

# hAROLD

Newsletter of Hastings & Rye Liberal Democrats: 2022 No.1



## **HISTORIC LIB DEM WIN**

# **LIB DEMS COME FROM 30,000 BEHIND TO BEAT THE CONSERVATIVES IN NORTH SHROPSHIRE BY-ELECTION**

The Liberal Democrats sent shockwaves through the country by beating the Conservatives in the North Shropshire by-election in December.

In one of the biggest by-election shocks in history Liberal Democrat Helen Morgan won despite starting 30,000 votes behind.

The result piled pressure on Boris Johnson's Government and cemented that the Liberal Democrats as the only challengers to the Conservatives in many places across the country. Hastings chair Bob Lloyd said "People are tired of being taken for granted and ignored by Boris Johnson and the Conservatives. The allegations around the Number 10 Lockdown parties have shown that it is one rule for them and one for the rest of us. People in our community suffered greatly throughout both the National lockdowns and to hear that our leaders were so flippant about their own guidance is an insult to them all. They are switching to the Liberal Democrats to send a message that "enough is enough"

# BOB'S BULLETIN

Dear Friends,

How does one follow the sensational news of the Lib Dems, nationally, winning both North Shropshire and Chesham & Amersham By-Elections and making gains on many councils including East Sussex County Council? Since May last year we have made 15 net gains in principal council by-elections, the Conservative have 12 net losses and Labour 6 net losses

It seems that we can finally see the light at the end of the COVID tunnel, Spring is on its way. and our thoughts are once again turning to getting out and about, visiting friends and family and even travelling abroad!!!



**Bob, one of many Lib Dems at the Hastings Rally for Refugees on 11<sup>th</sup> December**

These past 2 years have not been easy for our little band of volunteers and Executive members; campaigning has been very difficult, and we have struggled to get a local message across. Having said that. we ran a strong campaign in last year's May elections for ESCC and HBC delivering 1000s of leaflets in both Rother and Hastings. We have also forged closer ties with other Lib Dem constituency parties throughout Sussex.

Sadly, partly because of Brexit seeming to be done, we have lost some members in the past year; dislike of Corbyn and his Brexit stance led many to desert Labour and some of those have returned. Locally, the Greens have done well, their message is an easy one to put across to the public, who generally support the climate agenda. We have been promoting the environmental agenda since at least

the 1960s and have many achievements to that end, not least under Ed Davey as Secretary of State for Energy & Climate Change. Alas, we are not a single issue party, and the message is harder to get across.

Nationally Boris Johnson's government stumbles from one crisis to other but with such a large majority it may seem difficult to imagine a non-Tory government after the next general election, but it is not impossible.

The effects of Brexit have become so intermingled with the effects of the COVID pandemic that it will still be many years before we will be able to properly understand the economic damage it has done.

As you may know we have HBC elections coming up in May and we need to get out leafleting, and campaigning in the coming weeks.

We need your help to run an effective campaign and so I am appealing to you to lend a hand, we need to fund the campaign so any donations would be most welcome, you can donate via our local website. If you can spare a few hours over the coming weeks, anything at all that would be wonderful. Leafleting, canvassing, street stalls, manning polling stations on the day are just a few of the roles. Perhaps you have a skill which we could use to design leaflets etc. Perhaps you would like to stand in the Local Elections; we plan to have a candidate in all 16 contested seats. Please contact us ASAP via the website: email [info@har0ld.org.uk](mailto:info@har0ld.org.uk) or contact me directly on 07973614278

We are also looking for a new Prospective Parliamentary Candidate to replace Nick Perry who is standing down after many years valuable service.

