



Cllr. Rupert Read
Green Party lead candidate for Eastern Region in 2009 Euro-elections

e-Newsletter September 2008 – Conference Edition

edited by Paul Roome

Party conferences - On the one hand they are emotionally and intellectually invigorating. On the other, they are physically exhausting! There is precious little time to relax (let alone sleep) between the many speeches, workshops and hastily arranged meetings...not to mention the constant blogging and minute by minute twittering! Even a relaxing drink with friends ends up turning into a policy discussion lasting well into the early hours!

In this regard the 2008 Green Party conference was no different to numerous others I've attended. However the memory of this one will live with me as the others inevitably fade with time. Why? Because on September 5th 2008, the Green Party made an historic decision. We elected our first leader. This result, achieved after years of exhaustive internal debate, cannot be underestimated, for three reasons.

Firstly, I believe our new leader Caroline Lucas MEP to be the most inspirational, intelligent, passionate and relevant politician in British politics today.

Secondly, our election of Caroline and of my Norwich Councillor colleague Adrian Ramsay as Deputy should provide electoral momentum within Brighton Pavilion and Norwich South respectively, two of our strongest Westminster target seats.

Lastly, but most importantly, I believe this is a kind of 'Year Zero' for the Green Party. The next couple of years are the biggest opportunity we Greens have had for a generation, when the Party must take British politics by the scruff of the neck and lead the country in the fight against catastrophic climate change.

But now that the conference and the leadership election is behind us all thoughts must turn swiftly to June 4th 2009 and the European Elections, or E-Day as I have taken to calling it.

To win a seat at the 2009 Euro-election, we need to win about 10% of the vote. But, given the likely turnout (of about 30%) that translates to just 3% of the electorate. Think about what that means... If just one of out every thirty people on the electoral register votes Green next June, we'll gain an MEP... Surely we can manage that! It sounds almost embarrassingly easy...But still, we've never achieved it yet. Let's achieve it next year. Make sure that at least one out of every thirty people in your part of the Region is voting for us, and you'll be fulfilling your part of this bargain!

One last thing – Fundraising. I know it gets mentioned a lot (Especially in these e-Newsletters!) but that's only because it has such an enormous bearing on our ability to get a Green MEP elected in the Eastern Region. The national Party have put their faith in us: they have designated us a target Region, and given us

thousands of pounds towards our campaign. Now we need your help to raise the additional funds we need to achieve our goal next year. See page three for ways to donate. (Please ignore this bit if you have already given a donation to our European Election Fighting Fund this year! ☺).

Thanks!

Rupert

A Special Moment in British Political History

Excerpts from Caroline Lucas's inaugural speech as Green Party Leader on Saturday 6th Sept 2008:

"This year, we've seen more and more people looking for our leadership – yours and mine – to enable them to make real changes in their lives and in their communities.

Leadership like that shown by the Greens in Norwich, who – at the local elections in May, achieved an historic breakthrough...by being the first Green Party to become the official opposition on a city council...by winning more seats than Labour across the entire city, and more votes than any other party for the second year running.

Norwich Greens have firmly established their challenge to Labour at the next General Election...and it's now clear that, if anyone can claim this scalp and replace Charles Clarke in Westminster, it's our newly elected deputy leader, Adrian Ramsay.

Meanwhile, in the year to come, the European Elections will be a vital opportunity to take the Green message to new people, and to return a record number of MEPs.

It will be a tough election for us, because higher thresholds will mean that we need more votes to return each MEP...but we're ready to make the strongest possible case for change, to return our two sitting MEPs, and to gain new ones.

By getting more Greens elected in Europe, we'll be helping to defend social and environmental rights...we'll be challenging the increasing corporate influence in Brussels...and we'll be creating a far more transparent and accountable EU.

In my experience, though I say it myself, I can tell you that every Green MEP is worth 10 from the other parties...**and I can't think of better people to be our new Green MEPs in our target regions of the North West and Eastern regions than Peter Cranie and Rupert Read."**

See the full speech here: <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=1CtSso0tgHc>

Open Democracy leadership article: <http://tinyurl.com/3npuu2>

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Campaign Fundraising:

The Green Party cannot, like the other main parties, rely on a few rich benefactors to fund our election campaigns because our policies will not help them get richer. All our funding will come from you - members of the public who cares about environmental issues and wants the EU to work for everyone. If each of our members and supporters donated £5 per month to us between now and E-Day (June 4th 2009) then we would reach our target and be able to offer the region a real alternative to the grey Parties that are killing our planet.

