

INVESTMENT FOR CHICKERELL, PORTLAND AND WEYMOUTH



Lib Dem-led Dorset Council delivers financial recovery and invests in South Dorset

Councillor Simon Clifford, Cabinet member for Finance and councillor for Chickerell, has shared updates on Dorset Council's financial position and investment priorities for South Dorset.

Simon revealed that the current administration inherited an £8M budget shortfall from the previous Conservative leadership - with "no plans to fix it", according to senior officers. Thanks to rigorous financial management, this administration have now closed that gap while increasing spend on essential services to a record £417 million.

Despite hopes for improved funding from the national Labour government, Dorset has received less than expected. As a result, Council tax remains high - a necessary step to maintain core services.

The council is still however investing in our area with projects including:

- Regeneration plan for Weymouth Harbour
- Support for girls and women's sport through upgrades at the Redlands Leisure Centre
- Economic development opportunities on Portland
- Increased local bus services in Chickerell and other parts of our area.

Simon acknowledges the impact of rising national costs, including inflation, higher national insurance contributions and wage increases; but reaffirms the council's commitment to strong, local service delivery.

"We love our area and are ambitious for the future. If you have ideas for investment or know of local groups that could use our support, we want to hear from you," he said.

LIB DEMS TAKE ACTION ON HOMELESSNESS IN DORSET

Cutting homelessness is a huge success story for the new Lib Dem councillors running Dorset Council.

Across England and Wales the use of hotels and b&b to house homeless people is on the up - But not in Dorset! Here the figures have gone DOWN by more than a third.

Vulnerable people and families are finding the safe housing they need. It saves council tax payers a huge amount of money. And it means Dorset is one of the top performing councils across the country.

"At time of writing we have no families in B&B, said Cabinet member for health and housing Cllr Gill Taylor.

"We're focused on real, local solutions that help people at what is a very stressful time for them. We have set a plan, are investing in it and it is delivering for our local residents.

At the same time, the Lib Dems are making affordable homes for local people a real priority.

"Many working residents are being priced out, and firms are struggling to attract new staff down to high house prices," said Cllr Taylor. "We are working hard to rebuild affordable housing stocks to help in this key area. It is long term but it will work."



SUPPORTING US TO DELIVER FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

If you would like to help us please contact us at info@sdlibdems.org.uk.

Please let us know if you would like to help us

- To deliver a few of these leaflets in your area.
- To help with campaigns we are running

And get in touch with us if you have ever thought about standing as a candidate?

Thank you

FOCUS

on CHICKERELL WARD



Summer 2025



From your Lib Dem Councillors
Simon Clifford and Gill Taylor

LIB DEMS CUTTING THROUGH THE WASTE AT DORSET COUNCIL

Newspaper headlines this summer have shown the impact that new Lib Dem councillors are having at Dorset Council. An immediate spending review was quickly put into place to root out inefficiencies, waste and cut costs - and the results of this "DOGE for Dorset" were shocking.

- We knew we would find a financial blackhole left by the Conservatives - £8m with no plan on how to make the saving.
- We knew we would find poor decisions like allowing neighbouring councils to charge us to deal with Dorset residents' recycling - but not charging those other councils in return. A loss of at least £1m.
- We knew the Conservatives had stopped supporting the cost of living crisis so we reinstated it immediately and for the next four years.



But what the DOGE for Dorset found was jaw-dropping. £13m spent without essential checks and controls - so we don't know if it was well-spent. Worse, fraud, corruption, and waste taking place since 2022/3.

It's just not good enough. Already we have seen 11 interim staff sacked; police are investigating; we are actively looking to get back at least £1m we believe is due.

Investigations show that council officers did not inform the then ruling Conservatives what was going on. It is fair to say that Conservative Cabinet members did not know that misspending and fraud was taking place routinely over at least two years. All of this is bad news. The good news is that the Lib Dems helped uncover the mess and won't rest until it is put right.

"It has really shocked me," said Cabinet member for finance Cllr Simon Clifford. "I am pushing for further investigations and to make sure this can never happen again.

