

# Travellers sites - the search goes on

Much has been made in the local press about proposals to try to find better provision for two traveller families currently camped in two car parks – Station Car Park Matlock and Station Car Park Matlock Bath.

The problem arises from the decision made by the previous Conservative administration in November 2022 to stop considering a list of 27 locations, mostly car parks located around the Dales, as suitable sites.

This was unfortunate, effectively stranding the two families, for which the District Council has a legal duty under homelessness legislation, on two car parks.

The new Lib Dem led administration is trying to sort out this mess.

A hopeful sign was the Council's unanimous support for a package of measures designed to provide a detailed framework for the future selection of traveller sites, including consultation and a defined set of criteria for



Some of the caravans on Station Car Park Matlock

suitability. Also appropriate tenancy agreements will be adopted to establish agreed standards of behaviour. Planning permission for a traveller site on the A6 at Homesford near Cromford has also been granted. However it seems that the site has been privately sold, therefore the search continues! Failure to find and develop permanent sites could lead to the Government's rejection of our Local (Development) Plan, currently being reviewed.

**Contact the Matlock West Focus team**  
(including our new Town Councillors: Len Best and Pat Wildgoose)



**Cllr Sue Burfoot** – tel 584301 (County, District and Town) [sue.burfoot@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:sue.burfoot@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

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## DO YOU HAVE AN ISSUE? CAN WE HELP?

The local Lib Dem team want to hear from you on any issue, big or small, that you want help with.

### My issue

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

Tel ..... Post code .....

- I am able to distribute Focus leaflets every 3 months in my area
- I would like a poster at the next election to show my support for the Liberal Democrat team
- I would like to join the Liberal Democrats

If you agree with us and would like to join our Focus Team, please get in touch  
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](http://libdems.org.uk/privacy). To exercise your legal data rights, email [data.protection@libdems.org.uk](mailto:data.protection@libdems.org.uk).

Cut out and return to: Cllrs Sue & Martin Burfoot 12, Megdale, DE4 3JW or email (see Team details above)

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# on Matlock West FOCUS

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## Flooding Crisis More help needed from the County Council & Severn Trent

Once again, areas of Matlock and Darley Dale have been hit with surging water from swollen rivers, hillside surface water run-off and raw sewage. The debate will continue as to the exact causes, but there is no doubt that excessive housing developments, without adequate drainage infrastructure is partly to blame. Global warming means that these events are happening more frequently and with greater severity.

Liberal Democrat councillors would like to extend our sympathy to all the households affected, as well as our thanks to those involved in recovery operations.

### 'Stormy' Planning meeting

At a recent Planning Committee meeting, **Cllr Jo Linthwaite** provided the Committee data and photographs which demonstrated that the foul water drainage system in the east of Matlock is already

failing - despite Severn Trent Water's routine insistence that their system could cope with the extra run-off and sewage from proposed development on Chesterfield Road. Matlock East **Cllr David Hughes** told the Meeting that drainage problems in Matlock need to be formally addressed. He said that the District Council's Scrutiny Committee is assessing the advice provided by the County Council's Flood Team with work to start in January 2024. **Cllr Sue Burfoot** said "We are at crisis point with flooding and sewage. This is the serious, cumulative effect of new housing development".

Darley Dale Lib Dem **Cllr Roger Shelley** says "We need to make sure that no more new development takes place either directly on flood plains, or contributes to heavy run-off or ponding.

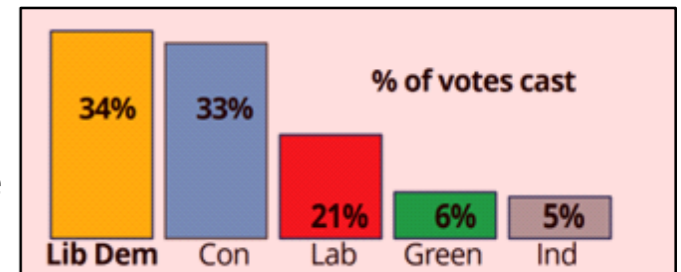


A garden path becomes a waterfall

The new **Local Plan** will have a role in this – it needs to be better than its predecessors, in order to stop inappropriate housing and make sure local residents get a say through meaningful consultation. We also call on the County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority to overhaul the way it judges flood risk".



Run-off pouring out of a garden from fields behind



The overall 2023 local election results show that the Lib Dems won more Council seats in the new Derbyshire Dales constituency than all other parties!

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## Funding to tackle sewage scandal slashed

In the recent Chancellor's Autumn Statement was an 11% cut in the new Environment Secretary's budget, impacting directly on Government attempts to deal with the sewage scandal. This is something we are familiar with in parts of Matlock, especially Lumsdale, a range of properties below the Treetops development and at Matlock Green.



