



# Brighton & Hove Liberal Democrats Summer 2023 Newsletter

For Members & Supporters

Editor & MDO: Trevor Freeman

## POST ELECTION SPECIAL

### Editorial

The votes have been cast and counted, the candidates selected and appointed and we now have a new council for the city. For the next four years they will take the decisions that will affect how we in the city live. It will not be an easy experience for many as they assume their responsibilities. They now have to make good on their promises. This is the point at which reality kicks in as budgets, expectations and delivery all collide to thwart them from their euphoria of becoming the ones who made it.

So why do we do it? There are many answers, but hopefully the one that resonates the most with us as Liberal Democrats is 'because we want to make the lives of those who live and work in the city better'. On this occasion we have not managed to get any of our candidates elected but we have had an influence on the election. This can be evidenced by our involvement in press coverage, social media responses and our participation in hustings around the city. People are listening to us and again becoming aware of what we bring to the table.

Although, we have not secured any councillors in the city the Liberal Democrats around the country have and we now have one of our best showings with our highest tally of councillors since the late 1990s. The Liberal Democrats are now well and truly back on the national stage.

Our next job is to make that presence felt in Parliament by winning more seats in the General Election that must be held by, at the very latest, January 2025. More likely is that it will be held earlier than that, possibly October next year. This means that we don't have that long and must start preparing ourselves for the next bout of campaigning and electioneering. So take a short rest and then come back to the fray fully refreshed and ready for action

### 2023 Executive Committee

Chair: Stewart Stone

Vice Chair: Martin Kersh

Secretary: Caroline Brown

Treasurer: Paul Chandler

Data Officer: Simon Jardine

Membership Development Officer (MDO): Trevor Freeman

Ordinary Members: Frances Lindsay-Hills, David Sears, Andrew England, Peter Denyer, Hyder Khalil, Simon Gamble, Robert Brown, Ashley Ridley, Caroline Ellis, Co-opted Members: Dominique Hall & Owen Sharp

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**Liberal Democrats**  
**The Listening Party**

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## Local Election Review

Firstly, we have to give an enormous thank you to all those who stood as candidates. Without you none of the work at election time would be possible.

Secondly, we have to give a massive thank you to all those who helped out in the election campaign. That includes all those who delivered, door knocked, telled, and worked in the background. Your efforts are what brought the votes in.

Lastly, we reserve an extra special thank you to Simon, our Election Agent. He kept the show on the road, pointed it in the right direction, and made sure all the bits of paper were filled in and submitted to the right people.

As for the election itself it very much turned out the result that we suspected would happen. Most local elections suffer from national trends and reflect the electorates verdict on the current government. This election did not buck the trend and the Tories saw their share of the vote plunge by over 28%, and left them with just 6 councillors. However, there was also a large local factor that affected the result and this was the disillusionment with the Greens and their minority administration. Their share of the vote plunged by a massive 38.37%, reducing them to just 7 councillors.

The main beneficiary of these swings was the Labour vote which increased by 21.69%, and handed them 38 councillors and overall control of the city council. The first time that any party has held a majority on the council since the city was formed in the year 2000.

A Party that did surprisingly well, considering they did not exist before this year was the Brighton & Hove Independent Party. They secured 2 councillors, both in the Rottingdean & West Saltdean Ward.

As for us, we pretty much performed as expected, with our overall vote falling slightly as we were squeezed by the obvious intent of the voters to punish the Greens and the Tories. On the whole we performed well through the squeeze and made our presence felt in a number of wards, especially those that we targeted or where we have had a historical presence. That we did relatively well in some of the new wards is a testament to the effort put in by the candidates for those wards and augers well for the future. Another factor that we can be pleased about is the number of new faces who stood as candidates for us.



## What of the future?

Labour have taken control at a difficult time as the city faces some fraught times with funding in short supply. Now that they have a majority the buck is going to stop with them and they are most probably going to find themselves taking responsibility for decisions that happened prior to them taking office. It is ever thus. The city has some very serious housing and social care problems and their ability to make a difference is very limited.

In all probability there will be a General Election next year and if as expected Labour win that then the probability that they will suffer from disenchantment at the next round of local elections in 2027 will be very high. Looks as though we need to get ourselves back out there and continue the fight for next time.

## Constituency & Ward Watch

### Constituency Boundaries

The Boundary Commission has made changes to Constituency boundaries that are due to be implemented in 2023 after they receive parliamentary approval. The anticipated date for approval is expected to be in July 2023.

