

LibDems call for water companies to become Public Benefit Corporations

Matlock and Tansley's problems with sewers and drains are local examples of a national problem with the regulation of water companies. **LibDem MP Layla Moran** has said, "The whole water system needs to be fixed with radical action to protect the environment and bring down people's bills". In a Parliamentary debate on 7th February, she reported that the Liberal Democrats are calling for England's water companies to be transformed into Public Benefit Corporations. Public benefits would then be considered explicitly in the running of the companies putting a stop to prioritising profit over the quality of waterways. Environmental experts and local community groups would have representation on the company boards.

She also called for a ban on water executives' bonuses until sewage dumping stops, and for pollution monitoring to be undertaken by the Environment Agency rather than the companies themselves to ensure independence. **LibDem Parliamentary candidate, Robert Court**, said that "We have a right to expect protection from flooding, access to clean water and proper treatment of sewage. We would hold the water companies to account, not letting them wriggle out of their responsibilities to us all."

Funding to tackle sewage scandal slashed

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement cut the Environment Secretary's budget by 11%, impacting directly on Government attempts to deal with the sewage scandal. **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".

Afternoon free parking extended

Following LibDem **Cllr Steve Flitter's** announcement in his leader's speech in May, the District Council has added an hour to free evening parking for Derbyshire Dales residents. Free parking will start an hour earlier at 3pm instead of at 4pm. Council Leader, **Cllr Flitter**, said "I announced this change in my first Leader's speech to the Council and I am pleased that the new permits with the revised times are now being issued. This change will benefit residents and shops across Derbyshire Dales. Parents and carers picking up their children will be able to go shopping directly without having to wait for free parking. Shopkeepers will benefit from increased footfall in the afternoon."

Local people can park free every day up to 11am and after 3pm - extended by an hour in 2024/25

In the Community

Buy a 2nd permit: carparks@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Extended free parking for you!

IN the Council Tax envelope in which you received this issue of *Dales Matters* is this year's resident parking concession permit, which enables local people to park free every day of the year up to 11am and after 3pm - extended by an hour in 2024/25.

Please use the permit now and note that one free badge is issued annually in March to every local household.

Pictured with this year's permit is Council Leader Councillor Steve Flitter, who, together with Deputy Leaders Councillors Neil Buttle and Peter Slack, is a member of the Council Car Parks Working Group that recommended the parking hours extension for local people and continues to look

This year's permit is in the Council Tax envelope



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Liberal Democrats - keeping you in touch all year

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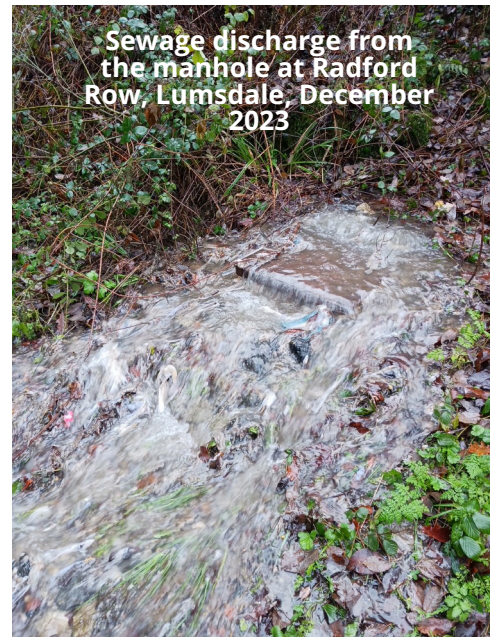
Liberal Democrats - for a Fairer, Greener, more Caring Dales

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

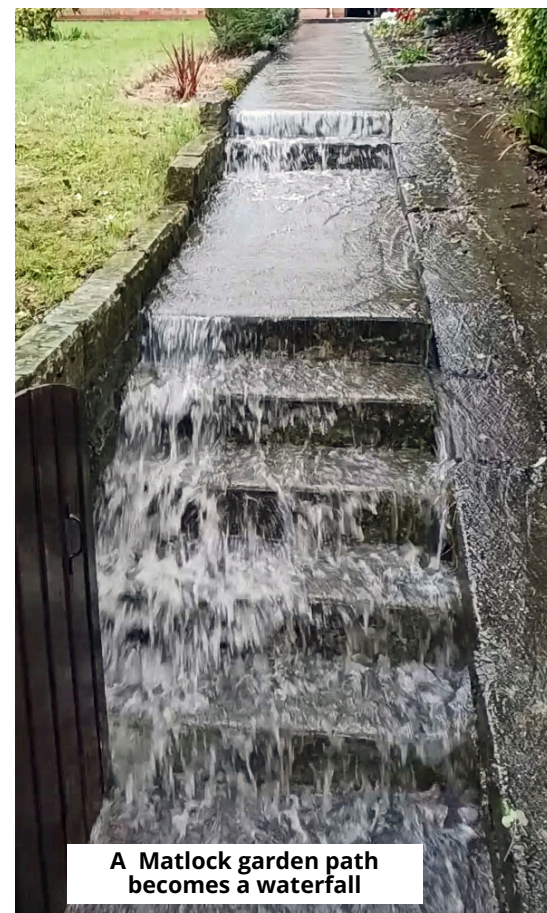
Areas of Matlock, Tansley and Darley Dale continue to suffer from hillside surface water run-off and raw sewage.

