



# South Shropshire Green Party

Officers 2003

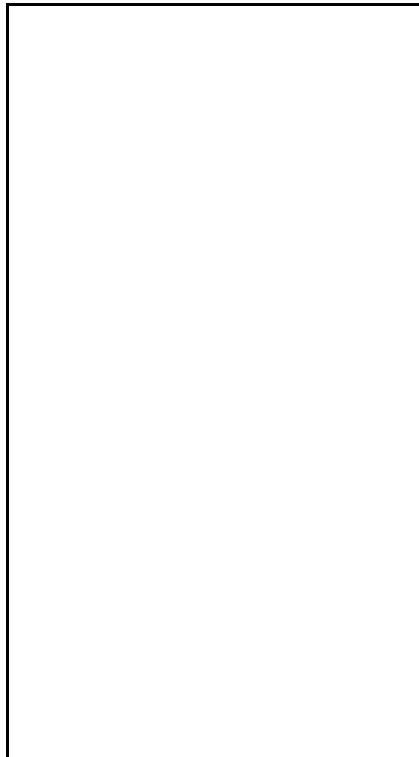


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which would place climate change at centre stage.

Despite these issues C&C is generally considered to be a fair and equitable solution and is the only approach likely to have any chance of success.

### Postscript

In correspondence with Aubrey Meyer I became aware that C&C is Green Party policy but it is hidden in the MfSS and not widely known. Tony Cooper (GP Executive) now intends to find some space for C&C in our publication "Green World".



# Grapevine



Newsletter of the South Shropshire Green Party  
Issue 39 Autumn 2003

## GETTING READY FOR THE 2004 EURO ELECTIONS

June next year will see elections for the European Parliament. European elections are held using proportional representation with each party nominating a list from which successful candidates will be selected following the counting of votes.

In 1999 the West Midlands narrowly failed to elect a Green MEP but in London and the South East two Green MEPs were elected. The trend in elections since then has moved our way – 3 members of the London Assembly, 7 members of the Scottish Parliament, and over 50 councillors in main tier local authorities.

Our target for 2004 is to see at least one West Midlands Green MEP. The regional party has nominated Chris Lennard on its list, with Alyson Duckmanton. Chris is coming to speak in Church Stretton on November 11<sup>th</sup> so do

come and give him a warm welcome. See page 2 for further details.

The European manifesto has yet to be finalised but we can be certain that the Green Party will have a distinctive flavour in its policies. We recognise the value of working together with other countries in Europe in a structured way but, at the same time, we do not believe that adopting the Euro will answer anybody's economic problems. It will put greater power into centralist organisations and multinational commercial interests. We also believe that there should be a referendum on the new European constitution.

To help fund next year's election the Green Party is issuing Euro Election Bonds. Anyone can subscribe. For further details please contact Jim Gaffney or John Lloyd.

## A LESSON IN LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Since joining Bishop's Castle Town Council, the issue I've spent most time on has been the recycling facilities near the town. These were opened with much fanfare in the presence of the local MP, leading councillors etc. barely eighteen months ago. The event was especially encouraging for local Greens because The Wasteless Society had permission from South Shropshire District Council to operate plastics and green waste recycling on the site. These facilities have been successful beyond all expectations.

However, the District Council has sold the lease on a plot including the recycling site to a local businessman. Originally he was offered a plot which included an oak tree hundreds of years old. The outcry from local people prevented the felling of the tree. For some reason the District Council could find no alternative but to lease the land containing their own and the Wasteless Society's facilities. Now everything has to be moved, at a cost of

perhaps £50,000 to the council tax payer. The problem is, the District insist the only option is to put the new facilities right up by the oak tree. This proposal met with unanimous objections from Bishop's Castle Town Council, The Wasteless Society, The Civic Society, The Friends of the oak tree and just about anyone else in Bishop's Castle you care to ask.. Everyone feels that the oak will be endangered and, more to the point, future recycling activities will be cramped and curtailed. Plenty of other sites are available close by.

I had the job of putting the Town Council's view to the District's Planning Committee. I had about 1 1/2 minutes to speak! No Bishop's Castle District Councillors were present. None of objections were discussed, or even properly heard, and the decision went against us.

The moral of the story is: local voices must be listened to more carefully if sensible and fair planning decisions are to be made. I'll keep on trying!

