

## Major Opposition Group Leader's Annual Statement

South Cambs Liberal Democrats have been at pains to point out, in our recently published manifesto, that it is the Tories nationally who chose to make the cuts that are resulting in reduced services in this Council and restricted choices for our residents. We will not support any further cuts to front line services and will continue to strongly oppose the latest housing bill and its consequences. We will promote affordable rented and shared ownership housing for people to live where they want to live and strongly oppose the Right to Buy which we believe sounds the death knell for social housing. We will use all our influence to ensure that new developments include 40% affordable housing and will challenge developers and landowners to do what is best for our residents and not what just benefits their shareholders.

South Cambs Lib Dems are committed to supporting rural businesses and local jobs for local people throughout the District. We believe that rural businesses are a key part to ensuring that communities are truly sustainable and will do our utmost to drive planning policies that support businesses and allow them to flourish. We shall promote Neighbourhood Plans in our own communities as a means of supporting local economic development and will champion transport links which are good for business.

Access to primary health care is our priority and we will do our utmost to ensure that GP surgeries access sufficient funding to meet the burden of new developments including ready access to good mental health support.

Protecting the Green Belt is the key theme in Liberal Democrat planning policies and we will fight to preserve South Cambridgeshire's rural character in the face of unprecedented demands for housing and the disastrous consequences of the suspended Conservative Local Plan. We will promote community energy projects and other initiatives aimed at minimising the district's carbon emissions. South Cambs Lib Dems will promote the delivery a network of rural cycleways suitable for the commuter as well as the recreational cyclist and will work towards a long-term strategic plan which includes rail for South Cambridgeshire.

South Cambs Lib Dems are supportive of the principal aims of the City Deal to reduce congestion and facilitate sustainable travel, but recognise that it has potential to threaten the quality of life for South Cambridgeshire residents. We will champion FREE parking in Park and Ride sites funded by revenue from congestion charging and will promote park and cycle facilities and subsidised rural bus services.

We are delighted to welcome three new Liberal Democrat Councillors to our team and are looking forward to the coming year successfully promoting Liberal values in South Cambridgeshire