Flooding in the centre of Matlock has been minimised this winter, thanks to the intervention of LibDem **Cllr Steve Wain**, Flood Warden. He persuaded Derbyshire County Council to employ pumps on Bakewell Road to discharge water from the overflowing drains into the River Derwent.

Residents of Matlock East and Tansley have suffered from surface water run-off and sewage during storms. Liberal Democrat councillors would like to extend our sympathy to all the households, businesses and institutions affected, as well as our thanks to those involved in recovery operations. The debate will continue as to the exact causes, but there is no doubt that new housing developments, without adequate drainage infrastructure, is at least partly to blame. Global warming means that these events are happening more frequently and with greater severity.



District LibDems are taking action



- Cllrs Jo Linthwaite** and **Steve Wain** are documenting flooding incidents across Matlock and Tansley. They are using the evidence they are collecting to challenge the County flood team and the District's planners on their decisions.
- Cllrs Sue Burfoot** and **David Hughes** and Ashbourne LibDem councillors **Peter Dobbs** and **Rob Archer** are demanding that wherever possible major planning applications (those with more than 10 houses) are thoroughly assessed for risk to flooding caused by overflowing drains and sewers as well as flooding from rivers.
- Cllr David Hughes**, as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, has initiated an enquiry into the advice received by planners and developers from the County Council's flood team (the Local Lead Flood Authority). This is taking evidence from across Derbyshire.
- Cllr David Hughes** has made proposals to tighten up evaluation of planning applications regarding drainage.
- Robert Court**, LibDem parliamentary candidate, is concerned by the lack of government action. He said "The Conservatives want action by 2050, but the problem is urgent. The LibDems would act now."

County Council Highways News: Cllr Sue Burfoot reports...



- The four year wait for double yellow lines authorised for highway safety reasons and other Traffic Regulation Order work in the Matlock area is not over. Come on DCC - get a move on - make our highways safer!!
- Still with Highways, but more positively, 2000 potholes across Derbyshire are being filled each week with priority given to main roads. I urge residents to report potholes on the DCC website and keep on doing so till they are filled.
- Some potholes are finished well, others not. The explanation I have received is that those that need finishing properly have been filled temporarily and will be finished properly as part of another package of work. Keep reporting those potholes where the repair is not satisfactory!
- Rattling manholes. Matlock Green suffers from this problem. Please report them as well!

The Wolds housing development – REFUSED - expert drainage consultants agree with residents

The Wolds housing development, off Gritstone Road, was REFUSED at a special planning committee meeting held on 28th March. The Wolds Action Group’s tenacity, hard work and organisation was key to this result.

Faced originally with the refusal of planning officers to meet with the Group, the sheer strength of evidence it brought over more than five years ultimately provided the reasons for the refusal.

Along the way, the Group, together with **Cllr Steve Wain**, demonstrated that the County flood team did not fully understand the hydrology of the site and surrounding hillside and that the flood team’s proposed conditions were insufficient to safeguard residents. This ultimately led to the District Council’s planning team commissioning its own assessment which confirmed the views of residents.

While the Wolds development has been refused by the Local Planning Authority, the developer may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate or even put in another application for the site.



The Wolds site from Gritstone Road

The site was originally placed in the Local Plan by a Conservative majority at a special Council meeting in 2016. LibDem councillors have sought legal advice about withdrawing the site from the Local Plan. The advice given was that there is no short cut to doing this. A review of the Local Plan is already underway.

Whitelea, Tansley drainage failure



Cllrs Sue Burfoot and Jo Linthwaite and Vicki Raynes (Tansley Parish Council Chair) met with a DCC flood team member, the Whitelea contractor and local residents to work out what to do about

the failing drainage system on the Whitelea Nurseries development (Old Nursery Gardens).

The system is intended to collect water from the site and store it temporarily, allowing it to drain slowly into a sough. This stops downstream waterways being overwhelmed. Unfortunately, the collecting pond is not emptying and is overflowing into a neighbouring garden.

