



Brighton & Hove Liberal Democrats

Summer 2022 Newsletter

For Members & Supporters

Editor & MDO: Trevor Freeman

You are in _____ Ward

Editorial.

Welcome to the summer 2022 edition of our newsletter.



War has impacted Europe on a scale not seen since 1939-45. Its imprint will remain with us for the rest of our lives. If we needed a reminder of our ties with Europe the actions of Putin have supplied it. Our hearts go out to the people of Ukraine as the devastation wrought on them and their country reminds us of how precious our freedoms are and why they are worth defending. It is also a reminder of how fragile and precious Democracy is and that we are a vital part of it. We are privileged to be able to partake of it through our everyday acts as a political party and is evidence of why what we do is so important. When we campaign we are performing an essential part of that democracy. As we prepare for the local elections in 2023 it will be worth keeping in mind that having and using a vote is one of the most important freedoms we have as individuals.

i360

Whatever we may think about the i360 the important question to ask is 'Does it make financial sense?'

For the city's finances the answer is increasingly looking like No. The initial projections were wildly over optimistic and the numbers claimed have at no time looked like being achieved. The reality is now, even allowing for the Covid effect, that the i360 will never be able to repay its loans.

The city is guarantor to loans of over £45 million with unpaid interest increasing that each year. So just what have the Greens really signed us up for?



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Breaking News

Rottingdean By-Election date is 5th May 2022

2022 Executive Committee

Chair: Stewart Stone

Vice Chair: Martin Kersh

Secretary: Caroline Brown

Treasurer: Paul Chandler

Data Officer: Simon Jardine

Membership Development Officer (MDO): Trevor Freeman

Ordinary Members: Frances Lindsay-Hills, Beatrice Bass, David Sears, Andrew England, Ben Thomas, Peter Denyer, Hyder Khalil

Liberal Democrats
The Listening Party

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Wards

What are wards?

Wards are artificial constructs devised by government to enable the administration of small local areas. They have no physical barriers and are fluid in their existence.

But just what does that mean? Can I touch them? Can I speak to them? Do they communicate with me? The answer to all those questions is no. They exist in name only. The important thing is what happens around the idea of wards. They are used by central and local government to enable political representation and to minister to the needs of the populace within them. As individuals we use them to come together in various activities such as supporting local infrastructure and groupings. One example of those groupings is a ward political party, eg. ward X liberal democrats.

The boundaries of wards are reviewed every few years to make sure that they are still relevant to the reasons that they were chosen. The organisation responsible for this is the Boundary Commission. This year they are reviewing the ward boundaries in our city to make sure that they still comply with their original intentions. So far they think that the population distribution has changed so the boundaries need to change to make them fairer. We will know more later on in the year.



An Example of a Ward.

In this case Brunswick & Adelaide which is due to disappear under proposed boundary changes

Organising ourselves in wards.

Traditionally the idea was to have Focus Teams that formed the backbone of campaigning and talking to our members. However, that presupposes that we had a number of individuals all geared up to work in and administer the ward. But like all political parties we no longer have the numbers that enable us to do that. The Tory Party for instance has seen its membership fall from nearly 3 million in the 1950s to just over 150k now. The reasons for that fall are many but do not speak well of how governments have behaved towards their populace. People no longer engage with politics

as they once did. They feel distanced from the decision making process and that their views don't matter, except at election time.

As a political party at ward level we have a duty to respond to that and how we organise ourselves is critical to that process. If you contact your ward organiser they will be able to give you more details of how you can be a part of the ward team and the opportunities that presents. Working together is the best way to let people know they are not alone and that support is always there for them. Contact the MDO to find out who your ward organiser is.

Campaigning in wards

Campaigning is about communicating. It is a two way process and listening is just as important as talking. Some say it is more important. How can you deliver if you don't know what you should be delivering? We are there to serve our community, not the other way round. Therefore it follows that the first exercise in campaigning is about asking and listening. The way we do this is by surveys and questionnaires. Asking the right questions is critical and to do that we have to understand that wards exist within larger political entities and to choose the right entity to ask questions about, in our case, the local council. That means understanding that we should only ask questions about things we could influence if elected as a councillor. As local politicians we can influence care in the community but we cannot influence the funding of the NHS.

Once we know about people's concerns then we can respond to them by telling them what our policies are and by explaining how we would try and deal with their issues and what we propose to help resolve them. Part of the way we achieve that is by knocking on doors and speaking to residents, by distributing Focus leaflets telling them about us and what we offer and by asking them to lend us their vote on election day so that we can become their councillor Representative.



Ward Focus

Goldsmid Ward

Goldsmid ward lies to the West of Seven Dials and extends from there to Sackville Road. It encompasses Hove Railway Station, and extends North to Old Shoreham Road and South to Lansdowne Road. It contains one of the city's most attractive parks in St Ann's Well Gardens and is also home to Sussex County Cricket Club.

Politically, it returns 3 councillors (currently 2 Labour and 1 Green). It is in the Hove Constituency and is represented by a Labour MP. In 2021 it had an electorate of 12,190 according to the Boundary Commission. But all that could change as it is proposed to split off the south eastern part of the ward to Central Hove and in the process reduce the representation to 2 councillors.

For the Lib Dems it is our most active ward with two representatives in place who are both very experienced campaigners. They have a good team of activists supporting them and are able to regularly produce and distribute Focus leaflets. The team have also supported the Dyke Road Park initiative to raise funds for seats in the park with great success. This park is in a neighbouring ward and so helps to also raise our profile there. It is a great example of how Lib Dems can get things done by working with the local community.

