

Say no to Parkway

Martin Horwood MP backs opposition to Gloucester Parkway Station



If Parkway goes ahead then services to and from Cheltenham Spa Station will be drastically reduced

Cheltenham's Member of Parliament, Martin Horwood has voiced his opposition to Gloucestershire County Council's proposal to build a new railway station at Elmbridge Court near Gloucester.

Martin has written to the transport minister to urge the government not to back the Council's bid for funds. Cheltenham's Chamber of Commerce is also opposing the scheme.

In his letter to the minister, Martin says:

"People must not be obliged to travel to Elmbridge Court to catch their train. It adds unnecessarily to CO₂ emissions, cost and inconvenience.

"Cheltenham has a cost effective alternative to Parkway that will bring major investment in the station and sustainable transport to the town. Its contribution to better rail services will be felt county wide. It should be vigorously pursued and supported.

"We should not be swayed by the mirage of regional funding for Cheltenham; the business case for the railway has little credibility amongst informed observers because it is seriously flawed.

"We should reject Parkway outright. We should work with Gloucester to find a real sustainable solution. If we do nothing and Parkway goes ahead, there is a clear long-term threat to the future of both Cheltenham and Gloucester stations."

Conservative and PAB councillors in Cheltenham failed to back Cheltenham Spa Station and are supporting Parkway instead

We need your support - please sign the petition overleaf or online at www.campaigns.libdems.org.uk/saynotoparkway

If Parkway goes ahead

- Immediately, the cross country services to long distance destinations e.g. Plymouth will be halved, alternating every other hour between Parkway and Cheltenham – a 2 hourly service:
- Confusion will reign for passengers who will have to choose the right station for their destination or connecting train, the right station for the return time, at alternating hours and depending upon the direction of travel:
- Once the new franchises are let, the Train Operating Companies will take commercial decisions about which station to use and will accelerate change:
- As soon as the new Cross Country franchise is in place the service into Cheltenham Spa will cease: this will also affect the number of services available for shorter distances such as Bristol:
- Passengers for the Cross Country services will have no choice but to go via Parkway; walking and cycling there will be impossible; car journeys, congestion and CO₂ emissions at Parkway will increase;
- The Department for Transport will not fund major improvements with the result that Cheltenham Spa, already in need of investment, will be downgraded and become the poor relation:
- The town, commuters, tourists and shoppers will have only a dilapidated third rate station; the prestige of Cheltenham will be at stake:

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**Save Cheltenham's
train services**

Conservative budget is half-baked and erratic



The Conservative's latest attack on the Lib Dems accuses us of leaving the books in a mess of virtual reality, so we would like to set the record straight.

The Conservative budget is a half-baked budget. The proposals for capital investment are incomplete, and there are no detailed proposals for spending the £500,000 of Government money which the Council expects to receive from the business growth incentive scheme.

Last June the Conservative cabinet splashed out around £250,000 of extra spending on everything from Town Hall crockery to taxi marshals. Now they are complaining there isn't enough money and are proposing cutting back, especially on grants to voluntary organisations.

There are a number of other penny-pinching cuts, from cutting money for a charity which works to equip disadvantaged young people with life skills, through a cut in maintenance of parks, gardens open spaces and sports pitches. It seems extremely foolish to cut in this area when there are already problems with the maintenance and cleanliness of parks and open spaces.

Then there is a reduction in grants for housing advice to voluntary organisations. This will have a devastating effect on several voluntary organisations and could lead to more of Cheltenham's most vulnerable people sleeping on the streets - not to mention a cut in the funding available to voluntary organisations to support the summer play scheme.

Liberal Democrats are concerned about the effects of this budget on the most vulnerable members of the community. Cuts in the grants for organisations that work with disadvantaged young people and people with housing problems are particularly damaging. So is the whopping 10% increase in cemetery and crematorium charges. This will hit bereaved people at a very vulnerable time in their lives, when they have high expenses to meet. The previous Liberal Democrat cabinet held these charges down to inflation last year. None of this would be necessary if the cabinet had looked after its money better when it first came into office."

Martin tells MPs: charity should mean charity

Member of Parliament for Cheltenham and Liberal Democrat charities spokesman **Martin Horwood** has told the House of Commons 'charity should mean charity'. The Cheltenham MP, who has worked himself for charities like **Oxfam** and the **Alzheimer's Society**, was speaking on the final stages of the Charities Bill which includes measures to make life more straightforward for charity treasurers and administrators. He told MPs about local charities including the **National Star College** and **Cheltenham Community Projects** and said many measures in the bill would help them when it became law.



Martin supporting CHILDREN IN NEED with Pudsey Bear in Cheltenham.

But he also called for more action to defend the public against charity scams and a tightening of the 'public benefit' test which will now apply to all charities.

"Charitable status is very valuable to the organisations concerned and a real badge of confidence that the public can trust" said Martin after the debate.

"We must make sure it stays that way. **Charity should mean charity.**"



Martin helping out the Gloucestershire County Association for the Blind.

Hundreds of dentists shun new contract and leave NHS

Dentists are quitting the NHS in their droves rather than signing the controversial new contract.



Figures from the Health and Social Care Information Centre show that there has been an **eight per cent decline in NHS dentists** since the introduction of the new dental contract in April 2006.

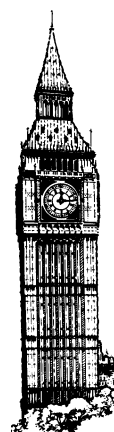
"We are witnessing a major crisis in access to dental treatment" said Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Cheltenham, Martin Horwood. "More than 1500 dentists opted out of the NHS in just three months."

Our research shows that rather than increasing access to dentistry, the new contracts provide for just one contract per year for each NHS patient.

This is indicative of Labour's failure to restore the NHS to what it should be: a universal comprehensive service that provides ongoing health care to everyone who needs it.

Would you like a tour of Parliament?

Martin is always delighted to welcome constituents to Westminster and arrange a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament for them.



Whether you want to come along with a few friends or family members, or would like to organise a group to come from your school, place of work or organisation, just let Martin know on **01242 224889** or email martin@martinhorwood.net

Martin Horwood



Member of Parliament for Cheltenham

Holds regular advice surgeries at his constituency office at

16 Hewlett Road, Cheltenham
and at other locations around Cheltenham

Call 01242 224889 to make an appointment

Would you like to get involved in campaigning to improve our area?

- I can help deliver leaflets
- I can help with clerical work
- I'll display a poster at election time
- I would like to join the Liberal Democrats



Title: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

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Return to: Liberal Democrats, FREEPOST SWC0744, Cheltenham, GL52 6ZZ.

I/We call on Gloucestershire County Council to re-think it's plans for the Parkway Station at Elmbridge Court.

If Parkway goes ahead then services to and from Cheltenham Spa Station will be drastically reduced.

Name(s)

Address

Postcode

Tel

email

or sign on line at: www.campaigns.libdems.org.uk/saynotoparkway

Return to:
Liberal Democrats, FREEPOST, SWC 0744 Cheltenham, GL52 6ZZ

The Liberal Democrats would like to use the information above to contact you from time to time to keep you informed of campaigns we may think of interest to you. Please write to us if you do not wish to be contacted in this way.