

# SOUTH EAST CAMBS REPORTER



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*plus much more!*

**It's a two horse  
race!**

**Con  
46%**

**Lib  
Dem  
42%**

Labour  
can't win  
here in  
South East  
Cambs



**Lab  
7%**

Votes in South East Cambs local  
elections, June 2009

# IT'S TIME TO CLEAN UP POLITICS

## Lib Dems launch Take Back Power campaign to restore faith in the British political system

Jonathan Chatfield, Liberal Democrat campaigner for South East Cambridgeshire, is calling on the Government to take real action to clean up the British political system.

After a summer of news headlines dominated by MPs expenses scandals, the Lib Dems want a massive reform of Parliament, with openness to the public as one of the top goals.

The Lib Dems have launched a campaign called 'Take Back Power', aimed at changing the British political system for good.

### **Reform the voting system**

One of the first things the Lib Dems would do is hold a referendum on changing to a fairer electoral system.

"MPs must no longer be allowed to walk into a safe seat and then get away with almost anything for the rest of their careers" said

Jonathan.

### **An elected House of Lords**

The House of Lords is far too often used as a retirement home for MPs who have done a deal with their party leader. The Lib Dems would like to see an elected second chamber to stop these backroom deals.

### **The right to sack your MP**

We should create a power of recall so if an MP is recommended for suspension by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, 5% of constituents can petition to remove that MP from office, prompting a by-election.

"People are rightly angry that there is nothing they can do to get rid of MPs who have abused the system" said Jonathan.

"Liberal Democrat plans



Liberal Democrat campaigner for South East Cambs Jonathan Chatfield wants a complete shake up in Westminster

would give people this power.

All of the reforms proposed by the Lib Dems are about taking power away from politicians and giving it back to ordinary citizens - which should be what a healthy democracy is all about."

**Local Conservatives insist on  
secret meetings despite public  
calls for open politics  
see page 2**

**For the latest Lib Dem news visit [www.secambslibdems.org.uk](http://www.secambslibdems.org.uk)**

# “Keep Ely special!”

## Lib Dems launch campaign to protect Ely as Tories plan 4,000 extra houses around the city

Liberal Democrats on East Cambs District Council have raised serious concerns about some of the proposals in the Ely Masterplan, which will be out for consultation in the autumn.

The key questions the Lib Dems want answered are:

- Why are the Conservatives still stuck on a massive increase in population, to 27,000 – way above government imposed targets?
- Where will the money come from for the proposed traffic improvements?
- Why is the leisure centre to be moved from the centre of Ely to land on the other side of the A10, making it only accessible by car?
- The current plan proposes

building three new multi storey car parks. Why are new park and ride sites not being looked at as an alternative, to reduce the number of cars clogging up the city centre?

The biggest problem with the scheme is that it is entirely dependant on the creation of a southern bypass around Ely, which many believe will never happen.

Councillor Gareth Wilson, leader of the Liberal Democrat group, said “Even if the bypass is built, I am not convinced it will reduce traffic in Ely. It will effectively be an A14 bypass, making it easier for lorries to use the A142.

And what effect will all these extra houses have on the A10? It would be as bad as Mereham!”



The Liberal Democrats want Ely to remain a beautiful, compact city - but the Conservatives are intent on building 4,000 extra houses in the area

## Liberal Democrats condemn South Cambs home sell-off fiasco

The sorry saga of ‘Housing Futures’ in South Cambridgeshire has finally come to an end with a resounding “No” vote.

The controversial Tory plan to transfer council housing stock from the Council to a private housing association resulted instead in a huge majority of tenants opting once again to stay with their local council.

Cllr Jonathan Chatfield spoke out at a recent Full Council meeting to condemn the whole manner in which the vote took place. In particular, he vigorously challenged the spending of nearly £1million on glossy propaganda including over £50,000 on DVDs.

Throughout the process, the Liberal Democrats challenged the Conservative administration to give both sides of the argument. However, this was refused on a number of occasions and the arguments coming from the Council were entirely one sided.

Linton councillor Trisha Bear added, “There was nothing balanced or measured about the literature produced by the Council. Any attempts to put forward an alternative view were ignored or dismissed.”

