

From your local Lib Dem team

# FOCUS

Spring  
2012



Serving the areas of Swindon Road, Tewkesbury Road and Wymans Brook

# Future closure of the M5 bridge on Tewkesbury Road

## Government told to think again about road closure plans

Protests by local residents, businesses, MPs and councillors have forced the Government to think again about its plans to close part of **Tewkesbury Road** for up to a year from next March. They planned to do this as part of a scheme to replace the bridge at junction 10 of the M5.

The planned closure of the bridge at Piffs Elm on Tewkesbury Road, has been delayed while the **Highways Agency go back to the drawing board and work on a better way to do the needed repairs** which causes less disruption to the surrounding areas.

Gloucestershire Highways have already made plans to attempt to minimise the expected pressure on our roads from cars that need to travel through our area to complete their journeys. In truth, it is likely as we all know, that people will take the shortest route they can find and no amount of signs will make a difference. When we have more information on this, we will share it through Focus.

Parliamentary Spokesman **Alistair Cameron** said, "We were particularly concerned about the impact on **Princess Elizabeth Way, Swindon Road and Tewkesbury Road**, which would have had to carry an even greater volume of traffic during the closure. We also want the government minister to look at the possibility of building a full **four-way interchange at junction 10**, which would help to reduce unnecessary traffic trips across Cheltenham."



The scheme has now been put on hold for at least a year, while the impact of the scheme is more fully investigated

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## The two faces of Labour

Most people will remember Labour's deception over the war in Iraq. But Labour's behaviour since going into opposition has been equally deceitful.

They've spent the last two years denying responsibility for the mess they left behind and opposed nearly every measure being taken to rebuild our nation's finances.

And now, as you will have seen in the news, Labour have admitted that they don't have a 'Plan B' for the economy. They now accept the cuts, the public sector pay freeze and more. They have gone from being **in the wrong place** to being **all over the place**.

### Against the cuts Labour



### For the cuts Labour

- The last Labour Government left Britain's finances in ruins.
- But that hasn't stopped them opposing every measure needed to clean up their mess.
- They've fought election after election telling voters there's an easy way out, but won't say what it is!

- Ed Miliband and Ed Balls have come out and said they accept the cuts and won't reverse them.
- They have called for public sector workers to take pay cuts too.
- Even Labour MPs don't know what to think - no wonder people feel cheated by Labour.

## Lib Dem budget freezes council tax

It's good news for **Cheltenham residents**. The **Liberal Democrat administration on Cheltenham Borough Council** has announced that there will be **no increase in its council tax precept this year**, meaning that council tax for Cheltenham residents will be **FROZEN** for the second year running.

**Car park charges will also be frozen for the second year in a row.**

**At the same time, frontline council services will be protected.**

This very positive result for Cheltenham taxpayers has not been easy to achieve. Although the Government has provided some one-off financial help to keep council tax down, it has cut its on-going support to the council by a further £534,000 in 2012/13. The Council has responded by making big savings in bureaucracy, and radical changes to the way some services are managed, in order to balance the books.



Councillor **Bernie Fisher** welcomes the news that there will be no increase in Cheltenham's Council Tax for a second year in a row.

# Gloucestershire Warm and Well

## – Keep your home warm and stay well

Gloucestershire Warm and Well offers the opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of your home, reduce the cost of your fuel bills and to reduce associated health problems caused by the cold, meaning you are more comfortable in your home this winter and can stay warm during the cold winter months.

**Councillor Bernie Fisher** said “The Warm and Well scheme offers free advice on saving energy and can help you claim a grant towards the cost of insulation.

**If you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit, on a low income or aged over 70, it may be FREE.**

If you do not fall into these categories, cavity wall insulation can now be installed from £99 and loft insulation from £149. The total cost of a job for a typical 3 bed semi is £400-£450, so it represents a 75% reduction through grant funding”

For free, impartial advice about this and other energy saving grants and offers call on **0800 512 012**.

The Gloucestershire Warm and Well scheme is funded and managed separately from the Energy Saving Trust Advice Service by the Severn Wye Energy Agency. To apply online visit: [www.warmandwell.co.uk](http://www.warmandwell.co.uk).

# Tories keep their incinerator plans burning

Lib Dem Councillors from Cheltenham are stepping up opposition to the County Tories ill thought out and expensive plans to build a **£500M** (yes half a billion) incinerator.

At a recent meeting Cheltenham Borough Council agreed a Lib Dem motion asking the county to pause and reconsider the proposals.

The motion asked the County Council to pause and **reconsider their mass waste incinerator proposals.**

We understand the importance of getting the economics of any waste strategy correct, but there is also a need to protect public health and the environment.

There are alternative, smarter UK technologies available. **Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT)** is a fraction of the cost and is now operating at four plants across the South West. Use of MBT technology would push our recycling rates to **over 80%**.

## Can you help us?

Would you consider delivering the Focus newsletter near your home every couple of months? If so please contact Alistair Cameron on 01242 584081 for more details.



## How to contact your Lib Dem team

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**The Liberal Democrats are committed to working with local people to improve local neighbourhoods.**

If there is a problem you want to see sorted out, have a good idea for improving our area, or just want to get more involved with the local community yourself, please contact any of the team or write to:

Liberal Democrats,  
FREEPOST SWC 0744,  
16 Hewlett Road,  
GL52 6AA

## Abandoned trolleys

We often receive complaints about abandoned supermarket trolleys in the area. Let us know if there are abandoned trolleys in your street – or you can contact the supermarkets direct on:



Tesco 0845 6779161  
Sainsburys (01242) 222011  
Waitrose (01242) 241425

## Waste & Recycling

Councillor Bernie Fisher reports that the new recycling scheme, which introduced weekly food recycling and alternate weekly collections of refuse and dry-recycling materials in April 2011, has boosted Cheltenham's recycling and composting figures from 35% in the first quarter of 2010, to 50% in the same period this year.

Landfill tonnage is consequently down from 52kg to 37kg per month

## Brown bin garden waste collections

Have you signed up for your brown garden waste bin yet? If not, now is a great time to do so as the Borough Council recently agreed a discount for new users and for those renewing their membership to the scheme within a certain timescale.



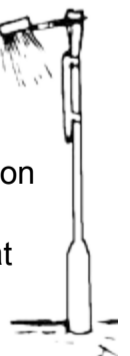
If you are a new customer, or if you renew before your renewal date, you will be able to use the scheme for a year for the price of **£34** instead of £36. New sign ups and renewals to the scheme can be done via the council's website, by telephone or by visiting the Municipal Officers.

For more information please visit Cheltenham Borough Council website: [www.cheltenham.gov.uk](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk) or telephone them on **01242 262626**.

## Streetlights

If you are aware of a light that doesn't work or burns through the day, you can either let us know, or contact Highways on **08000 514 514**.

There should be a number on the light at about head height. Please have this number available whichever method you choose to use.



## New Police phone number

The new non-emergency number to call the police is **101**.



This is much easier to remember than the **0845 090 1234** number which will still run alongside for 6 months. It is also cheaper to dial 101 which will cost **15p per call** no matter how long it lasts and applies to both mobiles and landlines.