The flood team and contractor agreed to drain the pond to find out what is happening over a month ago. **Cllr Burfoot** said, “The pond is still full to overflowing.I am disappointed by the lack of action which is putting the neighbour’s garden at risk”. **Cllr Linthwaite** added, “We will continue to press for a solution to this problem”. **Cllr David Hughes** said, “We are scrutinising the advice of the flood team to avoid problems such as this arising.”

Severn Trent’s performance - still discharging to rivers

Severn Trent’s performance in the Matlock and Tansley area has been mixed, according to the latest publication of data on spillages from storm overflows. The table to the right shows the performance of each local site.

Overall, in Matlock and Tansley, there were 272 spillages into the River Derwent and Bentley Brook in 2023, less than previous years. But most of the improvement was from a reduction in flows into the River Derwent from the Snitterton Road overflow.

Source: DEFRA, Event Duration Monitoring - Storm Overflows - Annual Returns for 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023

Site	Receiving River	Total Duration (hours)					Counted spills			
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Matlock East and Tansley										
Knowleston Place	Bentley Brook	12	63	54	30	15	30	26	11	
Websters Terrace	Bentley Brook	-	-	212	223	-	-	41	39	
Old Coach Road	Bentley Brook	11	414	40	41	5	54	25	27	
Old Coach Road (Pond)	Bentley Brook	66	5	15	36	18	7	16	11	
Stoney Way	Bentley Brook	88	-	-	4	30	-	-	6	
Matlock Green	Bentley Brook	4	2	0	48	4	5	1	6	
Lime Tree Rd	Bentley Brook	-	2	0	-	-	5	1	-	
Matlock West										
Imperial Road	River Derwent	-	68	65	44	-	48	41	41	
Bank Rd (Council Offices)	River Derwent	1	1	2	0	6	5	8	2	
Bakewell Road/Dimple Rd	River Derwent	3	0	6	3	20	1	6	11	
Bank Road (Post Office)	River Derwent	94	93	73	35	106	54	41	13	
Dale Rd (Railway Bridge)	River Derwent	35	242	110	203	32	82	71	72	
Wolds Reservoir	Bentley Brook	-	0	-	9	-	2	-	1	
Snitterton Road	River Derwent	1,007	1,455	158	118	114	116	37	32	
By River in Matlock and Tansley										
Bentley Brook		181	487	321	391	72	103	110	101	
River Derwent		1,140	1,859	414	404	278	306	204	171	

Recorded spillages in Matlock and Tansley since 2020

The tale of the overflowing Lumsdale sewer



The number of spills at the Websters Terrace (Alfreton Road) overflow is a key issue for Matlock and Tansley. The overflow drains the sewer that runs down Lumsdale Road from Chesterfield Road with a branch that drains Tansley. That is a combined sewer – it carries clean water from surface run-off as well as foul water. This means that it is liable to surcharge in wet weather. Severn Trent and the Environment Agency claim that most incidents are caused by “exceptional” weather. LibDem councillors do not believe that there were 41 exceptional weather events in 2022 or 39 such events in 2023; that would mean they happened on average every 9 days!

Cllr Jo Linthwaite believes the Lumsdale sewer is spilling because of recent development on Chesterfield Road and in Tansley. “The sewer along Chesterfield Road and Lumsdale has had to take on substantial amounts of new development along Chesterfield Road including Moorcroft, Cardinshaw Road and Thornberries, and Thatchers Croft and Whitelea Nurseries in Tansley. Two other large developments are now progressing – the Honey development on Chesterfield Road and the Tansley House Gardens development in Tansley. These are all feeding into a 225mm pipe which is overflowing through manhole covers in Lumsdale as high up as the junction with Asker Lane. I have brought these and other problems to the attention of the planners and the DCC flood team.”

The A632 – a dangerous road?

In recent months three deaths in two separate traffic accidents between Chesterfield and Matlock and, more locally in Matlock, two incidents of Highfields students being run down. This essential busy “A” road needs to be made safer for pedestrians and motorists alike. LibDem councillors would like to hear from you about the measures you think are needed. Do we need more speed indicators, better signage, more enforcement of penalties for parking opposite white lines? What about more education and awareness raising for children and young people?

Cllr Marilyn Franks says, “Responsibility for the road rests with Derbyshire County Council Highways department. Councillors would like to hear your views so that further representations can be made to make this road safer for all.” **Cllr Sue Burfoot** says “it is an uphill struggle getting the Highways to agree a solution but we must continue to press. I do of course recognise that the Highways Department is very short of resources.”