"There is no doubt that the scale of misspending or lack of spending controls will hit our bank balance. It's a scandal and the Lib Dems won't rest until we have recovered as much of the poorly spent millions of pounds as possible."

YOUR LOCAL TEAM

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LIB DEMS LISTENING: HAVE YOUR SAY ON DORSET'S PARKING



In the run up to the last elections we promised we would review car parks across Dorset. We're doing this and we want to make sure your voices are heard.

The review covers all 117 council-run car parks and on-street parking areas — including changes to charges, resident permits, and evening/overnight parking.

We know Chickerell does not have any car parks and that many of you use the car parks in Dorchester and Weymouth. Hence we know parking is a big issue for residents, businesses, and visitors. That's why we want to hear from you before decisions are made.



This is your chance to shape the outcome. The consultation is open until Wednesday 4 September 2025.

Have your say today:

Take the survey online at dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/parking-survey or call 01305 221000 for a paper copy.

Your views matter — and your Lib Dem team is listening. Together, we can push for parking arrangements that work for our community.



FAMILIES HIT WITH £50 A MONTH EXTRA ON ENERGY BILLS

Families and pensioners are still being clobbered with sky-high energy bills — over £50 a month more than five years ago. Businesses are feeling the pain too.

The narrative used by the Conservatives and Reform UK is that generating electricity by solar and wind is too expensive and we should therefore stop generating from renewables and rely on oil and gas. This narrative is false. Generating electricity from solar and wind is now much

cheaper than the alternatives but households aren't seeing the benefit — because electricity prices are still tied to the price of gas.

Years of disastrous Conservative energy policies pushed up bills, and this Labour Government has failed to bring them down.

The majority of the renewable market is still governed by Renewable Obligations Certificates which is fixed by the wholesale price of gas. If this link is removed and renewable projects moved into new Contracts for Difference, as recommended by academics at the UK Energy Research Centre, electricity would be cheaper and it would let people benefit from clean, renewable power.

The Liberal Democrats are campaigning to break the link between wholesale gas and electricity prices so that electricity will be cheaper. This link is unfair and also undermines public support for the investment we need in renewable power.

It's time for fairer, cleaner energy bills — and a government that puts people first.

ACT NOW - SIGN OUR PETITION

Help us cut bills for local families.



For more information go to libdems.org.uk/energy

ACTION ON RADIPOLE LAKE

LIB DEM CLLR Matt Bell driving long term solutions

Chickerell residents have told us they are interested in what is happening on Radipole Lake so we thought we would include a bit about it to bring you up to date with progress.

Following over a decade of neglect at Radipole Lake, Lib Dem Cllr Matt Bell who represents Radipole Ward next door to Chickerell, continues to champion action to:



- Restore the wildlife, tourism and fishing value
- Reduce flood risk
- Reduce litter and algae build up
- Improve drainage from the Radipole Park and Gardens.

Matt has run a petition for change and that, with his determination have prompted regular meetings between stakeholders; focusing on large scale silt removal, cutting back of reeds and better control of the sluice gates as well as reducing litter. He has also submitted an application to Weymouth Town Council to ask for drainage issues to be addressed in the new play area which is affecting the cafe business in Radipole Park.

STILL WORKING TO GET A BUS SERVICE TO LANEHOUSE ROCKS ROAD

Sounds easy to get a bus service along Lanehouse Rocks Road. Getting a temporary one would be easy but that's been done before and is not good enough. Gill and Simon want one which will run for a number of years, not five minutes. Progress is being made so keep a watch out as we update you later this year.



CUSHIONING THE BLOW!

BESS APPROVED FOR CHICKERELL



Despite the best efforts of both Lib Dem councillors, planning permission was granted for the battery energy stores in Chickerell. While disappointing it was not unexpected as the planning system does little to recognise local feelings.

We continue to fight other planning battles including the large Persimmon estate in our patch. Gill said 'Anything that is built will be here for a long time and we need to get it right at the plan stage, not try and alter it once it is built'

Battery Energy storage system approved despite local opposition