

FOCUS

On North East Somerset

Edited by
Gail Coleshill

**Only the
Lib Dems
can beat the
Tories here!**

Number of seats on
B&NES Council
(Others = 5 Labour
& 3 independent
councillors)

**LIB
DEM
26**



**CON
31**

**Others
8**

www.nes-libdems.org.uk

Winter 2009/10

Plans have been unveiled by B&NES Council that could see an extra 15,000 houses being built by the year 2026.

The ruling Conservatives are supporting proposals that would see thousands of houses built on Greenbelt land and open spaces right across the authority.

Gail Coleshill, the prospective Lib Dem MP for North East Somerset, says the targets are outrageous;

“The plans to destroy both the Greenbelt and existing communities are mad. Building thousands of houses in this way will do nothing to address the area’s poor infrastructure.

Yes, we need to provide more housing but this is not the best way to go about it. Many of these sites are far from transport links and job opportunities. If the plans go ahead then our roads will be even more grid-locked.”

Whilst B&NES has given a preference to building 2,000 houses next to Newton St Loe, plans also indicate 2,000 could be built in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) at South Stoke. Gail is supporting residents and

Cllr Neil Butters in their fight against the plans.

Recently, Gail and Neil met with Graham Watson, the Lib Dem Euro MP for the South West, in South Stoke who signed the petition condemning the proposals.

Gail believes there are better ways to provide more homes. She commented: **“There are almost 700 empty properties currently in B&NES. The Council should be making it a priority for these properties to be brought back into use.”**

Lib Dem Euro MP Graham Watson supports South Stoke’s campaign.

For more details watch Gail’s YouTube video at www.nes-libdems.org.uk

Gail and the Lib Dems - Standing up for the people



Save our

Greenbelt

Under threat: Gail (centre), Lib Dem Councillors, campaigners and residents next to threatened green fields at Newton St Loe.

Photo: Chaz Fisher

If housing development goes ahead, these areas will be hit hardest:

- ✗ Newton St Loe - 2,000
- ✗ Keynsham - 1,300+
- ✗ Whitchurch - 3,300+
- ✗ City of Bath - 7,000+

Tory plans also indicate a further 1,500+ houses to be built in other parts of North East Somerset, with Peasedown St John and Paulton earmarked as favourite sites.



Stop the Park & Ride

B&NES Council is a step closer to forcing through the Park & Ride on Bathampton Meadows, located between Batheaston and Bathampton.

Recently, the government refused to side with residents, and rejected calls for a public inquiry.

Prospective MP Gail Coleshill is supporting residents in their fight against the Park and Ride. She said:

“The scheme won’t make a difference to Bath’s traffic problems, yet it will destroy views of the

beautiful meadows and depress house prices in the area.

There are much better ways to tackle congestion. The Lib Dems would rather see re-opened railway stations at places like Corsham, Box and Bathampton.

The Park and Ride approach is out-dated, it will not solve the problem and is a waste of taxpayers’ money. It’s a real shame that both the Tory Council and Labour government want this scheme to go ahead.”

Gail has launched a campaign requesting the Local Government Ombudsman to investigate alleged irregularities in the process by which the Council awarded itself planning permission for the development.

To support the campaign visit: www.ourcampaign.org.uk/stoptheparkandride

Lib Dems give *green* light to Transition Towns

Gail and the Lib Dems are active supporters of the new ‘Transition Town’ initiatives springing up across North East Somerset.

Designed to encourage people to become less dependent on cheap oil, transition movements give people opportunities to grow local produce and shape their own sustainable futures. Some of the transition-style projects supported by Lib Dems locally include:

- ✓ Wellow Futures
- ✓ Peasedown Community Farm
- ✓ Bathampton Hydro Mill
- ✓ Freshford Community Shop
- ✓ Peasedown Area Land Share (PALS)

Meanwhile, Gail has been working with Parish Councils to create more allotment space. She said: **“There are Parish Councils right across the area with allotment waiting lists. Keynsham Town Council has 47 people on its list, with 30 being on the Norton-Radstock list. What I’d like to see is more land owners coming forward to let their land for community growing space.”**

For information about the above projects contact the Lib Dem representative for that area (see back page).



Bathampton Meadows: Gail wants to see this landscape protected from development.



Left: Gail with Cllr Neil Butters and Bath MP Don Foster outside the new community shop in Freshford.

Top right: Gail with Glastonbury Festival’s Michael Eavis and resident Emma Farrell talk about the campaign for more allotments in Peasedown

Bottom: Gail with Keynsham Lib Dems outside the town’s allotments.

Councillor's campaign for safer A367

Following Cllr Sarah Bevan's success in securing two pedestrian refuges on the A367 by-pass around Peasedown St John she has now launched a campaign for a third one.

Recently, she met B&NES Council Officers who have agreed to install a refuge. Sarah commented:

"This is very good news for pedestrian safety. Many residents like to walk around the fields between Peasedown St John, Shoscombe and Wellow.

Since becoming a Councillor in 2003, I've been constantly campaigning for more safety measures on the A367. This additional refuge is a step towards a much safer by-pass."

B&NES Council has told Cllr Bevan that funding for the scheme will be included in next year's budget.

For more details about the campaign watch Sarah's YouTube video at www.peasedownlibdems.org.uk



Cllr Sarah Bevan is campaigning to make the A367 safer for walkers.



New signs could save life

During the summer, a two-year old resident of Charlotte Place, Peasedown St John experienced severe breathing difficulties.

Charlotte Place was a difficult location for paramedics to find due to the location having no street signs.

Luckily, the ambulance was able to find the location and save the child's life.

Having heard of the child's frightening experience, Cllr Nathan Hartley arranged for new street signs to be clearly displayed next to and on the external wall at Charlotte Place.

Nathan said: **"Unfortunately, this two-year old resident often experiences breathing difficulties, and so if paramedics are called again helping should be a lot easier."**

Campaigner cracks down on flooding

Lib Dem Louise Bray (Bathavon West) wants B&NES to address flooding problems in rural areas.

She is pictured here on Combe Hay Bridge which she arranged to be cleared recently after heavy rainfall. She said: **"The problem at the moment is the Council doesn't see this as an issue. I disagree! If our country lanes are flooded people find it difficult to travel and could cause a driving hazard."** Louise wants to hear from any residents who have flooding problems in their area.



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Neil fights for new Wellow bus services



Cllr Neil Butters (Bathavon South) is liaising with B&NES Council over the possibility of a new bus service between Wellow and the Odd Down Park and Ride, and a further service into Bath via Orchard Way, Peasedown St John.



Cllr Neil Butters

He said: **“People living in rural areas often find it difficult to get about. If you live in a small village and don’t drive then you are very dependent on others for transport.**

The economics are difficult, especially at the moment. However, it is important to keep trying to crack this.”

Neil has been informed that three bus operators have shown an interest in running these services. Keep an eye on the local press for future news about this story.



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Your Local Lib Dem Team



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