



Sutton Coldfield & Erdington Liberal Democrats – Winter 2018

In 2015 we had very few members and we were campaigning very little. Our vote share went down in the 2015 and 2017 General Elections. Since 2015, however, we have gained members and are now growing as a party. Jenny Wilkinson and party members have worked hard in the ward of Sutton Trinity for the local elections and we doubled our vote share in 2018 as a result. We are, therefore, focusing on Trinity as our target ward at the moment as this gives us the best chance to win a ward. We need more people to get involved in campaigning so please do get in touch if you would like to get more involved. See below for more details on how to get involved. Over the past year we have been busy bringing attention to both local and national issues in the area through campaigning in Sutton, Erdington, and Birmingham.

What are your local issues?

We'd like to hear from you about your top local issues to help guide our campaigning over the coming year. Please email us at info@suttonanderdingtonlibdems.org.uk or message us on Facebook @SCELibDems.

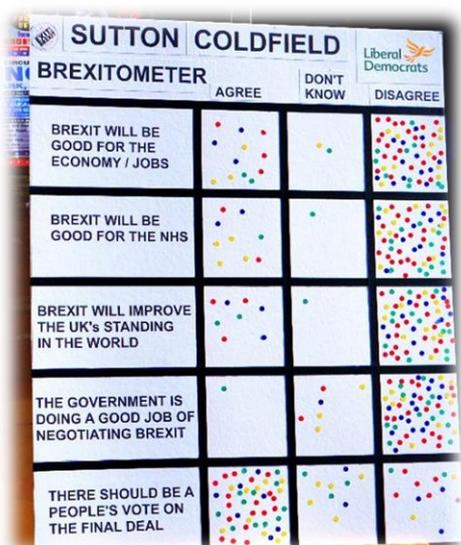
LITTER AND DRUG USE IN SUTTON PARK

The park is a key part of Sutton Coldfield and we are committed to keeping the area rubbish free. Unfortunately, a surprising amount of litter had accumulated since our last visit, including larger items like an electric heater and a car bumper. Members also found several dozen empty nitrous oxide cannisters, better known as "laughing gas". The use of the drug is a risk to both people's health and their criminal record.

Worryingly the cannisters were found just yards away from a popular beauty spot frequented by families with young children. We contacted the police about our findings and to find out if the community can be doing any more on the issue of drug use in the park.



SUTTON COLDFIELD RESIDENTS SUPPORT A PEOPLE'S VOTE



In September we conducted a 'Brexitometer' poll in Sutton town centre. We conversed with people of all ages and it quickly became apparent that the overwhelming number of people were dissatisfied with the government's conduct of Brexit and shared their concerns about the impact Brexit will have on the economy and public services. It was great to hear so many local residents speak passionately about the need for the UK to maintain close ties with Europe and two-thirds of people we spoke to supported a People's Vote on the final Brexit deal.

We also spoke to an EU national who has lived in the area for decades with her English husband. Sadly she told us she was planning to leave the UK, regardless of the Brexit outcome, because she no longer feels welcome in the country she has called home for so many years. Examples like this demonstrate that the Liberal Democrat commitment to creating a tolerant, fair, and open society is needed now more than ever.

EXPOSING LOCAL COUNCIL INACTION

Many residents have contacted us about their concerns about the level of dog fouling in the area. The matter is not only a nuisance, but also health hazard to locals. Local councillors said they would address the issue in their election leaflets, yet when we submitted a Freedom of Information request we discovered that neither Town nor City councillors have discussed the issue in any formal way. While the Town Council has accumulated a large surplus from taxing residents this issue demonstrates how the council is failing to use its resources to address long-term and ongoing concerns of local people. Our plan to deal with dog fouling is three-fold and based on successful methods used by other councils:



1. The Liberal Democrats would install bins for dog faeces, providing a place for people to put it. This means they do not have to carry it around in their pocket, which puts some off picking it up.
2. Changing behaviour requires social pressure, and a public campaign in and around Sutton Coldfield to highlight the issue would start to apply pressure on dog owners.
3. We would employ environmental wardens with part of their remit being to police the issue.

Upcoming Events:

Winning Here! Leamington Spa

9th March 10:00am onwards

Radford Road Church Hall, CV31 1HQ

A training day covering the basics for new and inexperienced canvassers. This is a great opportunity to learn valuable campaigning skills.

Politics & a Pint

12th March 8:00pm onwards

The Duke Inn, 12 Duke St, B72 1RJ

This is our monthly social event and is a great opportunity to relax and get to know other local members.

Coffee Morning

16th March 10.30am - 12.00pm

28 Goldieslie Road, B73 5PQ

Our local candidate Jenny would like to welcome female members to a coffee morning and host an open discussion on national policy issues.

Executive Committee Meeting

11th April 7:30pm onwards

Our Place, Farthing Ln, B72 1RN

All members are welcome to attend. Find out what we are doing and how you can get involved.

Get Involved in 2019

Starting on **April 27th** we are going to be doing regular monthly action days. On the last Saturday of every month a group of us will meet up at 10am and speak to voters until 12pm. Anyone can come along and you don't need any experience. Anyone who is new to it can go with someone who has experience so you can see what to do and you will always be supported.

The membership team are going to be ringing round our local members in the coming months to chat one-to-one about how you can support us. Right now we have two priorities:

- Delivering leaflets in the Sutton Trinity area
- Starting our door-step campaigning

If you are able to help out in any way please get in touch.

Join the 50/50 Club

Our treasurer David runs our 50/50 club, a monthly fundraising draw that offers you a chance to win 50% of the total subscriptions. The subscription is £1 per share payable monthly by Standing Order or £12 in cash being one year's subscription. The balance of the Club's fund not distributed in prizes will be donated to the local party, helping fund our campaigning efforts.

If you are interested in joining, or wish to set up a standing order for a regular donation, please contact David at:

davecooke1970@gmail.com.