*Jim Gaffney*

### Come and meet Chris Lennard

*November 11th at 7.30pm*

*At the Mayfair Community Centre, Easthope Road, Church Stretton*

**The meeting is open to all-comers.**

The UK's two Green MEPs, Caroline Lucas and Jean Lambert, have done a terrific job arguing a genuine Green perspective in many areas of European policy. As Europe becomes ever more significant in our lives, every chance for Greens to influence and improve decisions should be taken. This is the start of our 2004 opportunity to influence Europe. Come and meet Chris Lennard, top of the list of regional Green candidates for next year's election.

generally accepted among the leading players as meriting serious consideration in dealing with climate change. Here are some quotes about C&C:

*"...C&C makes an important contribution to the debate on how we achieve climate stability."* - Tony Blair, 1988

*"France proposes that we set as our ultimate objective the convergence of per capita emissions"* - Jacques Chirac, 2000

*"C&C is not 'Plan B', it is 'Plan A-Plus'"* - Michael Meacher, 2001

*"a formulation that carries the rights based approach to its logical conclusion is that of C&C"* - IPPC, 2001

### **So what is Contraction and Convergence?**

Essentially it has three steps:

1. An international agreement is reached on a limiting concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> to be reached by a given date. Suggested figures have been 450 or 550 parts per million by volume (ppm/v) by 2040. The current level is 372ppm/v.

2. With this target figure agreed it is possible to calculate by how much emissions per head of population worldwide (per capita) needs to be cut each year to achieve the target level. This is the Contraction part of C&C. Once the target level is reached the per capita emissions will be absorbed naturally in the forests and oceans.

3. With Convergence of emission output at the target level all countries will have the same allocation of emission permits proportional to their population.

However, during the whole process countries which were unable to live within their allocation would be able to buy more permits from countries which ran their economies in a more energy frugal way. This process would result in a flow of wealth from rich to poor and would also encourage poor countries to develop along a low fossil-energy path.

### **Problems**

It would be simplistic to suggest that C&C is a straightforward solution to climate change. There is the considerable political difficulty of obtaining a universal global agreement to a target CO<sub>2</sub> concentration and the consequent per capita emission contraction. An immediate example is the objection of AOSIS (Small Islands Association) who say that any agreed target CO<sub>2</sub> level would be unacceptable as it would result in damage to their territories (partial or total submersion). There are also difficulties in the science. The mechanism of natural absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> is not yet fully understood and melting permafrost could release large volumes of methane which would derail all the calculations. However the release of methane, an extremely potent ghg, would result in a major crisis

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## STABILISING THE CLIMATE

*Following a glorious summer is climate a matter for concern ?  
Gordon Gissing explores an Alternative Solution.*

The developing climate crisis, driven by the emission of man-made gases, is now almost universally recognised by politicians, business people and scientists. The debate now centres mainly on the acceptance of policies to be used to cut greenhouse gas (ghg) emissions.

At issue are the depth and time scale of ghg reductions needed to limit the warming trend. The present scheme, generally accepted at international level (but the USA has withdrawn), is the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. An alternative solution, not yet widely known, is called Contraction and Convergence and is now under serious discussion.

### **The Kyoto Protocol**

After many years of discussions with the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol emerged in 1997. This is a complex document but broadly it required most industrialised countries to reduce their carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>, the main greenhouse gas) emissions by at least 5% below 1990 levels by the year 2012. In 2001 180 countries agreed to a scaled down version of the Protocol which only becomes binding when it is ratified by at least 55 countries with the highest emissions. This target has still to

be reached and although some countries have instituted emission reduction programmes Kyoto is legally still on hold.

Kyoto is a remarkable political success in the sense that so many countries accepted that climate change was a reality. However the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have said an emission cut of at least 60% is needed to stabilise the warming trend. Kyoto, even if fully implemented, will cut emissions by only a few percent and in its present form cannot be a solution.

The poor countries would not participate in Kyoto, arguing that the climate crisis was a rich country problem. Relevant to this argument is the CO<sub>2</sub> output in 1990 of the major polluters. The USA was responsible for 36%, the EU 24%, Russia 17% and Japan 8% of the total global output.

### **Contraction & Convergence**

The idea of Contraction & Convergence (C&C) was introduced by the Global Commons Institute (GCI) in 1991 during discussions with UNFCCC. (The GCI was set up in 1990 by a Green Party member, Aubrey Meyer, together with three other GP members). The argument for C&C has matured and improved during the last decade and is now

## SCOTSMANSFIELD

Thanks to a well-organised campaign to extol the virtues of this Arts & Crafts house, the District Council refused an application to build three dwellings in its garden.

The house, built in 1908, is a little known gem on the Burway – leading to the Long Mynd from the centre of Church Stretton. It was built by the architect Ernest Newton RA, one of the founders of the Art Workers Guild which brought together the arts and crafts in a united approach, including architecture and garden design.

Whilst the house has been reasonably well cared for, being in

continuous occupation, although being split into three homes, the garden for the most part has been neglected. Originally Newton's garden was laid out in a formal style, with a series of south facing terraces and individual enclosed gardens. The whole effect enhances the house, giving a delightful Edwardian ambience, with the garden looking across Church Stretton to the hills beyond.