The only changes to affect our three constituencies, are that part of Hanover and Elm Grove ward is included in Kemptown as opposed to Pavilion. The last time we fought Pavilion ward was back in 2015 so for that constituency it will almost be like fighting our first election there.

### General Election.

We are now in the process of appointing our candidates to stand for us in the next General Election. The adverts for Kemptown Constituency have gone out and we are waiting to hear from the applicants before organising the panel that will make our choice. The next stage will be to launch the process for Hove and Pavilion so that we may get our candidates in place for those constituencies.

Appointing candidates is a long process as we have to go through the central party for the initial steps by inviting candidates that they have approved of to apply for our positions. After that we then have to go through our approval process before we select our preferred candidates.

Fighting a general election is vastly different to that of local council elections. The scale of operations is much larger as each constituency covers a greater population and the messages sent out refer to national issues as opposed to local ones. Referring to potholes in a ward won't cut it with those outside the ward.

Additionally, the cost is far greater. Just to be a candidate costs a £500 deposit. The local party provides this funding so we will have to find £1,500 before we have even started campaigning. To get those deposits back the candidate must secure more than 5% of the votes cast. Each candidate will get one free posting for a leaflet to the electorate, after that everything else has to be paid for with a limit on the total spend.

### Wards

Following on from the local elections in May a few of the wards have set about building their teams and profiles for the next set of local elections in 2027. This may seem early but is essential if they are to improve their performance.

Local voters are influenced by the level of activity that they see in their ward over the course of the years leading up to an election. A solid presence and high interaction pays dividends as the local voter interprets it as a party that cares and has their interests at heart. This was illustrated by the result obtained by the Independent candidates in Rottingdean & West Saltdean. Their leader had a reputation as a hard worker for the ward and a fighter for their interests. There is little doubt that it influenced the vote even in the face of high national voting patterns.

### Ward Teams.

Our new website retains the individual pages for each ward so it is an excellent focal point for the ward teams to work from. It gives them a public platform to carry out surveys, encourage volunteers and get news and messages out to those who live and work in the ward.

An easy way to introduce yourself to other members and find out how to become active is to attend one of the Coffee Mornings that are run monthly in each of the constituencies or attend one of the ward gatherings.



An example of such a gathering can be seen in the photo above where Rob from Kemptown Ward met up with some of his helpers to discuss tactics in his and Dominique's election campaign. Meetings such as these are very simple to organise and can take place anywhere you choose.

## Events

Courtesy of the Events Committee.

### **Brighton Carnival 10 June, Brighton Pride Parade 5 August, & Brunswick Festival 17-18 August.**

We are participating in all three events this year and would urge you to get involved. Details on how to join in will be announced by email and through the website.

### **Curry Nights - watch for emails.**

Our Chair has arranged these for those partial to a curry. It is not a Lib Dem event but he welcomes us to make up a table or two of Lib Dem members and supporters.

### **Events Group.**

If you are interested in joining this group please contact our MDO. The contact details can be found on the front cover.

**Coffee mornings are held every month, one in each constituency.**

Locations and timings are;

**Hove:** 10:00 am on the first Wednesday of the month at Big Beach Cafe, Hove Lagoon, BN3 4AX. It is hosted by Simon Jardine.

**Kemptown:** 10:00 am on the first Saturday of the month at Laughing Dog Cafe, 31 Waterfront, Brighton Marina Village, BN2 5WA. It is hosted by Simon Jardine.

**Pavilion:** 11:00 on the second Friday of the month at Café Aldo, 77 Trafalgar Street, BN1 4EB. It is hosted by Frances Lindsay-Hills.

All are welcome and it is quite OK to attend those outside your constituency. **Note change in venues for Kemptown and Pavilion.**

## Our New Website

Our new website should be up and running on its new platform by the time you read this. It still needs a lot of work before it is complete, but we are aiming to achieve that as soon as possible. Like all websites though, it can never stand still and so you will see the content being continually updated. Any thoughts that you have for improving its look or its messaging will be welcome. As strict amateurs our web team need all the help they can get.

# WE NEED YOU



## CAN YOU JOIN ONE OF OUR WARD TEAMS?

Do you want to make a difference?

With a general election starting to gain traction as the deadline looms ever closer we need to start organising ourselves as we carry our messages to the electors. We need deliverers, canvassers, envelope stuffers, backroom support workers. You name it and we have a need for it.

Do you have skills that could help us?

Are you good at social media, copy-writing, photography, information technology, and design. Or soft skills sets such as talking to people, listening to them, and helping them.

Contact our MDO, [trevor.freeman@liberalbrighton.org](mailto:trevor.freeman@liberalbrighton.org).

A Liberal Voice for a Liberal City

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