

LibDems win Matlock Town Council

Lib Dems won 10 out of 11 seats on Matlock Town Council, all of them returned unopposed! The 12th seat was left vacant. **Cllr David Hughes is now the Leader.**

David said "I would like to thank all the retiring members and Sue Smith, the retiring town clerk, for their many years of service to Matlock. And I would also like to welcome the new members and Simon Hosmer, the new Town Clerk who joins from Derbyshire County Council. They are bringing renewed energy and vigour to the Council. Working with community groups such as the Denefield Rangers who do so much good work in Matlock, we hope to improve public spaces under our control and make sure the Imperial Rooms continue to provide an excellent venue for events of all kinds from coffee mornings to weddings in Matlock."

Your LibDem Matlock East and Tansley Team

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Cllrs Jason Knighton and Marilyn Franks, two of the new Matlock Town Councillors

Liberal Democrats

FOCUS

on Matlock East and Tansley

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Liberal Democrats - working for you all year round

Thank you! Liberal Democrats win Matlock again!

Overwhelming support for Liberal Democrat candidates in the 4th May elections across Matlock, Riber, Tansley, Starkholmes, Morledge, Oker and Snitterton means that once again there are six Liberal Democrat Councillors representing the Matlock area wards.

In Matlock East and Tansley, Steve Flitter and David Hughes were both returned and have been joined by **Joanne Linthwaite**. Jo hails from Idridgehay but has lived in Matlock for ten years.



Matlock East and Tansley Councillors Steve Flitter, Jo Linthwaite and David Hughes

The result in Matlock West, the revised Matlock All Saints ward, were equally successful for the LibDems with the re-election of **Sue and Martin Burfoot and Steve Wain**. The LibDems also triumphed in Darley Dale with a clean sweep of the three places there, and in Ashbourne where LibDem candidates took three of the five places.

Steve Flitter, the new Council Leader remarked, "From canvassing we knew that we had many residents supporting us but to secure this result is most encouraging. Now we must set about turning our manifesto commitments into a reality for the people of Derbyshire Dales".

All change in Derbyshire Dales District Council

The election has resulted in a change in the leadership of the District Council. The LibDems gained the most seats and votes with 34% of the total vote.

In the words of the local leaders of the LibDems, Labour and the Greens who are bringing a new collaborative approach to local politics...

"We know that our District faces many challenges, not least the cost of living crisis, the shortage of affordable housing for our young families and the threat to our

environment from new developments and pollution. Working together we will support our communities in the best and most effective way, and provide them with genuine value-for-money services."

The new Council

Party	Seats	% of Vote
Liberal Democrats	12	34
Conservatives	11	33
Labour	6	21
Greens	4	6
Others	1	6

Let our next Focus story be about helping YOU

Want to tell us something? Something you'd like us to help you with? Let us know about it here.
My issue:

Name..... Email.....

Tel Post code

- I am interested in becoming a Town or District Councillor - get in touch with David Hughes
- I would like to join the Liberal Democrats - let me know how or visit libdems.org.uk/join
- I can display a poster at election time
- I can help deliver Focus leaflets in my area (4 times a year)

Can we keep you updated about our activities including campaigns, events, fundraising and details about how to get involved?

Yes please No thanks

The Liberal Democrats will use your contact details to send you information on the topics you have requested. Any data we gather will be used in accordance with our privacy policy at libdems.org.uk/privacy. To exercise your legal data rights, email: data.protection@libdems.org.uk.

Cut out and return to: David Hughes, 1 Rockside Steps DE4 3HB or email (see Team details above)

Platform Housing service charges



In our last issue, we reported on the massive increase in service charges levied by Platform Housing on residents of Denefield Court, Victoria Court and Gateway Court which averaged about £200 per month.

Residents have since met with representatives of Platform Housing. They have been told that

gas prices will fall from October but there will be no reduction before then.

