



Diana Wallis MEP

Liberal Democrat

Yorkshire and the Humber

Diana provides her own solution to plastic bags - reusable cotton ones!

Local Euro MP Diana Wallis, who is leading a campaign against plastic bags, has come up with her own solution - her own cotton shopping bags!

Diana has been campaigning for a small charge on plastic bags amongst a series of measures to clear the plastic bag mountain across the region.

Now Diana has launched her own reusable cotton bags and the initial 500 are available on a first come, first served basis.

The bags, produced by a company in Sheffield, come with Diana's website and email address printed on one side.

Diana said at the launch in Harrogate:

"By using these environmentally friendly reusable bags and reducing their use of plastic ones people can make a conscious effort to try and minimise their impact on the planet."



Taking the plastic bag campaign to Sheffield - Diana with local councillors and activists in the City centre



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Diana Wallis MEP - Reporting back

Diana's work as a Vice-President

After being elected as one of the European Parliament's Vice-Presidents in January, Diana has been given responsibility for several topics, including transparency and openness.

Diana says, "Transparency and openness in government at any level is a good liberal issue and one where the European Parliament has a fairly strong record especially when compared with the European Commission and Council. This contrasts too with Westminster where we have just seen MPs stall full freedom of information provisions from applying to themselves, despite the best efforts of the Lib Dems.

"I have made it clear that I intend to pursue a policy of maximum openness which has already brought a clash with certain colleagues particularly over the MEPs voluntary pension fund.

"I am expecting some interesting and challenging decisions during my tenure not least over the question of registration of lobbyists' interests. We now have more lobbyists in Brussels than Washington and we need to know exactly who they are and who they are acting on behalf of. To date the Commission has been far too weak on this."



Diana chairing a session of the European Parliament



UK's two-speed Europe threatens justice'

On the Legal Affairs Committee Diana has responsibility for a new file which could make it much easier for spouses who have separated to get monies from their partners in another EU country.

"I often get case work from constituents who have been left in difficulties by their partner and, with more international marriages, this is on the increase. Currently parties have to get an order from their home court and then get it endorsed by the enforcing court in the other country. The new proposal would cut this down to a one step process.

"This is brilliant news for many single partners with children in desperate straits, so imagine our incredulity when the UK exercised its right to opt out! This is despite the pleas of many of those professionals who work with these cases. It is simply outrageous. We will keep working on the proposal in the hope that the UK will come back in at a later stage."



Around the region...



With councillors Edwin Simpson (centre) and Paul Bissett in Kirk Sandal



On the stump in Dewsbury



Meeting members in Sheffield Central



Success in Hull - how the Liberal Democrats victory was covered by the local paper - Diana with the Lib Dem Leader, Carl Minns.



Visiting the Guardian Glass factory in Goole with local Lib Dem councillors Beryl Beck-Taylor and Jean Kitchen



'Tory-Free zone' in Knarborough - After May's local elections, Knarborough is an entirely Conservative Free Zone as all levels of elected representation are entirely dominated by Liberal Democrats from a clean sweep on the Town Council through to the MP and MEP



Campaigning in Calderdale with local councillor Jennifer Pearson



Diana outside her North Yorkshire office in Harrogate with Chairman of the Yorkshire & the Humber Liberal Democrats, John Smithson (centre), and John Fox who is being part-funded by Diana to assist on European Campaigns. (Photo: Adrian Murray)



Launching the campaign in Moortown, Leeds with PPC for Leeds North East Aqila Choudhry (left) and Councillor Brenda Lancaster



Opening the new Drop Inn centre on Aire Street, Goole. The Drop Inn is a new facility for the young people of the town. Diana said: *"This is a great facility for the town. I was particularly delighted in the way in which the whole community in Goole had made a contribution to the success of this project. As well as the work from many people to get the centre open, there were very many donations from individuals and companies in both kind and money."*





Diana Wallis MEP - Reporting back

Don't go without your card!

Most holidaymakers from the Yorkshire and Humber region do not know they need to apply for a new card that entitles them to free medical treatment across Europe this summer.

Diana made the warning as research shows that two-thirds of Britons are not aware that the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), needed to get medical treatment in the EU, has replaced the old E111 form.

The E111 forms were replaced last year by a credit card style pass that gives EU citizens access to all forms of health care when travelling in Europe.

The new card broadens the type of medical treatment that can be given and means that cardholders can go straight to any local doctor if they fall ill without first registering with local authorities.

All UK citizens can apply for the new health card by picking up an EHIC form at their local Post Office, but Diana warns that as applications can take up to 21 days to process, holidaymakers should leave plenty of time:

"The card will give greater confidence and security to travellers.

"This is a good example of the EU at its best, extending services, getting rid of red tape, and making it easier for travellers to get treatment if they fall ill anywhere in Europe. However, people should not delay in getting their applications in."



Diana with the European Health Insurance Card – not to scale!

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