Very Best Wishes,

*Bob Lloyd*  
HRLD chair

## **ENDING SEWAGE DISCHARGES & THE SPRING CONFERENCE AGENDA**

Last Summer was particularly notorious for sewage on our beaches especially after the spill at Bulverhythe courtesy of Southern Water. This has been a national disgrace and Tim Farron has brought a motion ENDING SEWAGE DISCHARGES to our Spring Conference, which as it stands fails to tackle dumping sewage in the sea. We are drafting an amendment to meet this omission and to tighten up on the transparency of Ofwat- the water industry regulator. **Join us at The Land of Green Ginger, in the Hastings Old Town High Street at 2.00pm on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February** to discuss the amendment and if there is time, other items that are on the conference agenda - ACTION ON AIR QUALITY follows on from Emlyn's work for example, and the motion on the forgotten Ethiopian Civil War need some teeth.

The conference agenda can be downloaded at

<https://www.markpack.org.uk/168747/lib-dem-spring-conference-agenda-published/>

The conference will be held online from 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> March, although ALDC are running a conference interactively live from York, and the above link will enable take you through to registration. The Autumn conference will be live, in Brighton – 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> September, so we will be able to commute!

## **MARTIN WINS DENNIS BLACK AWARD**

Chair Bob Lloyd presented Martin Griffiths with the Dennis Black Award for his contributions to the party as agent in the 2021 elections at the Politics and Pint gathering at the White Rock Hotel on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January - don't miss the next one... on the last Friday of the month...



## **May Elections – Candidates Wanted.**

If you are interested in standing for the Hastings Borough Council in May, there are still wards to fill. We are particularly keen to encourage more women to stand, and anybody from a group that feels under represented on the Council. In 2020 51.1% of the population of Hastings were women, but only 11 of 32 councillors in 2021.

Please let Bob Lloyd know if you would be interested in standing, please email [info@har0ld.org.uk](mailto:info@har0ld.org.uk) or contact him directly on 07973614278. If you would like to discuss the pros and cons of being a councillor, we would be happy to arrange a chat with one of our existing Rother District councillors or a former councillor.

## **ROTHER DISTRICT REPORT**

Contrary to what might be expected from the press coverage, here was quite a lot of sympathy locally on social media when a boatload of refugees came ashore at Fairlight last November.

Rother District Council has been proactive in its response to the wider issue. We have already been able to find safe and comfortable homes for two families under the Government's Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) for citizens who provided services to the British Armed Forces during the recent conflict. We have also made a commitment to find homes for families under the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement programme.

East Sussex local housing authorities have discussed an indicative target to resettle 200 people across the whole of East Sussex through the ACRS and ARAP programmes. The rationale being that this represents 1 per cent of the 20,000 Government commitment and the population of East Sussex represents 1 per cent of the total population of the UK.

Rother has an existing UK Resettlement Programme team which has been

supporting the Government's various commitments to resettle refugees from Syria and the wider region. The team has been enhanced to meet the needs of the Afghan households we have committed to resettle. The team provides a comprehensive support package to refugees throughout the resettlement period including assistance with accessing language classes, education, health and social care services as well as support with a range of activities to promote their integration into our community. Howard and I have also been raising the matter at parish council meetings.

Otherwise, the reform of Rother's Planning Department is bearing fruit; we have been using Capita to outsource processing of planning applications and are catching up, and there have been improvements to the management structure internally. Pressure to find land on which to build remains an issue. The revised Local Plan will be prepared over the next two years.

Progress on the Climate Emergency has been a priority in all the decisions as we seek to change the culture of the Council in the face of a challenge which will be catastrophic for the next generations if we do not act now.

The people of Camber must be delighted that there is some measure of respite from the free-for-all that saw half of London parking in their streets last summer, and Bexhill finally has parking controls.

Rother District have set up their online community lottery, going public next month. <https://www.rother.gov.uk/news/community-lottery-lifeline-for-good-causes/> More details will follow.