“In addition, some tenants clearly felt pressured and harassed. They accused the Council of using intimidatory tactics to push for a “Yes” vote, including heavy selling on the door-step.

“Now the tenants have spoken and we must honour their decision. There must be no reprisals or arbitrary budget cuts.”

## Kept in the dark

### Conservatives win battle to preserve secret committees at County Council

**The Conservatives at the County Council have won their battle to keep lots of County Council meetings secret.**

Lib Dem Councillors had objected to the policy development meetings being held behind closed doors, but with Labour support, the Conservatives voted to keep the press and public out.

Lib Dem group leader David Jenkins commented, “It is frustrating that the Conservatives insist on keeping these meetings secret, especially given the national mood. The Lib Dems will continue to campaign for more openness at the County Council.”



The Conservative-run County Council is keeping the press and public out of lots of policy development meetings, beating off Lib Dem attempts to make the meetings public.

# Shock imbalance in local NHS

New figures reveal NHS managers now outnumber nurses in East of England

**Local Lib Dems have expressed their severe disappointment in the latest staffing numbers to come out of the local NHS.**

It has been revealed that in 2008, there were 3,449 managers and senior managers working for the NHS in the East of England – an increase of 274 from the previous year.

According to the NHS Information Centre, during the same time period, 78 practice nurse positions disappeared, with numbers dropping from 2,591 to 2,513.

Between 1998 and 2008, the number of managers increased by an average of 5.5 per cent every year – a 70 per cent rise in total.

Parliamentary Campaigner Jonathan Chatfield said, “Once again we are seeing



**Jonathan Chatfield discusses the figures with Norman Lamb, Liberal Democrat shadow Health spokesperson and North Norfolk MP**

hundreds of extra managers appointed whilst the number of nurses has fallen. We recognize the NHS needs qualified leaders and people to manage the budgets, but this must not be at the

expense of front-line staff, in particular, nurses. The imbalance between managers and nurses is wrong and getting worse. Action to address this in-balance is needed now.”

## SOUTH EAST CAMBS REPORTER

### Opinion

Whether it is duck houses or chandeliers, gardening bills or home makeovers, the last six months have seen a tidal wave of expense revelations. A political earthquake has hit Westminster.

Trust in our national politicians has been shaken like never before. All our MPs must examine their consciences. Every expense claim should be justifiable to us, the voters.

However, within such a crisis, there is an opportunity to reform the whole system. Not only to address pay and expenses, but also to reform the way government works. Liberal Democrats have long argued for fixed term parliaments, fair votes, openness and real accountability.

The system is broken. Damage has been done. But there is an opportunity now to bring forward genuine and tangible reform. This is not about saying the right words; it is about doing the right thing.

Will Labour and the Conservatives take up the Lib Dem challenge? Or will they continue to prevaricate and hope it all goes quiet again soon?

# Houses on the cheap

Government cut £6 million from funding for Cambridgeshire developments

**The Labour government has slashed funding for infrastructure for housing developments in Cambridgeshire.**

Earlier this summer, the government went back on an agreement to provide £12 million for schools, transport and community facilities. Now only £6 million will be provided.

The government still insists that thousands of new houses be built here, but now they face being built with second class facilities.

Lib Dem campaigner Jonathan Chatfield said “This decision from the Government is bad news for new developments in Cambridgeshire. This money could have been used to ensure mistakes made in developments like Orchard Park are not repeated.

With such a dramatic reduction in funding, the quality of these new developments will surely be affected.”



**Jonathan Chatfield with Liberal Democrat MEP for the Eastern Region, Andrew Duff, at Orchard Park. The Lib Dems only want new developments like this to go ahead if the money is there for proper infrastructure - but the Government has just announced major funding cuts.**

# Labour vote collapses in South East Cambs

*Voters turn to Lib Dems as confidence in Brown's government plummets*

The Lib Dems and the Conservatives are neck and neck in South East Cambridgeshire, after an exciting set of local elections in June.

Voters in the constituency deserted the Labour Party, whose share of the vote fell to just 7%.

