

# NORTH NORFOLK GREEN NEWS

This newsletter is an introduction to the North Norfolk Green Party. As a group, we are keen to discuss 'Green' science, news and issues, as well as local, national, and international policy. We want to let you know about ideas, events, and possibilities for all of us to live a healthier, happier life. We want to build a better future for ourselves, our children, and grandchildren. Hope you enjoy!

## DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS MAY 2023

- Greens make a record 200 gains - the highest ever growth in the party's 50 year history
- Party gains majority control of a local authority for the first time - win in Mid Suffolk lays foundation for new MPs at General Election
- Made a total of 155 net gains from the Conservatives - cementing its position as the true opposition to the government in many places across the country

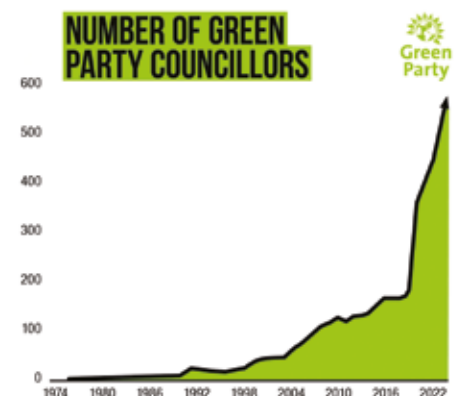
The Green Party went into this year's local elections looking to defend more seats than ever before - following its record surge in 2019. However, not only did we **hold 225** of our sitting councillors, but we **gained 201** new seats, taking the total number of **Green councillors** in England and Wales to a **record 738**, on a **record 166 councils**. Greens are now in control or sharing power with other parties in many councils and in East Anglia we had great success in Broadland, where our four Green councillors are in a power-sharing coalition, and in **Mid Suffolk where we are the largest party**.

North Norfolk Green Party stood in 17 of the 32 wards in May

and we got a total of 2,059 votes. We concentrated our leafleting and campaigning in Holt, where Simon Russell got an encouraging 286 votes. In fact all of our candidates did well and gave people the chance to vote Green. Our current **first-past-the-post electoral system is outdated and undemocratic** and the first task of any future Government should be to change to a proper system of proportional representation so that every vote counts.

**Green councillors make a difference** wherever they are elected and keep Councils aware of the urgency of addressing the climate and ecological emergency. Even in North Norfolk where the Liberal Democrats are in control and the Council has declared a climate emergency **we should be at the table** and helping. NNDC has no Green councillors yet but we can change that!

**Remember, the Green Party can win!**



## BENJAMIN COURT, CROMER

In July we were shocked to discover that the **Conservative run County Council** has decided, without local consultation, to **close the valuable rehabilitation facility** at Benjamin Court. The first group to discover this was the North Norfolk TUC who organized a demonstration outside Benjamin Court. Members of the Green Party including their candidate for the next General Election, Liz Dixon joined in. **A campaign group was formed** and they called upon Cromer Town Council to support the campaign and for the North Norfolk MP, Duncan Baker, to call a public meeting to meet with County Council and NHS representatives. The meeting

was held on August 25 and the 250 members of the public expressed their concerns about the withdrawal of this facility and the lack of local consultation.

The County Council wants to discharge more patients home, which is good for those who can manage, but it leaves those who can't without the local help they need before they can return home. **This will inevitably result in more bed blocking** and longer queues of ambulances at the acute hospitals. The campaign to rescue this facility is growing rapidly as so many residents of North Norfolk really appreciate its importance to the area. We hope that **public pressure will bring about a change of policy** and the Green Party members will be campaigning hard on this matter.

**IF YOU WANT A GREENER, FAIRER, MORE COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY  
THEN DO DIFFERENT AND VOTE GREEN.**

# LOSING OUR BANK BRANCHES

There is growing concern and frustration with the **fast-paced move towards digital banking**. In some places in our rural communities this is becoming the only option. While online banking offers convenience and efficiency, it also raises social implications related to access, personal interactions and the loss of meaningful financial support. It couldn't have come at a worse time for many people already facing financial difficulties.