Cllr David Hughes told Platform Housing representatives that residents were having to pay for the inefficient heating systems in the buildings. Platform Housing said that this was a national problem facing all housing associations.

We agree that this is a national problem. Housing associations are unable to increase rents in order to improve their housing stock. For most residents, a rent increase would be covered by housing benefit while improved heating and insulation would reduce their costs and deliver an environmental benefit.

As an EPC C rating will be required for all rented accommodation shortly, we call upon Government to make funds available for improvements to social housing stock.



Temporary toilets at Artists Corner!

The new District Council is installing temporary toilets next to the playground at Artists Corner to replace the ones closed by the previous Conservative administration. The old toilets cannot be re-opened as they have been leased to a brewery business.

Cllr Flitter instigated a review of the toilet closure policy to determine which toilets to re-open as one of his initial actions as the new Council Leader.

Starkholmes Plantation – Saved for the time being

The Starkholmes Plantation, a small wood above Tor Rise on High Tor, has been saved at least for the time being thanks to prompt action by **Cllr Sue Burfoot, Cllr David Hughes and residents**.

Derbyshire County Council proposed to sell the site as surplus to its needs. Sue and David leafleted nearby Tor Rise and Starkholmes Road residents leading to a large number of responses. Following this action, the County Council has said that it will not be disposing of the Plantation in the “foreseeable future”.

The Council is developing a Tree and Woodland Strategy, and this must be approved before any decisions are made. The Council also said that its preference is to negotiate disposal to another local authority, in this case either the District Council or Matlock Town Council, or a community or conservation group. Leasing the site would also be an option.

Residents reported that the site, which contains dangerous mine shafts, was planted with trees by local school children. It was intended to be a community resource which has sadly failed to be maintained in the recent past.



Chesterfield Road sewer failures and flooding

Residents in Hurst Farm, Lillybank Close and elsewhere in Matlock are suffering from water runoff - surface water that should be captured by drains which is ending up flooding their gardens, terraces and the ground floor of their houses.

Even worse, several buildings off Chesterfield Road have suffered from major and repeated sewer overflows flooding basements and bathrooms and leading to distress and sickness experienced by people coming into contact with the effluent.

This is the 2023 experience of Matlock residents high up above the bottom of the valley.

Over the last few weeks **Cllr Jo Linthwaite and flood warden Cllr Steve Wain** have called on many residents and investigated the sewers draining the eastern half of Matlock. They have briefed the flood team at Derbyshire County Council and Severn Trent Water and are working with them to identify the root causes and create solutions to prevent further issues.

The sewers concerned will be required to take the sewage and runoff from new developments off Chesterfield Road including the proposed 428 houses on the Wolds and the 70+ houses opposite the golf course. Yet councillors have been told that the failure of the sewage network is not a planning consideration. You can't make it up!

If you are having similar problems, Steve and Jo would be interested to hear from you. Please feel free to email or call.

What do the water companies do for us?

Robert Court, general election candidate

What have the water companies achieved since the industry was privatised by the Conservatives in 1989?

Shareholders have pocketed dividends and their bosses have paid themselves huge bonuses. However, some of the companies have fallen heavily into debt.

You would have thought that they would have invested in reservoirs to ensure future fresh water supplies. Actually, no new reservoir has been built in the UK since Carsington in 1991. The companies are failing to keep up with repairing leaks but introduce hosepipe bans.

Meanwhile, there are on average 824 sewage spills per day into our waterways. Severn Trent were the third worst offender in 2021 with over 59,000 sewage releases into rivers. Untreated sewage makes 83 of our beaches unsafe for bathing. All these releases are illegal except in times of severe weather. Most go unpunished.

The Liberal Democrats would transform the water firms into “Public Good Companies”. They would no longer be allowed to prioritise profit over the environment. Their boards would be reformed to include environment experts, and they would be obliged to provide information freely.

The Conservatives want action by 2050(!), but the problem is urgent. The Lib Dems say **act now**.



Where will the sewage end up from this site on Chesterfield Road?

