



Neil Harrison Ian Townsend and Anthony Negus

Welcome to our Green Capital!

Anthony, Neil and Ian are celebrating the arrival of Bristol's European Green Capital year. As your councillors, Anthony and Neil worked hard, alongside local MP Stephen Williams and many others, to help bring the honour to Bristol.

Anthony Negus said "The green agenda in Bristol was being set and delivered upon by the Lib Dems years before there was a mayor or any Green Party councillors. We saw continental cities as setting the pace and aimed to be best city in the UK. Lib Dem Council Leader Barbara Janke set up the Green Partnership in 2008 and we first entered the contest to be European Green Capital in 2011, coming second to Copenhagen, the clear favourite.

"Undeterred, and assured that our comprehensive improvements made Bristol a strong candidate, we worked with local people over a prolonged period to help win European Green Capital status for Bristol. Our local MP Stephen Williams successfully lobbied the Government for £7 million in Green Capital funding for Bristol to help fund schemes from many groups across the city. We hope this award will lead to radical initiatives within Bristol that encourage sustainable living and generate a sense of civic pride and a lasting legacy."

Bristol West MP, Stephen Williams, said: "I was pleased to be able to help secure funds to help give Green Capital 2015 a real legacy for our city. This year will place Bristol at the centre of European debate on how to tackle climate change and live more sustainable lives. It's a huge opportunity for our city and I look forward to all the events and activities that lie ahead."

The Lib Dem record on the environment

Local campaigner Ian Townsend said: "Bristol would never have become European Green Capital if it was not for the huge amount of work done by the previous Lib Dem administration to make our city a world leader on the environment." This work included:

- Cancelling Labour's plans for a mass-burn incinerator for the city's household waste and fighting Eric Pickles plans to defy our planning policy.
- Introducing kerbside plastics collection to cut waste to landfill and pushing recycling rates up above 50% (under the Mayor recycling rates have, sadly, dropped back under 50%).
- Introducing biomass boilers into our schools and invested millions in solar panels on over 30 school buildings and on our council housing stock.
- Introducing wind turbines in Avonmouth and becoming the first local authority in the UK to set up its own energy services company.
- Introducing park-keepers in every one of our major parks after achieving 'green flag' status in 11 major parks.
- Reducing 40% of the energy cost of street lights without turning off any lights - saving £1 million and cutting emissions.
- Initiating and published the Council's first 'Walking Strategy' and delivering Bristol's Cycling City status, which helped to increase cycling trips in Bristol by 63%.

Anthony said "The choice in May is clear: if you care about the environment, and want to live in a cleaner and more sustainable city, it is the Lib Dems who have proven that they can deliver actions, not just words, on this and on the services that hold our city together."



Local Lib Dem campaigners Ian Townsend and Anthony Negus are delighted that Bristol is European Green Capital 2015, in recognition of the huge amount of work that has been done to make Bristol an environmental world leader.

Big boost for Cycle City!

Lib Dem Leader Nick Clegg has announced an extra £210 million for cycling infrastructure. Bristol looks set to benefit from around £10 million of grants as one of 8 Cycling Cities. Council officers are working on a number of projects across Bristol that could benefit from the new money, including on Gloucester Road and in the centre.

This is the latest in a long line of successful Lib Dem initiatives for cycling in Bristol, not least winning the accolade of 'UK Cycling City' - a key factor in our successful bid for Green Capital 2015 - and investing in cycle safety measures and infrastructure projects.

Local campaigner and cycle commuter Ian Townsend is leading on city-wide Lib Dem cycling policy ahead of the May election. "We see cycling as part of a wider healthy living approach that also encourages walking, and a great way to reduce congestion on our city's crowded roads," said Ian. Nationally the Lib Dems propose a 'Green Transport Act' as one of five new green laws which would benefit cycling, walking and public transport.

Lib Dems... working hard all year round!

NEWS IN BRIEF

Whiteladies Road empty site - Anthony has written to Tesco to ascertain their plans for the unsightly empty plot on Whiteladies Road at the corner of South Parade. He says "Building work has not started after demolition of the petrol station and in view of recent announcements the permitted scheme could be further delayed and remain a neglected eyesore, even worse than yet another supermarket. If this is likely, I have asked Tesco to consider making a townscape contribution to a scheme from the two affected Neighbourhood Partnerships to create an urban 'pocket park.'

"Some of the concrete surface could be broken up with other ways of greening the areas such as tubs for trees and shrubs, and benches. Local businesses, 'Winning Whiteladies', local residents, schools and the universities might be involved in ideas and action." Watch this (open) space!

Bin Lids - Be aware - if your bin lid doesn't close, it is likely that the bin will not be emptied, and you will struggle to catch up. Push it down, remove a bag for next time or better RECYCLE into the boxes. If you don't know how this works, consult: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/nav/bins-recycling-and-street-cleaning> or your landlord - who should have told you.



Bishopston, Cotham and Redland Neighbourhood Partnership Open Meetings and 'green capital' awards - Our local Neighbourhood Partnership will have made a decision on 26th January on which of the varied local schemes to allocate the £10k of 'green capital' grants. **The next Cotham Neighbourhood Forum is on 16th February 7-9pm - Saint John's Primary School, Lower Redland Road site (The Old Police Station).** The agenda includes: Waste Collection and Litter, and current and future neighbourhood priorities. Come and have your say on our local area.