Kate and her elderly mother are customers of **Barclays Fakenham**, this is **one of many banks to announce closure** in the busy market town. They are already traveling from Wells-next-the-Sea to use this service because the Wells branch closed its doors in 2019. "Teaching my mother to use online banking is never going to happen, change isn't always a good thing and doesn't suit everybody."

With the town's full-time Post Office closing back in 2020, we believe the current part-time Post Office is already struggling to cope and the added demand will cause more problems and even longer queues. The search continues for a full time base for the well-used service. Losing access to a walk-in branch is **highly likely to exclude certain people**, this is becoming a constant issue for our rural areas. There are individuals who can't use a computer, low-income households and those in areas with limited access to public transport. In addition, poor internet means some tourism and other businesses are already losing custom.

While some may readily adapt to digital life, banks should recognize that only one way forward isn't good enough. These fast-paced changes are forcing those already at a disadvantage into an even more challenging future. The solution is **Banking Hubs** which provide face-to-face access to cash and banking in the heart of UK communities - whoever you bank with but **the roll-out of these facilities is painfully slow**. As of August 2023 there are 8 in the whole of the UK despite almost half of the UK's bank branches having been closed since 2015. We are working hard to ensure that there is a Banking Hub in every town.



## TIPS AND IDEAS

**Ideas for shared holiday activities with children that cost little to the planet and your pocket.**

- Grow cress in empty eggshells and put faces on for Egg Heads
- No cook play dough, there are lots of recipes on line to choose from.
- Wildlife spotting for older children with points!
- Build a den indoors if no garden, using household items and use as a story-telling zone or dry art zone.
- Nature walks collecting items that are then turned into art either a picture or a sculpture.
- Treasure hunt at home for young children go out on a nature trail for older children.
- Make a bug house for insects using what you find on a nature trail or around the home



## CANDIDATE CORNER

### LIZ DIXON, GREEN PARTY PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE FOR NORTH NORFOLK



The NHS constitution says:

- You have the right to access NHS services. You will not be refused access on unreasonable grounds.
- You have the right to receive care and treatment that is appropriate to you, meets your needs and reflects your preferences.
- You have the right to expect your NHS to assess the health requirements of your community and to commission and put in place the services to meet those needs as considered necessary, and in the case of public health services commissioned by local authorities, to take steps to improve the health of the local community.

The current **BUPA dental practice in North Walsham** is up for sale again as it is not profitable enough for its not for profit private health provider. When BUPA took over the practice it lowered NHS provision for patients but still currently provides some NHS services. I am led to believe that **if there is no buyer found, BUPA will just close the practice** leaving its patients with no dental provision. It seems that there is **no space available for new NHS patients in any of the dental practices in North Norfolk!** This is a direct result of 13 years of relentless underfunding of the NHS by this Conservative government, meaning that dentists providing NHS treatment are paid less than it costs to provide the service. One could speculate that the underfunding has been done quite deliberately so all dentistry is provided by private companies. **The Green Party is fully committed to adequately fund the NHS** in order to ensure North Norfolk would have the dental services that it is entitled to under the NHS constitution.

## JOIN US

IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION OR TO GET INVOLVED:

[greenpartynorthnorfolk@gmail.com](mailto:greenpartynorthnorfolk@gmail.com)  
[lizannedixon@gmail.com](mailto:lizannedixon@gmail.com) (membership secretary)

IF YOU WANT TO JOIN THE GREEN PARTY:

<https://join.greenparty.org.uk>

IF YOU CAN HELP AT THE NEXT ELECTION BY LEAFLETING, CANVASSING, DONATING OR STANDING AS A CANDIDATE:  
Stephen Green: [elections@northnorfolk.greenparty.org.uk](mailto:elections@northnorfolk.greenparty.org.uk)

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# Green Party