

# Dover District Labour opposition leader joins Green Party



2 November 2018

**\* Cllr Mike Eddy of Dover District Council and Deal Town Council becomes first Green councillor in Dover District after 10 years as leader of Labour opposition**

**\* Cllr Eddy said: "I'm excited to join a party which believes in putting power in local people's hands"**

The leader of Dover Labour party Mike Eddy has joined the Green Party to become Dover District's first elected Green councillor.

Cllr Eddy, who has been a Labour councillor in Deal and Dover for more than 20 years and led the opposition for 10 years, made the move after being impressed by the Green Party's commitment to making sure "local decisions are made by local people and their representatives."

Dover and Deal Green Party officers, Beccy Sawbridge, John Lonsdale and Sarah Gleave, said: "We are delighted to welcome Mike on board, and now look forward to making a few changes in the district."

Green Party co-leader Sian Berry, who is an elected member of the London Assembly, joined Cllr Eddy and local Greens at Dover Seafront on Friday 2 November for the announcement, where Berry backed the local party's commitment to securing a free flow of traffic.

Berry said the people of Dover must "have a say on their future" after local freight clearance experts warned Dover would be hit by gridlock if the type of Brexit the Prime Minister is pursuing goes ahead.

Cllr Eddy, who is councillor for Mill Hill ward in Deal, was also galvanised to make the change by the Green Party's firm commitment to scrap Universal Credit, which has left people in Dover District facing poverty since its rollout in July this year, as well as its campaigns to tackle air pollution

and protect Dover and Deal's green spaces and biodiversity.

Cllr Mike Eddy said:

"I'm excited to join a party which believes in putting power in local people's hands. Whether it's standing up against the damage that May's government decisions will inflict on the port and community in Dover, or fighting to scrap Universal Credit, the Green Party is committed to making sure local decisions are made by local people.

"The decision to leave Labour after ten years as leader of the opposition was not made lightly, but it was the right one. I am a firm believer that no one has the monopoly on wisdom and look forward to working together with progressive local councillors and my new Green colleagues to make sure the people of Dover District and Deal Town are not overlooked or left behind."

Martin Whybrow, lone Green County Councillor, said:

"Mike is an excellent addition to our Green councillors. I am delighted to welcome him. I got to know Mike at KCC and he is hard-working, principled and knowledgeable. He did an excellent job of holding the Conservatives in power to account and working for residents. He will join 176 other Green Party councillors of principal authorities nationally, and another 220 Green town and parish councillors."

Sian Berry, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"History has been made in Dover today with Mike joining us as the first Green councillor for the district. Mike has a track record standing up for what matters to the people of Dover District and Deal Town and it's a privilege to welcome him to our party. The local Green Party is already a growing force for good here and I have no doubt he will be a valuable addition to that work.

"Dover is on the Brexit frontline with the port and community set to feel the full force of the damaging policies the Government is pursuing, and Greens are committed to making sure people in every community in the country have a say on their future in or out of the EU and how the impact of any Brexit deal is felt in their area. The Dover and Deal Green Party will work with local people to make sure journeys to work, schools and health appointments are not subject to gridlock, that the vulnerable are not further beset by food and fuel poverty."

#### **Notes:**

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/jun/20/port-of-dover-warning-regular-gridlock-congestion-hard-brexit-trade>

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