Colston's Primary Annexe, Elmgrove Road - Anthony recently met with council officers and staff at Colston's Primary School. He says "I remain concerned that safety for children and accompanying adults will be affected by the increased traffic that will inevitably be channelled down Redland Road because of the left turn ban into Bath Buildings to ease issues at the Dolphin School.

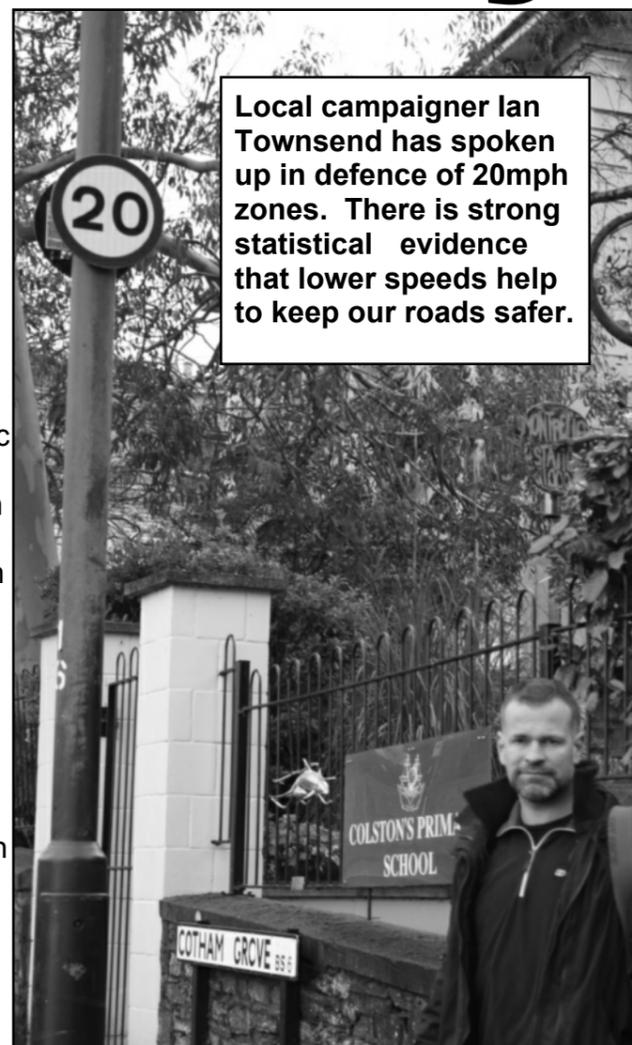
"Although the junctions at each end of this stretch of Redland Road are to be improved, this narrow two-way road is already difficult to negotiate. A school, more traffic and build-outs will slow traffic but also frustrate drivers with poor visibility. Cyclists as well as pedestrians will be at greater risk. Council officers agreed to review the location of the crossing to make it as visible as possible."

20 is Plenty!

Cotham ward has been benefiting from safer 20mph zones for some time. The 20mph zones were a Lib Dem initiative under the previous administration, introduced with broad residents' support.

But other local parties attempted to halt their rollout in other parts of the city at a council meeting in November, called for new zones to be postponed until after an enquiry had been held. Local campaigner Ian Townsend made a public statement at the last meeting of the full Council in support of 20mph areas which encourage walking and cycling and are safer for pedestrians - especially children in areas near schools - riders and drivers, and called for greater enforcement in problem areas now the zones have bedded down. Anthony spoke against the dissenters.

The motion was only advisory, and the Mayor committed to continue with 20mph policies. Residents can volunteer for 'Community Speed Watch': you get police training before helping to monitor car speeds in our area. If you are interested in helping to ensure our streets are safer, please let us know.



Local campaigner Ian Townsend has spoken up in defence of 20mph zones. There is strong statistical evidence that lower speeds help to keep our roads safer.

Preserving the Colston Hall - Bristol's Performance Heart

Bristol has an extremely vibrant cultural sector and the Colston Hall is the cultural heart of the city. It is Bristol's largest concert hall and its Listed building dates back to the 1860s. It requires significant modernisation to meet the needs and expectations of 21st century audiences and performers. The Liberal Democrats have a proud tradition of championing the arts, culture and heritage within our city. The previous Lib Dem administration successfully invested in the Colston Hall's new foyer, the venue's major sustaining face-lift and helped form the Bristol Music Trust, an arm's length organisation which now manages the Hall and is the focus for music all around the city.

We have since been making a positive case for the interior of the building and the auditorium to be given urgent improvements and have been asking the mayor and Bristol City Council to give clear financial backing to the project. We welcome the mayor's conversion to increase the Council's future investment in the Colston Hall from £5m to £10m and raising its importance from Tier 3 to Tier 2 after the Liberal Democrats secured all-party support for our long-running campaign.

Anthony said: "The creation of the Music Trust under the last Lib Dem administration has led to much greater efficiency, a better programme of events for the city, Arts Council funding for the first time and a registered surplus, about the only comparable hall in the country to do that. "This latest financial commitment goes a long way in ensuring the Hall's future is secure for everyone to enjoy."

Ian added "This represents a clear commitment to continue to invest in and to support the ambitious £45m transformative programme at the Colston Hall. The scheme will move to the main Capital Programme when all funding has been raised by the Trust and all necessary approvals are in place. This should now help to unlock other sources of finance which together could deliver all our hopes for an assured future for this stunning arts venue.

Your Cotham Liberal Democrat team...



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