The stage is now set for an exciting General Election, with local Liberal Democrat candidate Jonathan Chatfield the main challenger to the Conservatives.

The Lib Dem share of the

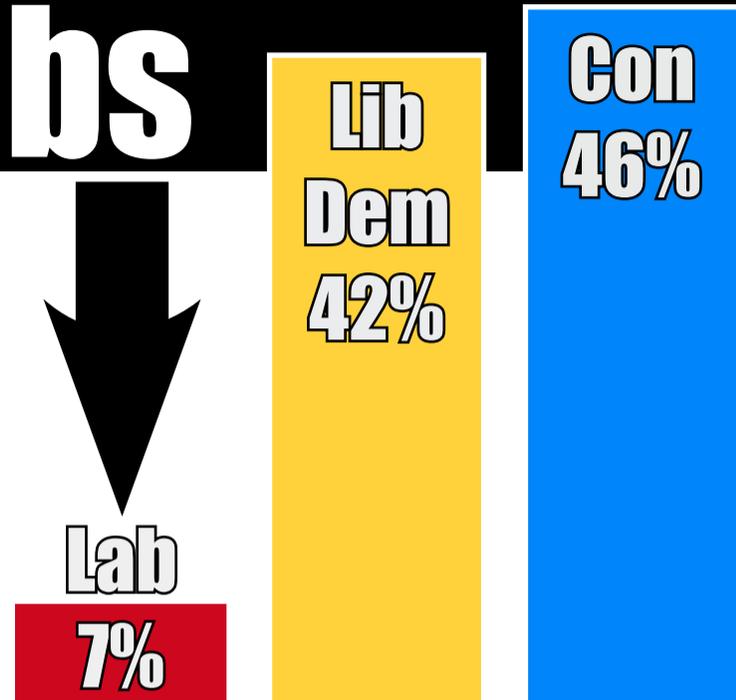
vote rose to 42%, only 4% behind the Conservatives.

## No change in Eastern Region MEPs

There has been no change in the number of MEPs for each party in this region after the European election on June 4th. Despite a fall in their vote share of 5.8%, Labour managed to hang on to fourth place across the region and retain their MEP.

Labour finished behind the Conservatives, UKIP and the Liberal Democrats, with the Greens in fifth place.

Labour are now out of the race in South East Cambs, getting only 7% of the vote in the recent County Council elections, despite fielding candidates in every seat.



County Council election result in South East Cambs, June 2009

## 20 is plenty campaign takes step forward

The Liberal Democrat campaign for more 20mph limits has taken a step forward.

The County Council has agreed to trial a 20mph limit in the centre of Cambridge. If the trial is a success, campaigners hope that the limit will be introduced in Ely. Many villages in South East Cambs could also benefit from the reduced speed limits.



County Councillor David Jenkins and local campaigner Vanessa Kelly want to see more 20mph limits

## Ely Citizens Advice Bureau hit by record demand



Jonathan and Haddenham Councillor Gareth Wilson at Ely CAB, which is struggling to cope with increased demand caused by the recession.

The citizens advice bureau in Ely is having to dip into its reserves to take on more staff and rent more office space, due to high demand.

The number of people seeking help from the centre has doubled, from 2,019 in total in 2007-08 to 4,102 so far this year.

The Lib Dems have spoken out in recent years against cuts to the funding given to the CAB, and urged local councils to invest more in these important services.

## Support the Liberal Democrats

- I want to register my support for the Liberal Democrats
- I can display a poster at election time
- I can deliver Lib Dem FOCUS leaflets in my street
- I want to make a donation to the Liberal Democrats and enclose cash / a cheque for:

£ .....

Name .....

Address .....

Tel .....

Email .....

Please return this slip to:

**SE Cambs Lib Dems, FREEPOST, 16 Signet Court, Swann Road, Cambridge CB5 8LA**

or contact us for more information on Lib Dem activities in your area:

**Tel:** 01223 313765 or 01223 520 132

**Email:** [info@secambslibdems.org.uk](mailto:info@secambslibdems.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.secambslibdems.org.uk](http://www.secambslibdems.org.uk)