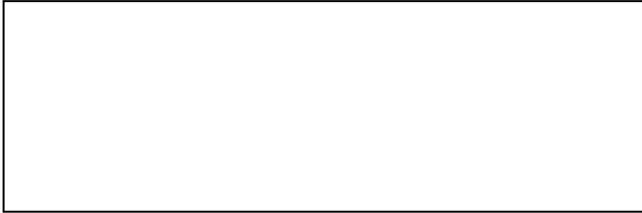


GREEN VIEW

Newsletter of the Green Party
in Lowestoft and Kessingland
No. 1 – July 2013



Green Party
Fair is worth fighting for



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Here is a new venture, a newsletter for Green Party members and supporters in Lowestoft and district. I thought I'd try this because I like to be kept in touch with organisations to which I belong and we have no mechanism for doing this in our area. I am using a list of names and addresses which may be out of date. If so, or if you do NOT want to receive future issues, please let me know: I have no desire to waste time and effort printing and distributing it to people who do not want it. Also if you'd prefer to receive it by e-mail.

If all goes well, I'd envisage it could come out once a quarter. Please do respond to this newsletter, and offer contributions to the next one, or tell me what topics or issues you would like covered: otherwise you'll just get me burbling on again.



Regards, Peter Eyres

OULTON BY-ELECTION – 8TH AUGUST 2013

Sadly, Mike Ives-Keeler, one of the Labour councillors for Oulton ward, has died after a short illness; he was elected in 2011 and was appointed Shadow Cabinet Member for Resources. His death means there will be a by-election on 8 August.



Therefore, we shall be looking for a candidate to contest the election. Last time, Jedda Smith came 6th out of 7 with 8% of the ballot papers cast (4.7% of the total vote). Is there anyone who'd be willing to stand? There will be a meeting at 19.30 on Tuesday 9 July at 49 Station Road, Beccles, to discuss this and future elections.

GREEN DRINKS

Green Drinks for the Lowestoft area takes place every month at 8pm after the Development Control Committee meetings, which are at 6pm. They are at the Triangle Tavern in the Triangle Market. Come along to meet members and tell us how you would like the group to develop. The next few dates are: •Tuesday 16 July, •Tuesday 13 August, •Wednesday 18 September and •Tuesday 15 October. The dates are on the Waveney Green Party website. The dates of the committee meetings are on the WDC website.

Campaign to save our High Streets

A campaign is under way to stop supermarkets from tearing apart our communities. This would be done by imposing a levy on the large supermarkets in an area and by spending that money on helping boost local jobs, local trade, local services and local communities. It would be a huge boost especially to Lowestoft, which has been swamped by supermarkets. It has already been done in Northern Ireland: last year, the Assembly passed a law introducing an 8.5% local rate on retail outlets with a rateable value above £500,000.

The idea is to use the Sustainable Communities Act to force the government to pass the necessary legislation, and our help is needed. We can all get involved by writing to our local councillors to persuade WDC to join the campaign. Visit <http://localworks.org/pages/supermarkets> for information on what to write.

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

For many of us, April was busy with distributing leaflets and canvassing for our target candidates, Graham Elliott in Beccles and Simon Thompson in Bungay. The weather happily was mainly dry, but the month was marked by a strong, cold east wind. One exception was 25 April which, after an early heavy shower, turned into one of those rare hot days. This was an action day in Bungay, for which we were joined by Will Duckworth, GP deputy leader, who had driven from the Midlands with his wife to spend a few days campaigning in our region. It was a pleasure to meet Will, and altogether it was a very positive and enjoyable day of door-knocking. Will reports that they spent a relaxing evening with the Elliots, including a canoe trip to the Geldeston Locks.



Many of you stood in the election, for which we are very grateful, as it helps to fulfil our aim of allowing everyone to vote for a GP candidate; we were one of the few districts in Suffolk to achieve a full slate of candidates, so well done everyone. Unfortunately, this was UKIP's year and the Green Party did not do very well, either here or in Norfolk, where they lost three seats. In Suffolk, Andrew Stringer and Mark Ereira retained their seats, but we failed to win any of the 3-4 seats we were targetting; this was a pity because, if the Conservatives had lost two more seats, they would have lost their majority. As it is, they have been kicked out of Lowestoft.

Results:

Division	Name	Votes	% of votes	% of ballot papers
Beccles	Sue Bergin	918	10.86	20.81
Beccles	Graham Elliott	1322	15.64	29.97
Bungay	Simon Thompson	756	29.73	29.73
Gunton	Emma Bateman	279	3.76	6.80
Gunton	Peter Eyres	246	3.10	6.00
Halesworth	Jennifer Berry	374	14.72	14.72
Kessingland	Emma Waller	179	6.55	6.55
Lowestoft South	Tom Hammond	211	2.72	5.26
Lowestoft South	Steven Nichols	170	2.19	4.24
Oulton	Maxine Narburgh	378	4.56	8.16
Oulton	John Nixon	228	2.75	4.92
Pakefield	Douglas Hoffman	138	1.99	3.86
Pakefield	George Langley	165	2.37	4.62

Where there are two seats in a division, the percentage of the total vote gives an underestimate of our true support. To get round this, I have added another column calculating our votes as a percentage of the total number of ballot papers; this is probably a slight overestimate of the percentage we would have got in a single-seat election. Graham came third in Beccles and Simon was second in Bungay; elsewhere, we beat the Liberal Democrats in every seat bar one.

Genetically Modified Organisms

The Environment Secretary has announced his firm commitment to introducing GM crops to Britain as soon as the EU Commission can be persuaded to allow them and the general public to accept them. We saw off Tony Blair's attempts: we must be no less determined to see off this government.

One expert has summed it up very neatly: "GMOs are a solution looking for a problem." He went on to say, "Cheap food is the problem: lack of food is not." There are 1 billion people who do not get enough to eat, but there are another 1.5bn who are obese and 0.3bn who suffer from type 2 diabetes. Retailers push down food prices, so it is easier to waste than not. The real answer is to help small farmers in developing countries to be more productive with agro-environmental farming such as organic rather than to push more money into the pockets of wealthy Western corporations.

Waveney Green Party website: www.waveney.greenparty.org.uk