

# A New Deal for the Dales

Robert Court is the Liberal Democrat candidate for Derbyshire Dales at the General election on 4<sup>th</sup> July.

A former physics teacher, and headmaster of a Sheffield school, Robert has lived with his wife in Derbyshire Dales for 25 years.

Robert pledges to work to:

- Fix what the Conservatives have broken. The list is long: the NHS, the economy, local infrastructure such as affordable housing, sewage and roads
- Restore trust in politics, and make utility companies and public services properly accountable in return for much needed investment
- Improve our relationship with the EU, re-establishing mutual trust and then removing the brakes on business, trade and growth by going into the single market. This is the way to tackle the cost-of-living crisis.



Robert Court, Lib Dem candidate

## NHS CRISIS

Sunak admits failure over promise to cut NHS waiting lists

Guardian - 5 February 2024

Cancer waiting times in 2023 worst on record in England

BBC - 8 February 2024

Huge human and economic toll: one in seven people in England waiting for NHS treatment

Guardian - 8 February 2024

## Your Lib Dem Matlock East and Tansley Team

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[ddld.org.uk](http://ddld.org.uk)

Liberal Democrats - keeping you in touch all year

## Lib Dem plan to fix our NHS

- 1 Train and recruit 8,000 more GPs
- 2 Address social care to enable quicker hospital discharges
- 3 Empower and train pharmacists to ease pressure on GPs and A&E
- 4 Improve retention with a fair pay deal for NHS staff
- 5 Launch flu and Covid vaccination campaign

# FOCUS

on Matlock East and Tansley

Liberal Democrats

No 187 Summer 2024

Liberal Democrats - for a Fairer, Greener, more Caring Dales

## We're on your side

Says LibDem General Election candidate - Robert Court

Are you one of the people who keep telling us that our public services just aren't up to scratch?

You and thousands of others... in doorstep conversations and in our mailbag.

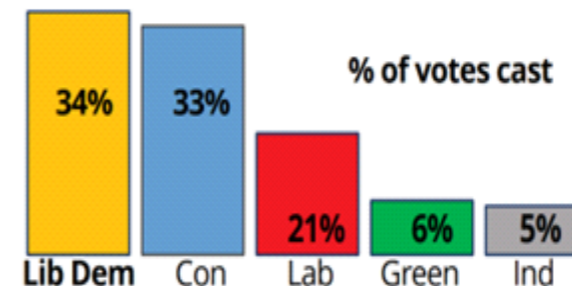
Public services are in desperate need of investment, especially here in the Dales. These are the tip of the iceberg

- Severn Trent Water seem unwilling or unable to prevent **foul and surface water flooding** of our homes, here in Matlock and Tansley
- The Conservatives refuse to give housing associations the money they need to provide the **truly affordable, energy efficient homes** needed here in the Dales (not the large executive homes developers want). Here in the Dales 'levelling up' cash has enabled the Council to buy just 17 homes
- Woe betide anyone trying to get on to an **NHS dentist waiting list** round here - the nearest available are in Chesterfield or Ilkeston
- Public bodies like the Forestry Commission and our local councils are starved of resources to **protect our landscape and provide basic services** like repairing our potholed roads



Robert Court, Lib Dem candidate (centre) with Cllrs David Hughes and Jo Linthwaite

"Will you support my campaign to get **A Fair Deal for the Dales?**"  
Robert Court, Lib Dem General Election candidate for Derbyshire Dales



## The results of last year's local elections in Derbyshire Dales

At the next election, it's the Liberal Democrats who are the effective challengers to the Tories (graph shows results from this year's local elections across Derbyshire Dales)

Want to find out more about the Lib Dem plans for A FAIR DEAL?

Visit <https://www.libdems.org.uk/plan>

or scan the QR code.



## DCC consulting on proposed care homes closure



Cllr Jo Linthwaite

Derbyshire County Council (DCC) is proposing to close up to 11 of its 16 residential care homes! Their proposals would affect up to 162 current residents. They also propose to no longer offer residential home provision at all, focusing entirely on dementia care.

What does that mean for us in Derbyshire Dales? There are two DCC care homes in The Dales: Meadow View in Matlock and The Leys in Ashbourne. The proposal includes the closure of the Ashbourne home. That would leave only the Matlock centre and that would no longer offer residential care. If you have family or friends in the Ashbourne area, they will no longer be able to access affordable residential care in their home area. Private care home provision currently costs between £1,200 and £1,400 PER WEEK! How many families can afford that?

**Cllr Jo Linthwaite** asks: "DCC claim that families are no longer looking for

affordable residential care. Is that true? Are you trying to find affordable residential care for a family member or may do so in the near future, please complete the County Council's public consultation form found on their website."

**For more details and the questionnaire, search for "DCC Proposed redesign of residential care and day opportunities for older people adult care" on the DCC website or scan the QR code.**



## DCC to halve support for at risk families



Cllr Sue Burfoot

At the April meeting of the DCC Cabinet, it made the decision to disestablish the current Early Help Service and close 10 Children's Centres in Derbyshire including Matlock to save £3.9m.