Even if you can only afford a couple of pounds a month, it will all add up and significantly increase our chances of success.

Be part of something historic and help us, today. Your donations will help us spread our message as wide as possible so that voters know what they will gain from a Green voice in Europe. We need to further our campaign online, on the streets and in the media. Where we have been able to reach the public, we have seen our vote share rocket, and the more resources we have, the more people we can reach.

Please, help us change Europe, and the East of England, for the better. For good...

Ways to donate:

Paypal

Below is the link to our PapPal fundraising account. Please feel free to make a donation, small or large! Every little bit counts.

<http://tinyurl.com/6k98kn>

Please forward the link on to anyone/everyone you know who might be willing to donate! *Thanks!*

Cheque

Please send cheques made payable to Eastern Region Green Party, to the following address:

Graham White, E.R.G.P., 3 Mazoe Close, Bishops Stortford, Herts, CM23 3JU

Standing Order

Please complete the standing order mandate attached at the end of the e-Newsletter and return it to your bank.

Thank you!

Community Action

Lowestoft - Rupert addressed a large meeting of councillors in the Lowestoft area about the future of local government in Norfolk and Suffolk.

The purpose of the meeting was to give all the Parish Councillors the opportunity to learn about the Boundary Committee proposals and about various Parties' views of them, before returning to their respective Parishes to discuss the proposal and submit their views to the Committee.

Rupert addressed the meeting as a spokesman for Norfolk Green and stressed the commitment of Norwich and Norfolk Green Parties to *local* government and to resisting any drive towards centralisation / overly large administrative areas for local government. This implies very strong reservations about the 1- or 2- or 3-unitary models currently being proposed for Norfolk (and Lowestoft).

Councillor Read said: "The Green Party strongly believes that Lowestoft should have a far more local council than any of the Boundary Committee proposals would give it; that means that we would back either a 'Yarftoft' Council (comprising Yarmouth and Lowestoft, a mostly-urban area with mostly urban needs, in common) or simply the status quo. Preserving the status quo would be far preferable than taking all the power away to somewhere remote in Norfolk."

Witham - Along with Marcus Hemsley of Norwich and Cllr. James Abbott, Rupert did a stint of canvassing the Witham ward where there are by-elections on October 2nd.

They met no-one intending to vote Labour or LibDem(!), but quite a number of people who were already intending to or soon persuaded to vote Green - including some previous Tory voters! The experience convinced him that these by-elections are winnable - IF we get enough people on the ground canvassing. Our chances in the area have also been increased by the withdrawal of the BNP candidate, great news as the mere fact they had one was generating a lot of totally unjustified publicity and deflecting attention from the real issues.

If anyone can help for an evening or two with canvassing then please get in touch with James Abbott at james_abbott@btinternet.com. Thanks!

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Recent/Upcoming Diary Highlights:

21 st Sept	Norwich	Speaker, 'Peace One Day'
25 Sept.	Norwich	Joint Highways Agency Cttee
26 Sept.	Attleborough	10-year celebration of Liftshare
26 Sept.	Great Yarmouth	Public meeting on dredging
28 Sept.	Huntingdon	Speaker, Green Party Meeting
30 Sept.	Norwich	Full City Council Meeting, City Hall.
1 Oct.	Norwich	Transition Town 'Unleashing' event!
7 Oct.	Easton	Speaking to students at Easton College
8 Oct.	Cambridge	Federation of Small Businesses Dinner, and speaking at a Party meeting
9 Oct.	Cambridge	Visiting Freshers Fair
10 Oct.	Norwich	On 'Future Radio', on the internet & the airwaves, 12-2pm

Green Links:

- **Social Networking**
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Rupert-Read/9128762052>
http://www.myspace.com/rupert_read
- **A new experiment in green blogging, 'Green Home'! Check it out:**
<http://greenpartyblogs.org.uk/>

Feedback/Contact Details:

All of your feedback is hugely welcome so please feel free to contact me to comment about the newsletter and/or any of my other campaign work.

Email: rupertread@fastmail.co.uk
Tel: 01603 219294

Thanks!



<http://rupertsread.blogspot.com/>

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[[Note: this newsletter is put out in Rupert Read's name and does not necessarily represent the opinion of Eastern Region Green Party.]]



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