



Green Party

Winchester

A GREEN THOUGHT

Movement Strategy Bold Words – Uncertain Action

Winchester’s draft Movement and Access Strategy has been published for consultation. It is good to see at least the first two priorities identified:

Reduce Traffic in the town and recognise that all other priorities depend on doing this.

Improve Health through tackling air pollution and encouraging active modes of transport.

This at long last sets a sensible direction for transport policy in Winchester. There is, however, a third priority which requires interpretation and which must be treated with suspicion:

Infrastructure for ‘Sustainable’ Growth. *Sustainable Growth* has been weasel-wording with both local and central government for too long for its meaning to be trusted. And the Movement Strategy makes it clear that the infrastructure intended – ‘strategic’ road capacity increases – is the very opposite of what would be environmentally, economically or socially sustainable.



Waste of Space: People or Cars?

Green Candidate

At the time of going to press it is anybody’s guess what will happen as factions debate the Brexit Deal. A clear possibility is that, despite the Fixed-term Parliament Act, there will be another General Election.

Winchester Green Party has voted to be ready for such an event by adopting a Parliamentary candidate, Andrew Wainwright.

Andrew has a particular interest in the new economics that works from the basis that people and planet matter.



Big Projects Carry on Regardless

The politicisation of the Movement Strategy is apparent in the fact that the City Council’s development projects are completely uncriticised, even though they threaten strategic priorities.

Andrew Wainwright says “*the Station Approach and the Leisure Centre projects are big traffic generators and cannot be squared with the desire to reduce car movements and air pollution in the city centre. The City needs to do some joined-up thinking*”

Air Pollution is a Health Problem Not a Legal Nicety

We have long campaigned on air pollution (see past Green Thoughts on our website) but the City Council remains in breach of the law. The Movement Strategy has no sense of urgency on this even now. But the Law is not the main story, since it is inadequate in its recognition of the harm being done. Local authorities across the country have their sights only on how to get under the allowed level of Nitrogen Dioxide, while the greatest health risk is now known to reside in the smallest soot particles. Even if local councils manage



Brexit Woes

At the time of printing we have no idea what will happen on Brexit, but the Green Party considers that all the urgent issues facing the world require international action and isolating ourselves à la Trump is to court catastrophe.

The Brexit vote was a democratic expression, but democracy did not end in 2016. Now that we know a lot more about the value of the false promises we ought to have the opportunity to confirm or reject the 2016 decision. Arch Brexiteer David Davis said in 2012: *“If a democracy cannot change its mind, it ceases to be a democracy”*. Exactly!

to ‘limbo dance’ under the legal thresholds, particulate pollution in Winchester will still be killing 6 people in the central area alone and taking away over 60 life-years every year.

It is time that the local authorities and public health groups recognised this significant burden of mortality. Winchester’s MP, Steve Brine, is a Junior Minister for Health. Is it not time he took an active interest in seeing how this ill-health burden can be removed from his constituents?

Solar Under Attack

If you are thinking of putting solar PV on your roof you need to act quickly. New installations will no longer receive the Feed-in-Tariff as from 31st March 2019 and now the Government has announced a proposal to stop paying for surplus electricity not used by the householder which is fed into the grid. This electricity will then be sold on to consumers by the big energy suppliers. All of this is alien to Green Party policy which is to divert subsidies from nuclear and carbon-intensive systems and encourage renewables. There is more on this topic on our website.

Whither Growth?

There has been much correspondence recently on the assertion by the Business Improvement District (BID) that Winchester must grow or *‘wither on the vine’*. Growth **forever** has long been questioned as either desirable or achievable and no modern branch of economics can reconcile it to planetary stability. Natural systems can mature and then last for a long time. Unnatural, unrestrained growth is usually called cancer. Winchester is like a mature oak tree – it can last a long time with healthy renewal, but it doesn’t need dramatic growth.



Join Us?

Why not come to a Green Party meeting? These are held on the first Wednesday of each month at the University in Sparkford Road (Winton Building Room 3). The usual format (in addition to news/business) is to have a debate on a subject centred around a video lecture or a presentation by an invitee.