The Early Help Teams provide support to families with young children at a time most needed. DCC itself has noted that partner organisations have "expressed significant concern" about the impact of reduction in support for vulnerable families and for the resultant increase in demand on other services that are already experiencing "significant challenge and strain".

Opposition parties challenged the decision at a Scrutiny Committee meeting, but the Conservative majority rejected the challenge. At that meeting **Cllr Sue Burfoot** said " This decision, if it goes ahead, will amount to a false economy, to a growth in demand for other more expensive services, in other words crisis intervention services. It is unfair that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society are again asked to pay a high price. The high level of risk is not proportionate to the likely additional costs".

DCC reported that the workforce across Family Help and Children's Centres will be reduced from 221 posts to 103 posts.

## Old Nursery Gardens – update

Our last Focus issue (no. 186) included an article entitled "Whitelea, Tansley drainage failure" which suggested that the drainage system on the "Whitelea Nurseries development" was failing and that the collecting pond was overflowing into a neighbours' garden.

We would like to clarify that the drainage system on the new development was delivered as approved and that the issue the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is looking to rectify relates to a suspected blockage beyond the development within the existing off-site system. This off-site blockage has not been caused by the on-site drainage system. We apologise for giving the impression that the problem was on the site.

Regarding the collecting pond, the Developer, Woodall Homes, and a neighbour, have confirmed to us that it has not overflowed. Woodall Homes

are however, under their own due diligence, looking to assist the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) in determining the location and cause of the offsite blockage. From this regard a meeting took place between the Developer and the LLFA on 5th March, whereby additional inspections were discussed, including the proposed draining of the existing pond to allow for further inspection of where the offsite blockage is occurring.

Unfortunately, the LLFA's approval for the draining of the pond was not confirmed until the 2nd April 2024, by which time a family of ducks and ducklings had moved onto the pond meaning it could not be emptied in the immediate term for ecological reasons. Woodall Homes are accordingly maintaining a watching brief of the pond and keeping the LLFA updated until the family of ducks moves on."

## Sinfin waste treatment centre- a £93.9m fiasco!

Plans by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and Derby City Council to fix and operate a waste treatment facility in Sinfin are on hold.

In February 2023, both councils took the decision to fix and operate the waste treatment centre on Sinfin Lane, Derby but now the councils have announced they are formally in dispute over plans for the Sinfin New Waste Treatment facility.

In January 2024 DCC issued an invoice to the city council for £93.9m + VAT to recover its share of the costs of the project.

Derby City disputes the validity of the invoice and has itself now triggered a notice of dispute, which includes the county's refusal to formally include regular reviews of project progress, against the business case to fix and operate the facility.

On 24th May 2024, both councils met to try to resolve the dispute and agree terms but have not been able to do so and will be entering the next stage of formal dispute resolution processes.

**This is the latest in a series of failures associated with this investment. Here is the history.**

**2009:** RRS, a partnership between infrastructure firm Interserve and waste management company Renewi, was awarded a contract by Derby City Council and DCC to manage the councils' residual waste, and to design, build, commission, and operate a waste treatment facility in Sinfin, Derby. This was to be completed by 2017.

**2019:** The contracted was terminated after a failure of the plant to pass commissioning tests by the agreed date and after the banks funding the project issued a legal notice. Overheating, excessive odours and a failure to handle waste at the required rate were a few of the many reasons for the testing failure.

**2023:** DCC and Derby City pay RSS administrators £93.5m to compensate RSS for contract termination. Derby City's share of the compensation was £36.5m, leaving DCC with a £57.5m share. At the time, their intention was to try to open the waste plant as originally planned. Later, the new City Labour administration indicated it was opposed to using the plant.

**2017 - 2023:** Ongoing maintenance, continuing health and safety requirements and specialist legal advice had resulted in costs of £26m for DCC and £8m for Derby City by 2023. None of this is being used to repair the plant and bring it into use.



Sinfin Lane waste treatment centre

## Starkholmes allotments - successful appeal

Derbyshire Dales District Council supported the Starkholmes Road Allotments Association in listing its former site on Starkholmes Road as an Asset of Community Value in 2021 and then again in defending the listing at appeal. The judgement to dismiss the appeal was made in May 2024.

If an Asset of Community Value (ACV) is put up for sale, a community group can then express an interest in putting together a bid for it within a six week period. If a group does that, it triggers a six month moratorium on the sale giving the group sufficient time to mount a bid. At the end of that moratorium, the asset can be sold as the owner pleases. There is no requirement for the asset to be sold to the community group or on any particular terms and the owner can seek compensation from the local authority for any loss or additional expense arising from the listing.

The judge hearing the appeal, Judge Neville, said that "continued use of the land as allotments remained one of the realistic alternatives for the site, only requiring failure of [the landowner's] residential development ambitions, a break in his resolve to let the land go to scrub, or compulsory acquisition."

In response, **Cllr David Hughes** said, "The current use of the land to grow trees can therefore remain, and. The listing has force only if the landowner chooses to sell the site or, as the judge says, there is compulsory acquisition. Matlock Town Council, who is responsible for allotments, will need to whether any immediate action is possible or desirable". The District Council has said that it recognises "the importance of allotments in the Starkholmes Community" and will continue "to seek a positive outcome for the community".