Sewage flowing from an sewer overwhelmed with flood water

Lib Dem MP Tim Farron said: "Not content with the levels of pollution in our rivers already, scrapping so called 'nutrient neutrality' is a disgraceful act from the Government. The Conservatives seem happy for our rivers to get even worse".

The Environment Agency is carrying out a study of the Bentley Brook catchment, from which most surface water discharged from Matlock Bank and Tansley, along with sewage overflows during heavy rain, flows into the River Derwent at the Knowleston Place Pumping Station.

## The Wolds - Update

The highly controversial Gritstone Road Wolds Farm housing development of 430 houses is still under consideration by planning officers, with more and more demands on the developers to provide answers to challenging reports and questions from other consultees and residents.

To find out more visit our website

[ddld.org.uk](http://ddld.org.uk)

Liberal Democrats - keeping you in touch all year round

# Potholes!

According to the RAC, Derbyshire is the worst place in the country for potholes, apparently over 90,000 last year, although we all know that the definition of a pothole usually depends on its location and risk of damage to vehicles and cyclists or injury to pedestrians, especially the elderly and disabled. The County Council disputes the RAC claim, saying that Highway Authorities use different ways of reporting potholes, before or after repair.



The Council obviously blames the 'adverse weather conditions' in recent weeks - flooding followed by freezing - but have assured the public that they are 'working on

them in priority order'. They urge residents to report potholes through their website, but some find this is a time consuming and confusing task. The same applies to the many blocked gullies on our streets.

**Cllr Martin Burfoot** says the present reporting system, through the County Council's website, is complicated and requests more effective ways of reporting issues. Martin comments "It is disappointing that many potholes re-appear a short time after being filled, so are 'best practice' methods being used for repairs?"

**Cllr Sue Burfoot** has asked if Council members can be given full updates on progress with pothole repairs.

County Council leaders and even our MP are now so desperate to speed up pothole repairs that they are blaming their own Government for under-resourcing highways funding for local Councils in the Midlands and North compared to those in the south-east. Obviously Derbyshire's multi million budget shortfall does not help.

Apart from potholes and blocked gullies, uneven paving means there are also too many puddles on our pavements.



## Progress on increased charges



**Significant progress has been made by Victoria Court and Denefields Court** residents in the re-assessment of the charges they are paying for heating and electricity. Platform Housing has made an interim concession on the charges for the year ending April 2024. The housing association made the concession unilaterally. Negotiations with residents are continuing.

Matlock East **Cllr David Hughes** says "Platform Housing's change in attitude is to be welcomed. All credit to the residents of Victoria Court and Denefields Court who have demonstrated to the housing association that there were problems with the charges, and to Platform Housing who are continuing to work with residents to reach a final settlement".

## A6 Road works misery More delays expected

There will be no immediate let up with the road works along the A6 Bakewell Road from Darley Dale towards Matlock. Thankfully the flood wall works in Matlock were finished in September, when the former 'one-way' access across the historic Matlock Bridge was reinstated.

Severn Trent Water's essential 1.6km clean water pipe from Stanton Moor View in Darley Dale to Sainsbury's roundabout is resuming now, to be followed by a second phase, on past the roundabout and into Matlock, over the winter and spring, followed by another as yet unscheduled **foul sewer replacement** along the whole of the same route!

Lib Dem councillors say "We are all now paying the price for the Conservative Government's insistence on local councils allowing the building of more and more houses in the wrong places, without enough thought about the impact on our infrastructure, mainly the hidden, outdated pipework beneath our main roads".

## Cavendish Road Car Park County continue to be obstructive

The decision by the Tory run County Council to close off its car park on Cavendish Road has already affected residents in that area of Matlock, including impacts on nearby roads and roadside parking; refuse collections; and access for buses and emergency services.

**County Cllr Sue Burfoot** comments: "I asked Council officers why there was no proper consultation and why so little notice was given to residents or myself. Even worse, why were two security fences erected, without any notice, to prevent access through the rear gates of George Road residents?"



Sue adds "I hope the Council will listen to and engage with the local community, in particular with the **'Matlock Community Land Trust'**, formed to find a way forward and the best use for this site, to the benefit of local people, rather than just a sale to the highest bidder, for up to 30 houses! The ideal solution should be 8 or 9 genuinely affordable houses, a residents' car park and new allotments". Sue has welcomed the District Council's designation of the site as an **'Asset of Community Value'**. However, the County continues to refuse vehicular access to residents who need to carry out maintenance works to their boundary walls and hedges.

## Oker Road Landslip

This long-awaited road reconstruction scheme should have been completed by the middle of November, but residents and others are still waiting for a final agreement with the landowner. During the re-building period the road will be closed even to cyclists and walkers.