I was at the opening of the Archive Resources Centre, in Pett Methodist Chapel on 12<sup>th</sup> February, where the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Andrew Blackman, presided. This is a tremendous local resource and community initiative, and all of those who have made it so are to be heartily congratulated and thanked. The archive covers the Fairlight, Guestling and Pett area. If you have any material which you would like to either donate to the ARC or to lend for them to scan and catalogue, please contact: [archiveresourcecentre@outlook.com](mailto:archiveresourcecentre@outlook.com)

*Andrew Mier*

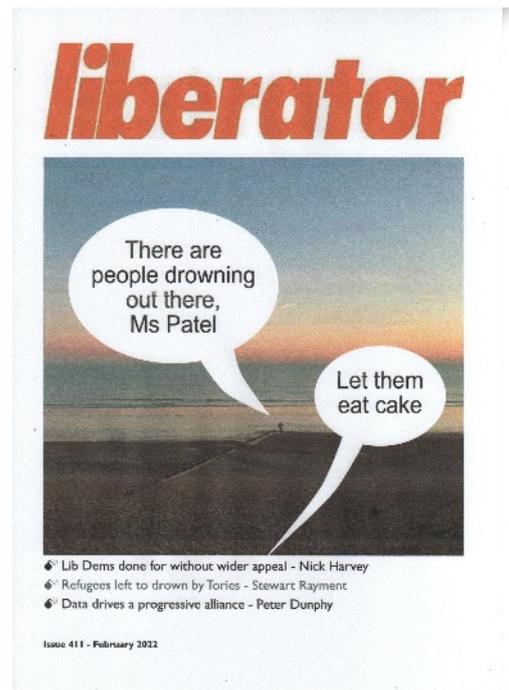
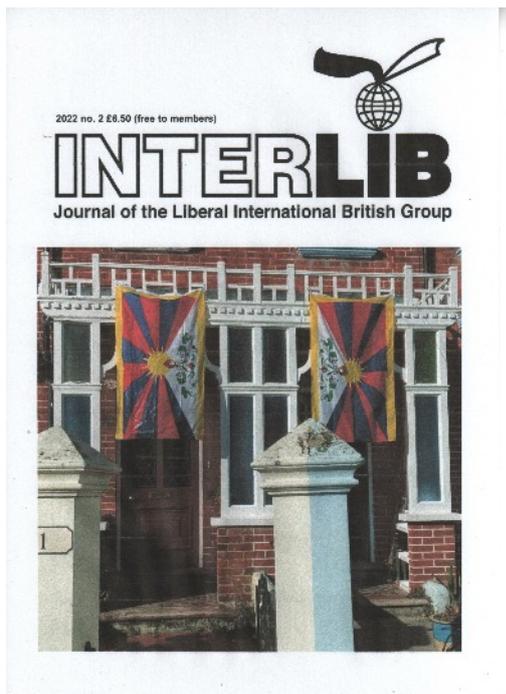


**Andrew & Howard visiting work at the Camber car park.**

# HASTINGS IN THE LIBERAL PRESS

Hastings has made it twice into Liberal press in since the New Year. The independent Liberal magazine LIBERATOR featured an article on the incident that brought shame to the borough last November when fishermen reputedly blocked the launch of a life boat; you'll probably recall the accusations and denials flying around at the time on the town's social media. Liberator can be accessed at [www.liberator.org.uk](http://www.liberator.org.uk) – the magazine, which was founded in 1970, went online with the first Covid Lockdown. It comes out every six weeks, and whilst often critical of the Liberal Democrat leadership, as Paddy Ashdown put it, if it wasn't there someone would have to invent it. You may recognise a glorious sunset on Hastings beach on the cover.

The other feature is again, a magazine cover – two houses in Hastings sporting the Tibetan flag, as a protest against the continuing occupation of Tibet by China, during the Beijing Winter Olympics. Hong Kong and the Uyghurs have been the focus of our attention over the last year, whilst Tibet is largely forgotten. The Liberal International British Group publish INTERLIB at [www.libg.co.uk](http://www.libg.co.uk)



This month's LIB DEM PINT takes place on the last Friday - 25<sup>th</sup> February at 8.00pm at **The Prince Albert**, on the corner of Brooke Street & Cornwallis Street, just off of Queen's Road. We look forward to your joining us there!

