



# Malvern Hills Green Party E-Newsletter

Issue No. 24

January 2014

**A** very Happy New Year to all our readers! This is a shorter-than usual issue – because there is not a lot to report since the December issue because of the intervening Christmas and New Year holiday. However, there are a couple of events coming up fast, and to which your attention is drawn. First, is this week's (Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January) **talk on eco-log cabin houses** by designer, architect and Director of 'Nordic Log Homes', Paul Sherratt – whose website is <http://www.nordiccountryloghomes.com>. This will commence at about 8.20pm after a much shortened monthly business meeting (starting at 8.00pm).



Then there is our **Burns Night Ceilidh** at Malvern Cube on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January – starting at 7.30, and dancing til' midnight to the rhythms and calling of the fabulous 'Loose Canons'. Last year's event was greatly enjoyed by all in the packed West Malvern Village Hall venue; so we have relocated this year to Malvern Cube for more space to accommodate more participants. Tickets are £8 in advance (email John Raine on [j.w.raine@bham.ac.uk](mailto:j.w.raine@bham.ac.uk) or phone him on 07786 198332) or £10 on the night at the door (subject to a limit on numbers!). Families of four at a discounted special price of £25. Tickets include a light ploughman's meal. There will be a cash bar throughout the evening.



## Up-and-Coming Events

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December - *Malvern Hills Green Party Monthly Meeting* 8.00pm, Great Malvern Hotel – come along for a seasonal drink and mince pie!

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January - *Malvern Hills Green Party Monthly Meeting* 8.00pm, Great Malvern Hotel followed at 8.20 by Guest Speaker Paul Sharrett on 'Low Energy Log Homes'.

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January *Burns Night Ceilidh with 'Loose Canons'*; Malvern Cube; 7.30 til 12.00 midnight – with bar and light refreshments.

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January - *Councillors' Surgery at Elim Café, West Malvern, from 11.00am- 1.00pm*

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February – *Councillors' surgery at Malvern Vale Community Centre, 9.45- 11.45am* (please not the new earlier time here – and for all future surgeries at Malvern Vale. This is to avoid clashes with other activities at the Centre)

## News from the Councils

### *Taxing the Poorest in our District?*

Malvern Hills District Council meets on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January to debate plans by the ruling administration to fill a 10% funding gap in Council Tax Support (resulting from central government's cuts) by passing the cut on to those council tax payers who have been in receipt of discounts, exemptions and benefits (and for whom the Council Tax Support scheme has been developed). In effect, central government has made the cut but passed the responsibility for its incidence on to local councils which are now being asked to impose it on those least able to afford it. The decision was deferred by the Council in early December as councillors felt they wanted more information about the issue and its effects on those in greatest need.



### *Incinerator Decision Looms?*

Meanwhile, Worcestershire County Council meets on 16<sup>th</sup> January and will be asked to endorse the recommendation of the Cabinet (made last month) to proceed with the incinerator at Hartlebury on the basis of a financial package that involves the Council (or rather, the tax payer) borrowing money to support the private contractor, Mercia Waste which will build and run the plant. Sadly, it seems likely that a significant majority of county councillors will be supporting this most 'ungreen and hugely expensive' solution to Hereford and Worcester's waste management challenge – as the Labour members as well as Conservatives are supportive of the proposal. Others, like us Greens, see it as the replacement of one unacceptable approach – that of landfill (at a site near Pershore) with another – that of 'mass burn incineration (at Hartlebury). It is unlikely to do any good to our recycling performance – as the incinerators work efficiently only when operating at capacity, so there is every likelihood that more potentially recyclable materials will be burned. And of course it will be

many years before we know anything much about what the emissions are doing to our environment and to human health for those living near, or down-wind to the plant. Significantly too, the Hereford and Worcester Action Group whose members have campaigned so hard on this issue have recently received confirmation via their Freedom of Information requests that the solution chosen for our two counties is going to be much more expensive (and therefore represents much poorer value for money for taxpayers) than other options being pursued by other local



authorities. Wakefield, for example, has recently opted for a 'mechanical and biological treatment' solution and at a significantly lesser cost (this also being the chosen approach of Lancashire – which has built three such plants strategically located in different parts of the county to minimise transport costs and associated pollution). Part of the problem for Hereford and Worcestershire is that we have been locked into a large (and very expensive) Private Finance Initiative (PFI) agreement since 1998 (and with government support) and this has heavily influenced decision-making as to the future arrangements for waste management. Also, having gained planning permission for the Hartlebury site – and this after a lengthy and difficult process and following rejection of an application for another site at Kidderminster – many longer-serving councillors seem to be willing to support the decision irrespective of its environmental or financial merits simply to be able to 'move on' as quickly as possible from a subject that has proved so politically fraught as well as technically difficult.

