

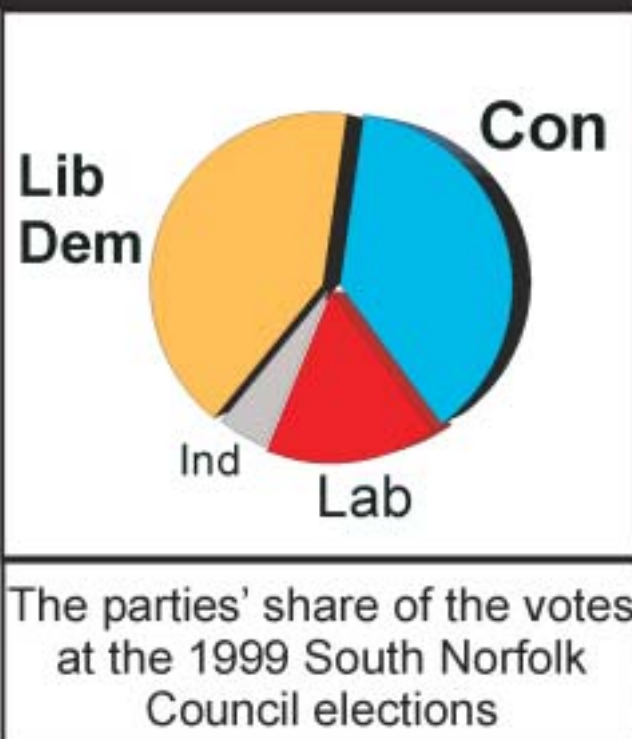
# Chronicle COMMENT

Members of the general public are rightly upset when political parties do one thing in opposition and another once they take office.

Before 2001, South Norfolk Conservatives went on and on about excessive Council Tax increases by the county and district councils. They carefully ignored the impact on both local authorities of falling government grants. However, since taking control of the county two years ago they have themselves managed to increase their share of the Tax by a massive 27%.

And what is their excuse? They say, "It is all the government's fault". Well, to a large extent, it is, but their sudden discovery of the realities of local government finance does them no credit at all. The voters of South Norfolk, going to the polls on May 1<sup>st</sup>, will no doubt bear this in mind.

## It's a two horse race for South Norfolk



## Kennedy backs local Lib Dems



### Kennedy briefs the press

Launching his party's 2003 local election campaign at the Lib Dem's Spring Conference, Charles Kennedy congratulated Liberal Democrat councillors on their excellent record. "Up and down the country Liberal Democrat controlled councils are doing a great job, working to provide sustainable quality services for local residents," he said. "In East Anglia places like Cambridge, Norwich and South Norfolk have benefited from having our party in control. I am sure that they will again attract wide support from their communities on May 1<sup>st</sup>."

# South Norfolk Council elections, 1 May 2003

We have given below a few selected highlights from *For people and communities*, the Liberal Democrat Manifesto for the South Norfolk Council elections on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

The full document runs to 24 pages and gives a detailed analysis of the issues facing the District and what the Liberal Democrats are going to do about them.

To obtain your own post-paid copy, please send £1 to Mrs S Beare, 17 Hall Lane, Wacton, Norwich, NR15 2UH. Please make cheques payable to South Norfolk Liberal Democrats.

## Four Years of Achievement

### Joined-up thinking

We have set up a Local Strategic Partnership that brings together all the service providers, the three tiers of local government and the voluntary sector to develop and implement a Community Plan for South Norfolk. This is now making a significant contribution to community life.

### Increased efficiency

We have reorganised the council. This will save you £73,000 every year but the greater efficiency and more responsive services will produce the real gains.

### Partnerships for health and crime

The Council has been active in partnership working to promote the health and safety of residents. We have developed a close relationship with the new Southern Norfolk Primary Care Trust and have also worked with other partners in the Crime Reduction Partnership.

### More housing

The Council has been very successful in making developers provide affordable housing in all new major developments. Recently this has been extended to a figure of 25% and now includes schemes as small as 10 properties.

### More learning

We have been keen to see the range of adult learning facilities in the District expanded. We have thus taken the lead in the creation of the Wymondham Learning Partnership and the opening of the new Learning Centre in the town.

### Local towns

Our market towns are vital to the District. We have helped set up Local Development Partnerships in Wymondham, Diss, Harleston and Loddon. These are already making a significant contribution to developing their local economies.

### Democracy in action

We have put in place an Executive/Scrutiny system of political management. This ensures that decisions are taken in an open environment with opportunities for contributions from opposition members and the public.

## The Next Four Years

### Better health

We will ensure that the Council continues to play an active role in the South Norfolk Health Improvement Forum, acting as the 'voice of the people' campaigning for better local health services.

### Flooding

A Liberal Democrat-controlled Council will further develop its policies on flooding. We will work proactively, as at Shelfanger recently, with residents, Parish Councils, the County Council, the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Boards to resolve problems.

### Crime

We will work through the Crime Reduction Partnership to involve local communities in tackling the priorities for action identified by the Partnership, namely burglary, car crime, domestic violence and street violence, in the firm belief that local people know best what is needed in their towns and villages.

### Housing

Whatever the result of the tenants' ballot we will strive to ensure that the housing needs of all people in South Norfolk are met. We will try to provide integrated health, housing and social services support, thus enabling more older or disabled people to stay in their own homes.

### Environment

Our aim is to increase public awareness and support for environmental issues, putting sustainable development at the centre of all decisions that we and our partner bodies make. We will continue the roll-out of the new twin-bin waste collection system so that South Norfolk achieves its recycling targets on time.

### Economy

The Council must play an active role as a partner in Shaping the Future, the economic development strategy for Norfolk. We will work with others to assist the development of the Norwich Research Park.

### Leisure

We will seek to extend the range of leisure facilities available to local residents whether provided by the council itself or by other bodies. The specific problems of young people will be addressed.