



# FOCUS

**Newsletter from Rushcliffe Liberal Democrats Summer 2011**

## Thank you for your support

### May 2011 Musters Ward Election Results

<b>Karrar Khan</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>1,057</b>
<b>Rod Jones</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>1,011</b>
<i>both elected</i>		
S Carlton	Conservative	376
M Khera	Conservative	375
P Fallon	Labour	356
C Wrigley	Labour	336

The turnout was 59.2% - the Rushcliffe average was 50.7%. Thank you for your high level of interest in the democratic process. The total votes for us held firm.

**Many residents told us that we were arguing on the local issues which matter and many said that they appreciated being informed regularly.**

Liberal Democrats are still the largest opposition party. Of the 50 Councillors there are now 6 Liberal Democrats, 5 Labour, 2 Green and 1 Independent on this Council. The Conservatives (over)run the Council: they grew by one and now number 36!

*N.B. All W.B. Wards elect 2 Councillors*



**Rod Jones and Karrar Khan at Boundary Road Playing Field.**

We will do our best to serve Musters Ward residents as your Councillors on Rushcliffe Borough for a further 4 years.

You have told us of your concerns with waste collection charges, grass cutting, road maintenance, planning, parking, speeding, Rushcliffe Leisure Centre amongst others.

*We welcome contact from any resident and your views, suggestions and comments. We would like more people to join us to help our efforts in the wider community in West Bridgford. For our part we will keep residents informed about what we do and what we stand for. We issue Focus at least three times each year. An increasing number of people also now receive occasional Community News updates by email. If you are interested - contact Rod Jones.*

### Green bins - a charge too far?

We will continue to press for the annual charge to be reduced to £10, as we did at the outset.

Charging £25 for emptying green bins was forecast to produce an income for the Council of £330,000 a year. Now that about half of all householders have (mostly reluctantly) signed up to the scheme, the Council is set to make £566,000 a year (and rising). This excess profit is not going to provide you with better street cleaning, or more public toilets, or simply reducing the green bin charge.

**See inside re Charges, Metal, WB, Library and more.**

### **Your Musters and West Bridgford Liberal Democrat Councillors**

Contact us with views or help: Rod Jones 0115 914 6616 and Karrar Khan 0115 914 6758

Emails: [cllr.rjones@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.rjones@rushcliffe.gov.uk) & [cllr.kkhan@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.kkhan@rushcliffe.gov.uk)

Visit [www.rushcliffelibdems.org.uk](http://www.rushcliffelibdems.org.uk)

## Focus Team - Working for you

### Green Bins (continued)

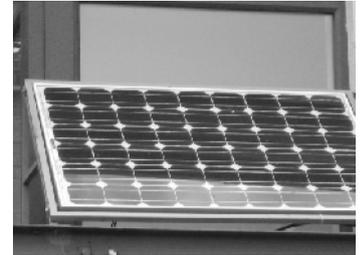
It takes three months to set the charging system up; so the scheme started at the start of July . The Council is taking 12 months' money for 9 months' chargeable service in the current financial year. This was raised in the Council Meeting. The Conservative Cabinet dismissed this and said those residents had had 12 months service. Is this right? Many residents don't think so and some are pursuing complaints.

What's more the charge of £25 is almost half the cost of collecting all your bins each year!

### Greener way to increase Council Income

Liberal Democrat Minister, Chris Huhne, removed the block which stopped Councils generating and selling electricity to the grid. So now Council's can use their buildings to generate solar and other forms of power.

Last year Rod Jones proposed a motion in Rushcliffe Council. This called for the Council to look quickly at using its buildings to generate electricity. The Conservatives are not moving fast enough and have put nothing new in place. A report is said to be imminent.



### County's Plans for West Bridgford Library and Youth Centre

Rushcliffe's Development Control Committee in May was consulted by the County Council on the latest design.

Rod Jones and others expressed serious concerns about the architecture proposed particularly for the side of the buildings.

We want this to be a building for the future of which we and others can be proud.



We want to see improvements made to the excessive variety of windows on the side facing the car park. There were six different types of windows.

We want to see the proposed 'gabion wall' removed (this is a type of stone and steel base cladding and eminently a 'climbing wall').

We want to see serious energy efficiency measures.

### Grassing Cutting - County Council Conserves Weeds!

Caring for our public spaces means a lot to residents. Public grass here is cut by the County, the Borough and the Highways Agency. Finding out who is supposed to cut what can be a nightmare.

This has recently got worse with the ending of an agreement under which the Borough used to cut the County's grass, while the County looked after the Borough's trees. The Borough cuts its grass on its open amenity areas to an acceptable standard between 9 and 12 times a year.



Karrar Khan and Harrow Road grass pictured by the Nottingham Evening Post which told of Resident's fury.

The County decided to take back cutting its highway verges – but **reduced it to 5 times a year**. This includes the D shaped areas on Harrow and Repton Roads. The first cut this year was made after the grass had gone to seed on 1<sup>st</sup> June. The result is badly cut grass and the area left untidy. Residents ask: "Why can't they do it properly?"

The County's main roads now have high weeds and look a mess.

At a recent meeting the Council backed a motion proposed by Sam Boote (Liberal Democrat, Keyworth) calling for negotiations to restore the grass and tree-cutting to its previous standard.

**Breaking News.** After concerted action the footpath under the A52 has been partly re-opened. A vehicle barrier is to be installed.

**Liberal Democrats – working all year round**

# West Bridgford – needs a low cost local Council

Rod Jones and Karrar Khan proposed at the Council meeting **“that a West Bridgford Member Group be established to examine the specific local issues facing West Bridgford from the imminent Sharphill development, to hear the views of residents and community groups and partners of the Council and to comment to Cabinet accordingly.”** (\*email Rod Jones if you would like a copy of the submission.)