Let's hope, however, that on January 16<sup>th</sup> enough councillors will vote at least for deferment, to allow more time for a fresh and more thorough review of all the options. You can watch the debate on the Worcestershire County Council website – where there will be a live webcast of the meeting – starting at 10.00am (on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>).

## Recent article

### *Malvern Needs Its Own Currency (Observer 8 January 2014)*

Whatever the season, we are used to having what we want, when we want it. But lengthy global supply chains not only waste energy but leave us vulnerable to interruptions in local energy, finance, food, and industrial networks wherever in the world they occur. Increasingly extreme weather and rising energy costs highlight this exposure.

Current monetary systems fail because they simply burden us with debt and put no new money into circulation when and where it is most needed. The intense drive for investor and corporate profit is poorly aligned with what matters most to the average person: wellbeing.

A sustainable society requires us to move towards self-reliant local economies, where the majority of our needs are met from genuinely local production. We can become more self-reliant by funding a diverse set of small businesses and local supply chains. And a local currency, the Malvern pound, would shift economic activity out of the globalised economy and into a local economy on which we could all come to rely.

A currency that must be spent locally boosts local economic activity by retaining money in the area. Known as the multiplier effect, the Malvern pound would be spent repeatedly only within the local economy. With sterling, much of the wealth spent in the area is soon lost to big international business, remote shareholders and the boom-bust financial services industry. A Malvern pound would deepen and diversify connections between local business people and all the citizens of the region – essential to building a sustainable regional economy and providing high quality employment – building a sense of community and shared purpose. And if local councils accepted the Malvern pound in payment of taxes, this would immediately underwrite the value of the currency and increase its credibility.

Local currency systems can inject new money into a region, so increasing the capacity to generate jobs and fund public services. A Malvern pound could be directed toward public works, to fund new businesses, generate donations for local schools, non-profits and social services, or to help a community reduce inequities in income and wealth.

The people of Malvern have a strong sense of identity and civic pride and our independent businesses are crucial to that community identity. A Malvern pound could help us to support them and enable Malvern to become truly self-reliant.



**MALVERN HILLS  
GREEN PARTY**

---

**BURNS NIGHT  
CEILIDH**

---

---

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January

**— THE —  
LOOSE  
CANONS**

---

Malvern Cube

**— 7.30 PM —**

**TO MIDNIGHT  
with a bar**

---

**£8 (IN ADVANCE)  
£10 (ON THE NIGHT)  
£25 FAMILY OF FOUR**

**INCLUDES A LIGHT  
PLOUGHMAN'S STYLE MEAL**

---

email [j.w.raine@bham.ac.uk](mailto:j.w.raine@bham.ac.uk)  
or phone 07786 198332

## Contacts

**Chair and Treasurer:** Jan Dyer  
E: [greenleafjan@gmail.com](mailto:greenleafjan@gmail.com)

**Membership/Supporters Secretary:** Mel Platt  
E: [hounds142@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hounds142@yahoo.co.uk) • T: 01684 560922

**Elections Agent/Press Officer:** Julian Roskams  
E: [jdr@eticapress.com](mailto:jdr@eticapress.com) • T: 01684 565739

**Elections Nominations Agent:** Richard Perkins  
E: [rsperkins@freeuk.com](mailto:rsperkins@freeuk.com) • T: 01684 568989

**Minutes Secretary:** Isabel Jones  
E: [isabel.jones486@btinternet.com](mailto:isabel.jones486@btinternet.com) • T: 07854 522114

**Fundraising Co-ordinator:** Will Coleman  
E: [colemanjenkins@btinternet.com](mailto:colemanjenkins@btinternet.com) • T: 01684 578009

**Campaigns Co-ordinator:** Anna Stenning  
E: [anna.stenning@gmail.com](mailto:anna.stenning@gmail.com) • T: 01684 578009

## Councillors

County Councillor (Trinity Division) – John Raine (078786 198332 or [j.w.raine@bham.ac.uk](mailto:j.w.raine@bham.ac.uk))

District Councillors (West Ward) – Julian Roskams ([jdr@eticapress.com](mailto:jdr@eticapress.com) or 01684 565739) and John Raine (as above)

District Councillor (Link Ward) – Clive Smith ([CTSmith@waitrose.com](mailto:CTSmith@waitrose.com))

Town Councillors (Dyson Perrins) – Julian Roskams (as above)

Town Councillor (Link Ward) Clive Smith (as above)

Town Councillor (Chase Ward) Alex McLellan ([alexander.r.mclellan@gmail.com](mailto:alexander.r.mclellan@gmail.com))

Parish Councillor (Malvern Wells) Malcolm Victory ([malcolmvictory@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:malcolmvictory@tiscali.co.uk) or 01684 575156)

As well as the E-Newsletter, keep up to date by visiting the Branch's website:  
<http://www.greenparty.org.uk/localsites/malvernhills.html>

We also have a Facebook page:  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Malvern-Hills-Green-Party/171627822885633>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Malvern-Hills-Green-Party/171627822885633>