North Portslade Ward

North Portslade lies on the outermost western region of the city. Its eastern border is the A293, with its southern border being Drove Road and Mile Oak Gardens. To the north it extends beyond the A27 by-pass into the South Downs National Park. Its main residential area is Mile Oak and it is home to the Portslade Aldridge Community Academy.

Politically, it returns 2 councillors (currently both Labour) and is in the Hove Constituency with a Labour MP. It had an electorate of 7,554 in 2021. The Boundary Commission propose no changes and so the ward will remain as it is.

We have not been very active in this ward in the past and are looking to change that. Mile Oak has always been known as having a strong sense of community and would welcome a more active Lib Dem presence.

If you are interested in raising our profile here then contact our MDO to learn how you could make a difference to North Portslade. The contact address is on page 1.

East Brighton Ward

East Brighton centres on Whitehawk and extends down to the seafront and the Peter Pan Playground area. It contains the main hospital for the city, Royal Sussex County Hospital and also includes Brighton Racecourse. Its main park is East Brighton Park ably backed up by Whitehawk Hill and its attendant playing fields area. Its northern boundary lies along Warren Road.

Politically it returns 3 councillors (currently all Labour). It is in the Kemptown Constituency and has a Labour MP. It had an electorate of 10,363 in 2021. The Boundary Commission propose parting the Hospital and Kemp Town areas from the new ward and reducing the number of councillors to 2. This will concentrate the ward into the Whitehawk and Wilson Avenue areas and remove a sizeable chunk of its population.

This is a ward that has received our attention in the past mainly because of its strategic placing between Queens Park and Rottingdean Coastal. The proposed changes are going to have a significant impact on the nature of the ward and make it much more focused on its community areas in Whitehawk. This area received major funding during the last Labour government through EB4U. Unfortunately, it is debatable whether this was well spent. There is much that could be achieved in this ward.



Withdean Ward

Withdean lies to the North of the city and extends from Highcroft Villas along the west of London Road past the A27 by-pass into the National Park. To its east it gathers in the area around Surrenden Road taking in the schools complex around Varndean. It includes Coney Hill and Woods and the city's only athletic arena at Withdean Stadium (once a former temporary home to B & H Albion F C.).

Politically it returns 3 councillors (all Green) and is in the Pavilion Constituency with a Green MP. It had an electorate of 11,324 in 2021. The Boundary Commission has proposed a major change regarding this ward and as such it will cease to exist and will be absorbed into other wards.

Events

Courtesy of the Events Committee.

Early Booking for Brighton Pride

If you would like to join the Brighton & Hove Pride Parade on Saturday 6th August 2022 and walk with the B&H Lib Dem group, please email <events@liberalbrighton.org> with your name, email address and mobile phone number. This information will be used to track numbers and contact you about arrangements as well as in the case of an emergency. Please RSVP as numbers are limited to 50 only. We shall gather at 10.30 am by the Palmeira Square bus stop and the parade will begin at 11 am.

Rottingdean By-Election



Our candidate for Rottingdean is Stewart Stone, who is also the Chair of our local party.

Stewart grew up in Brighton and went to Varndean before attending university in Kent and graduating with a degree in Industrial Relations (Economics).

After a number of years living elsewhere he moved back to Brighton and became involved with us joining our Executive in 2020. He previously stood as a candidate for the Lib Dems at General Election so is a long time supporter of our ideals and is fully committed to the local community and their needs. He lives in the ward and understands the problems the residents face. He is ready to take on the role of councillor and do all he can to make the life of those who live in the ward better by being their Lib Dem representative.

Coffee mornings are held every month, one in each constituency.

Locations and timings are;

Hove: 11:00 am on the first Wednesday of the month at Big Beach Cafe, Hove Lagoon, BN3 4AX. It is hosted by Martin Kersh and Jo Baldwin-Trott.

Kemp Town: 11:00 am on the first Saturday of the month at Open Art Cafe, 6 Nevill Road, Rottingdean, BN2 7HG. It is hosted by Stewart Stone and Simon Jardine.

Pavilion: 11:00 on the second Friday of the month at Muse Café, 37 Queens Road, BN1 3XB. It is hosted by Hyder Khalil and Frances Lindsay-Hills.

All are welcome and it is quite OK to attend those outside your constituency.

Rottingdean By-Election

We need people to help with delivery and canvassing. If you think that could be you then we would love to hear from you. Please contact us at info@liberalbrighton.org.



A Timely Warning from one of our former Councillors, Frances Lindsay-Hills

Many of you will have been receiving regular letters from Southern Water headed 'Information about the plumbing and drainage at ' followed by your address. This is a very slick piece of marketing, carefully personalized with your name and address. It is just adding another financial worry that most of us could do without. Don't be fooled, they are simply selling insurance. They have contracted an underwriter called Aviva and one assumes they are taking a profit from every policy sold. If you want to insure your water pipes it would be worth contacting your home insurers, you are probably already covered for burst pipes, etc.

The big 'come on' is that if you sign a direct debit payment form which is attached to the letter, within eight days you will get a year's cover for £6. If you read on to the end you will discover that once this offer ends your cover will automatically renew unless you opt out and is expected to increase to £158.84 in the second year, provided no claims have been made.

Last year Southern Water had to pay a £90 million pound fine after they pleaded guilty to thousands of illegal discharges of sewage which polluted rivers and coastal waters in the south. After paying the fine they made £139 million profit. They don't need to sell you insurance you didn't know you needed.