We are mindful that the population is changing and the new housing will add to that. Witness the years in which West Bridgford primary schools have found that there were more children than spaces.

Many people want to know the school, health and traffic measures for the new housing. At a time when our areas of housing are again spreading wider, West Bridgford has some GP surgeries considering getting together in one mega centre - and the idea of closing Rushcliffe Leisure Centre has been floated, with a mega centre created at the Arena! *Imagine the travel consequences.*



**Future of Rushcliffe Leisure Centre - its location is under question.**

We believe that West Bridgford residents should be involved more in commenting directly on potential changes. Sports groups should be able to know what the arrangements will be for the additional sports grounds. The allotments associations and people interested in shaping the community park should be more involved. We proposed this group because it would link to the Cabinet and have officer support. All opposition parties voted to support this.

**The Conservatives turned down this proposal.** Even though they praise Parish & Town Councils in the rest of Rushcliffe for enabling local involvement. In effect they said that West Bridgford was adequately served by the Borough Council. They refer to a County Council created ‘West Bridgford Forum’ which has no money, no teeth and no executive function. Have you heard about it? West Bridgford Conservatives should be ashamed – they have not welcomed localism.

### Other News in Brief

**Sharphill** hasn't gone away! A start on site has been made just inside the time limit. A stretch of road has been created from off the Wells driveway. This is likely to remain a ‘road to somewhere’ while various deals and purchases are sorted. Meantime the Wells new granary silos can be seen shining in the distance beyond Flawforth Lane.

**Malvern Road.** Good news. The very damaged paving was repaired at last - replaced with tarmac over 2 years of the County's planned programme.

**Boundary Road.** The yellow lining beside the Park is very welcome. Our campaign to deter dangerous parking (photos, site meetings, emails) has ended in success.

**Interactive Speed Signs.** Good news. The County Council has established a permanent sign to replace the temporary one on Musters Road. The Boundary Road temporary sign is often out of action – we would like to see a permanent replacement.

**Chaworth and South Road tree pollarding.** The County is considering a proposal to do alternate trees so that the street scene is never totally bare.

## Rushcliffe Demands More for West Bridgford Car Parks

The machines have been changed. We are told the others were unreliable (not that we had noticed) and that the new machines enable afternoon parkers to pay for the evening charge. However the new ones require you to input your car registration.

No opportunity was taken to meet the requests to pay a lesser fee for under one hour.

There are many residents who feel unfairly charged for a few minutes parking. Residents have already told us that they feel fleeced.

### **Planning Inquiry.**

Liberal Democrat Councillors are supporting the public in saying NO to a Tesco in Keyworth.

### **Karrar not impressed by the new car park ticket machines**



# Liberal Democrats – the Listening Party

## On your Metal - help make our neighbourhoods safer

Many of the scrap metal lorries which roam our streets are **NOT REGISTERED\*** to collect metal. Some come from a distance. The Police have said (at our local liaison meeting) that members of the public should report the details immediately to them locally by ringing 0300 300 9999.

*Residents have not known that most of these vehicles are outside the law. It has been convenient to leave unwanted metal out at the front – from where the items disappear. This ‘feeds’ the unregistered ‘roamers’. Please DON’T leave items out for collection by unregistered individuals. You can:*

- take your scrap metal to the NCC’s ‘tip’ on Rugby Rd or
- contact Rushcliffe Council on 981 9911 for a special items collection (there is a charge) or
- ring a registered Nottingham scrap metal dealer. These can be found by looking in yellow pages under ‘scrap metal’ or by searching the net.

\*Dealers in waste are required to register with the Environment Agency. *Please do not use unregistered dealers.*

**Metal thefts are a continuing concern.** Police reports mention metal thefts from local properties. Thefts include radiators and metal objects from the front, side and even inside properties. Recently metal lids were stolen from a West Bridgford street. Playground equipment was stolen twice and attempts made to remove street signs. Roof lead and street wiring was stolen in Ruddington.

## Musters Rectory & Melton Road Junctions

Changes were made by the County Council without consultation. For upper Musters Road, the 2 lanes have benefits in reducing the rush hour queues. This does not justify the consequences for increased risks to life and limb, nor the deletion of all cycle lanes.

The changes create a big risk at the bend of Rectory Rd and its junction with Musters Road. Here the previous cycle lane was deleted and the 2 vehicle lanes are now continued into both roads. Cars are not required to hesitate or signal! Also drivers not familiar with the area switch lanes and zoom across. This makes it more unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists.

More people are cycling and walking in the Musters Ward area and in West Bridgford – which is great. Sadly the changes to this junction will encourage more cyclists to ride on the pavements and on the pedestrian crossings to avoid being sandwiched.



**Rod Jones sees problems for pedestrians and others at the high risk junction.**

## Musters Rd/Boundary Rd Junction – cameras v physical barriers

After several months of delays, the County Council still hasn’t decided how to ensure the top end opening into Sharphill Road will be **restricted** to public service vehicles – mainly buses. This requirement has been known since 2009 when planning permission was given. In 2010 there were meetings with residents and later Rod Jones and others met the County Council Officers with Rushcliffe Planning Officers. Yet the County has still not committed anything in writing. We want physical barriers.

Please let us know if you have a local problem which you would like the Focus Team to tackle or if you are interested to support our efforts:

Name .....Address.....

Phone .....Email.....@.....

Please return to: Liberal Democrats, c/o 110 Repton Rd, West Bridgford, NG2 7EL

Or email : [cllr.rjones@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.rjones@rushcliffe.gov.uk) & [cllr.kkhan@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.kkhan@rushcliffe.gov.uk).