



A GREEN THOUGHT

Climate Emergency Running Down the Clock

Brexit has cost us nearly three years of normal political business and looks set to divert our attention from other matters for much longer yet. The Prime Minister may have run down the clock on her unpalatable 'deal' and even managed to reset the time (to what end we can only guess at). But the planetary clock has been ticking inexorably and there is no-one to grant us an extension.

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) last October spelled out that world carbon emissions need to have **fallen** by 45% by 2030 in order to avoid the very worst catastrophe. **ELEVEN YEARS TO GO!** And emissions are actually **rising** again.

YAWN! You've heard it all before. The Cassandra Effect of warnings of catastrophe is *'to evoke in others a refusal to believe what at the same time they know to be true'*. In Trump's anti-scientific Post-Truth age any piece of lunatic denial gets to be believed in by large groups of people.

But the biggest danger lies with those who accept the science but continue to behave irrationally out of habit (just one more cigarette) or for more cynical short-term political advantage. Our government fully accepts the IPCC findings; it is signed up to the Paris Agreement. Yet Mrs May's government, in all its actions seems committed to breaking that Agreement – it seems intent on doing as much environmental damage as it can.



Mozambique 2019 – Image Wikicommons

How else to explain the commitment to airport expansion, massive road expansion, more subsidy to road transport and less to efficient and socially useful public transport, fracking for ever more fossil fuel and so on? How else do you explain the simultaneous neutering of the environmental protection agencies and the denial of proper public appraisal of major infrastructure projects?

Where was Steve Brine?



Parliament debated climate change on the 28th February, for the first time in two years. Only 48 out of 650 MPs bothered to turn up for at least part of the debate. Our MP was not one of them.

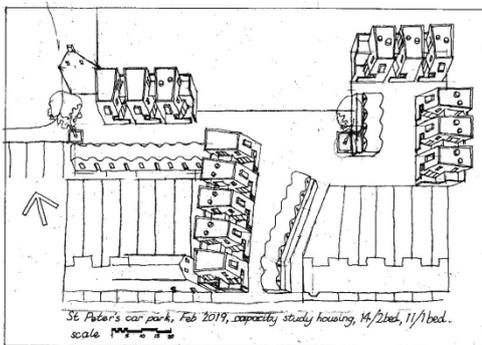
Only the Green Party gets it

Climate Change, Mass Extinction, Soil Destruction, Air Pollution..... These imperatives for action have been at the core of what the Green Party has been about since its formation. None of the other main political parties have ever paid more than lip-service to these problems. They have run out of time and run out of credibility.

Joined-up Thinking Housing, Transport, Health

Three problems in Winchester:

- **Affordable Housing Shortage:** Planning policy has been aimed at commercial **demand** rather than social housing **need**, with the result that much of the population on which the functioning of the city depends is priced out of living here. The Council has recognised a need to return to providing social housing. Unfortunately, valued green open space has been identified for some of the new and planned provision (e.g. at Abbots Barton and Stanmore).
- **Traffic Congestion:** The City is choked with traffic that restricts more efficient access of people by public transport and deters active modes of travel. The Movement Study has identified a need to reduce traffic in the centre.
- **Pollution:** The Council continues to act illegally on air pollution 9 years (and ~50 deaths and ~500 years of lost lifetime) after it was supposed to have eliminated the problem. The Movement Study recognises the problem, though it has yet to act with any sense of urgency.



St. Peter's car park - an early and easy win:

We have proposed to the City Council that they close St. Peter's car park in North Walls (fulfilling a long-standing promise to do so), thereby releasing land which a well-known local architect has shown has the capacity to provide 25 dwellings. The removal of the car park will contribute to a reduction of traffic and ameliorate the current air pollution burden on the neighbouring St

Bede's primary school. There would be a net economic benefit arising from bringing purchasing population into the centre without the economic cost of extra car journeys.

Since edge-of-centre car parks are underused there would be no loss of parking revenue to the Council.

A letter calling for this measure was delivered to the Council by visiting Green MEP, Keith Taylor, in early March. A petition to this effect can be found at:

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/build-social-housing-on-the-site-of-st-peters-car-park>



Back to the Future

We thoroughly welcome the new and especially the young radical environmental movements, **Extinction Rebellion** and the **Youth Strike 4 Climate**. Both give us hope that their energy will wake up the politicians in Parliament and Council chambers everywhere.

The young should not be left alone to fight for their future

Candidate **Andrew Wainwright** says: *"Winchester needs Green Party presence on the Council to insist that the environment is at the heart of everything it does. There is no place for carbon-wasteful vanity development projects or car-obsessed transport policy"*.

The Council Elections in May are your chance to back the future generation