Well done the citizens of Church Stretton for registering your objections to this ill-conceived development proposal. It would have devalued Scotsmansfield in the proper sense of the word.

## DIARY

*Saturday 1st November*

### **Fancy a day out in Worcester ?**

Members are invited to come to another enjoyable regional meeting. A guest speaker, George Morran (former Chief Executive of Dudley Council) will speak on "Your Region Your Choice".

Time: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm      Venue: St Andrews Methodist Church, Pump Street (200 yards passed the Cathedral).

*Tuesday 11th November*

### **Come and meet Chris Lennard**

Our first meeting preparing for the 2004 Euro Election introduces our lead candidate. Everyone welcome.

Time: 7:30 pm

Venue: Mayfair Centre, Church Stretton (opposite main car park).

*Friday 19th December*

### **Bring and Share Social Evening**

Bring a dish and a bottle and a story to tell - everyone welcome. Lots of laughter and good company.

Time: 8:00 pm

Venue: Acorn Restaurant, Sandford Avenue, Church Stretton (opposite Barclays Bank).

## GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND

*John Lloyd reflects on Church Stretton's trees.*

On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August I watched five Scots Pines being felled in Clive Avenue. Not outstanding specimens but they represented another small loss of the tree cover which once enhanced Church Stretton.

Within a decade the town has become a playground for chain saw enthusiasts. Just take a look across to Hazler Hill from the town centre, or better still turn round and look towards the Long Mynd. The devastation of the tree cover has been rampant. Cunnery Hill, once thick in forestation has given way to the symbolic TPO – the single tree here and there that fails to cover more recent developments. It might not be as bad if the actual buildings

rise above their surroundings and remind me of excesses which have blighted some of the Spanish coastal areas.

The fact is Church Stretton needs its trees. It hasn't inherited an historic town centre like Ludlow, much of the architecture is mediocre, but its tree lined hills do provide a backdrop which lifts the whole town out being just ordinary.

Looking at what has happened to Church Stretton, and what might, one is left with the feeling that this endless desire to fell trees, destroy gardens, knock down modest houses, only to replace them with pretentious villas, merely reflects a society which knows the cost of everything and the value of nothing.

Whether the District Council will wake up to the damage that has been

were designed to nestle into the hillside but they



done and place a greater value on the humble tree in its planning process we shall have to wait and see. Money has been allocated for a review of Tree Preservation Orders in Church Stretton. Hopefully this may lead to a reassessment, with more trees coming under the order, and a move away from the 'slash and burn' merchants who care little for this town. It needs a civic voice, crying out loud and clear that we do value our trees in Church Stretton. Enquiries about the TPO review are being dealt with by Mrs Hudson at South Shropshire District Council on 01584 813360.

## LUDLOW – LOCAL ECONOMY IN DANGER

The District Council has approved the Eco Park proposal, by the narrowest of votes despite solid resistance, and the development now awaits the final decision of the government. But no sooner has one questionable Ludlow development ploughed its way through the planning process than another is put forward.

The £10 million proposal to create a retail park on Foldgate Lane is causing major concern. The main feature is a mammoth DIY store which Ludlow has successfully done without through the DIY revolution of the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s.

Local stores run by local people feel threatened and many Ludlow people question what benefit could result from the development. There is real worry that the council, having succumbed to questionable

promises on the Eco Park, will be open to persuasive pressure from a smooth national operator.

Sally Ford put it this way. "As with all colonial powers, they are full of promises: jobs and prosperity for the region. In reality, many of the jobs will probably be either part-time or temporary and, after the initial rush, many will be let go. In the meantime, the local businesses which offer a superb service will struggle and may go out of business."

There is, however, a good case for a petrol station on the edge of town, however much the growth of car use is regrettable.

The council must not be blinded by this real need into acceptance of a grandiose proposal which could start Ludlow down the road to the retail decay which has blighted so many other English towns.

## LUDLOW & DISTRICT LETS

### *Local Exchange Trading System*

With a dozen new members as a result of its stall at the Green Fair, LETS is alive and well in South Shropshire. Anyone who'd like to find out more and meet some of the members old and new, why not come along to one of our monthly sessions at the Spiral Studio, 10 Charlton Rise, Ludlow (next to Halls TV). Dates and times of forthcoming meetings :

Sunday 16 November 2.30pm

Tuesday 16 December 7.30pm

Thursday 15 January 7.30pm

Tuesday 17 February 7.30pm

Application forms can be picked up from the LETS mailbox at Myriad Organics, Corve Street, Ludlow or for further details, contact the Coordinator, Roger Taylor, on 01584 856354.