to on your behalf recently……

***In the last few days ....*** your South Shropshire Green Party (hereafter SSGP) has:

Seen **John Lloyd's** letter **'*More Greens*'** published in South Shropshire Journal (SSJ) and Ludlow Advertiser - about continuing inadequate parliamentary and governmental responses to climate changes.
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Seen our Coordinator **Hilary** attend a service of Celebration and Thanks for Mortimer Forest and the successful ‘Save Mortimer Forest Campaign’ at St Lawrence's, Ludlow.

Hilary also travelled to Birmingham on Tuesday to meet with our regional West Midlands Green Party executive colleagues - in her role as social media coordinator for our region.

Hilary met in Shrewsbury on Friday with our Green Councillor Julian Dean along with colleagues from Shrewsbury and North Shropshire Green Party to develop Green Party responses to current Shropshire Council housing proposals in the Local Plan.

Hilary has also been working with the West Midlands Green Party Field Organiser to advance SSGP member Lyn Antil's candidacy for a vacancy on Church Stretton Town Council.

Hilary also liaised with Herefordshire Green Party to discuss how SSGP might practically support them in the run up to their local elections this May.

*Hilary has been working like a Trojan!!*

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In addition, last week also saw a SSGP letter sent to Health Secretary Matt Hancock MP reminding him and his Department of Health civil servants of the public responses we obtained in our balloting in six S. Shropshire towns, which overwhelmingly (no town less than 90%) call for both A&Es at Telford and Shrewsbury to be retained - in contrast with local 'Future Fit' plans to close Telford A&E. Our letter was copied to each Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin MP and to the T&W Council leader.

**NOTE:** Council elections for Telford and Wrekin are in early May.

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**John Whitelegg**, our Press Officer, has issued a press release (see below) to around 30 local media outlets about the dire and declining A&E and Urgent Care performance at our two acute hospitals.

The press release was written by John Crowe and is based on data he obtained through a Freedom of Information request.  A meeting has been secured with a hospital manager to discuss what South Shropshire Green Party can do to help ameliorate the situation. A further meeting with the A&E manager has now been arranged.

Membership Secretary **Steve Hale** has responded to member’s queries and attended the People's March in London, the school children’s Strike For Climate march in Shrewsbury and the Extinction Rebellion demonstration in Shrewsbury on 25th March in support of the Town Council’s adoption of a Climate Emergency proposal. He has also written a letter to our local papers on SSGP's behalf calling for a Peoples' Vote on Brexit with the option to Remain.

**Anne Dyer**, Minutes Secretary, has circulated to Executive colleagues a draft record of SSGP's March executive meeting,

As these notes show, all SSGP exec members are working flat out to advance the Green Party in South Shropshire and in the West Midlands. Please help us keep on keeping on, however you can.

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Future Fit Proposal**

**South Shropshire Green Party**

**Press Release**

**Immediate**

**21st March** **2019**

***When is urgent care not urgent care?***

For nearly 5 years the Future Fit managers re-designing our two Shropshire hospitals have told us that approximately 60% of patients attending A&E at Royal Shrewsbury and Princess Royal, Telford hospitals don't need 'emergency care' but need 'urgent care'. Each of these two hospitals have for many years had urgent care provision alongside their A&E departments. We know that Shropshire's A&E's fail month after month to meet the national standard to treat, transfer or discharge 95% of all A&E patients within 4 hours of arrival - to the serious detriment of patients' well-being. The latest performance, following consistent decline was just 70.6% in Dec. 2018

This is appalling. The Trust's own prediction shows no improvement and we need to know why.

From recent figures (Nov.2017 - Oct.2018) supplied by the Hospital Trust, we learn that 17% of all patients attending the A&E and Urgent Care facility at both hospitals are treated by Urgent Care clinicians. As 17% is significantly different from the 60% urgent cases used in the Future fit planning we have asked why the Hospital Trust managers have not, years ago, increased the urgent care treatment provision - thereby relieving A&E to concentrate only on emergency patient care. Or, is it that the vast majority of patients attending A&E actually need emergency care and this is the area that planners should be resourcing accordingly? When resourced according to need our Shropshire A&Es might succeed in meeting the 4 hour national target and begin to work towards reducing the wait to 2 hours and better. We remark that the UK is the 6th wealthiest country in the world and therefore we can afford better care for all of us. Well, you wouldn't wait 4 hours for a cappuccino.......!

South Shropshire Green Party Coordinator Hilary Wendt says

*"Patients triaged as needing urgent care should not have to wait for the Future Fit plan to materialise. We need to know why the Hospital Trust management is not providing for urgent care clinical staffing and facilities now and leave the A&E clinicians to treat the more serious emergency patients much sooner than appears now. We are seeking a constructive meeting with the Hospital Trust's management."*

**Cuts to bus funding**

**South Shropshire Green Party**

**Press Release**

**Immediate**

**28th March 2019**

 **The Green Party asks Shropshire Council to reverse its plan to cut bus funding and to recognise rural buses as an essential service for rural residents.**

 Shropshire Council has revealed its plans to slash funding for rural buses. The fact that this is packaged as a “consultation” does not alter the fact that this is an attack on rural residents in the predominantly rural county of Shropshire.

The cuts are a savage attack on the young, the elderly, those who cannot afford a car and those who for health reasons cannot drive.  It will make living in rural Shropshire and accessing health care much more difficult than is currently the case and it is already difficult.  It undermines the choices that rural residents have around education, training and jobs and it damages the rural economy.

 Commenting on this attack on public transport and rural residents the co-ordinator of the South Shropshire Green Party, Hilary Wendt, said:

 “This is a slap in the face for all those who live in rural Shropshire and need to be able to access health care, education, training and jobs.  It reveals an astonishing lack of understanding of how people live in rural Shropshire and a disregard for climate change and the urgent need to reduce emissions of climate damaging CO2 from cars.  I have asked Councillor Nutting, the leader of the Council, to withdraw the consultation with immediate effect and explore ways of providing additional funds to support rural buses”

 John Whitelegg, the lead person on transport in the South Shropshire Green Party and a transport expert added:

 “These cuts make an already sub-standard rural bus service much worse and the time has come to halt the bias towards the car in Shropshire and support best practice 21st century public transport.  This “consultation” reveals a staggering disregard for public transport which will hit rural residents very hard indeed and add to climate change problems and congestion problems”