

FOCUS

On Ouseburn Ward



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Paid for by the Lib Dems and delivered free to Shieldfield, Battlefield, Quayside and West Heaton

CRUNCH TIME FOR COMMUNAL BINS

Your local Lib Dem team insisted that residents have a say on proposed new bins - make your voice heard!



Lib Dem Focus editor Stephen Howse (left) and local Liberal Democrat Councillor Stephen Psallidas inspect the communal bin trial in Sandyford - the consultation for our area is now live.

As we go to press, the Council is consulting residents of Heaton and Shieldfield with back lanes whether they want to change from individual wheelie bins to larger communal bins. These would stand permanently in the back lanes. A lengthy trial of communal bins in Sandyford showed that lanes with communal bins are tidier than those with wheelie bins (see picture above) – and surveys suggest that the residents there are largely happy with the scheme.

However, there are differences between Sandyford and here. In particular, there is no parking in Sandyford back lanes – they all have double yellow lines – whereas many residents in our area rely on the back lanes for parking, for example Stratford Grove, Warwick Street, and Kingsley, Eversley and Holmside Places. Any back lane where a third of residents oppose the communal bins will not get them.

Believe it or not, your Lib Dem team had to insist on this consultation as the Labour-run Council tried to impose communal bins on residents without any meaningful consultation - just a legal letter telling them the bins were changing. The local Labour councillor has argued against having a proper consultation, attacking your Lib Dem councillors publicly for insisting that residents' views should be heard.

"This is a big change which will be difficult to reverse later, so it is vitally important to get it right," said Lib Dem activist Stephen Howse, "We will always stand up for the right of local residents to have their say."

Our View

The communal bin approach is not perfect - ideally everyone would take in their wheelie bins from the back lanes after the bin collection. However, the trial in Sandyford suggests it would be significantly better than the terrible situation we have in the back lanes at the present time.

In the absence of a better practical solution, we believe that residents should be given the choice over whether they want communal bins or not.



Local Lib Dem councillor Stephen Psallidas at the open garages at St Ann's which now come into the permit parking scheme.

Lib Dems secure parking improvements across our area

Parking is always at the top of any local councillor's agenda. Your Lib Dem team is delighted to have secured several improvements to parking across Ouseburn Ward. Some of these have taken years to be implemented, so thank you for your patience!

Shieldfield

In Shieldfield, we have brought the parking spaces under Clarence House (aka 'the stilts') into the permit scheme. Residents have told us there has been an immediate improvement.

We have also brought the Barker Street car park into the scheme - so it will now be shared by local residents and people working in the Social Services building, but other commuters will be excluded. This is a vast improvement over the existing two (unenforceable) residents' parking bays.

Battlefield

At St Ann's, the loophole which allowed non-permit holders to park in open garages under the block has been closed. This had been exploited by people storing and selling cars, so residents should see a real improvement.

In addition, we've asked for changes to parking on Crawhall Rd - moving the parking spaces beside Melbourne Court uphill to improve visibility at the junction with Howard St (which will become 20mph under the proposals). Double yellow lines will be added on corners at the top end of the road to cut dangerous pavement parking, for example at the junction with Coquet St.

Heaton

A consultation on parking permits for Stratford Grove West, lower Hotspur St and lower Mowbray street will go live in the next few weeks - make sure you respond to the proposal so we can deal with the menace of city centre commuters clogging up these streets.



Gareth Kane at the Barker Street car park which has been returned to residents.

Working Hard All Year Around - Not Just Election Time!

What have the Lib Dems ever done for us??? (Part 2)

Last year we reported on the things the Liberal Democrats have done in Government that never get reported in the press. Here's a few more of our achievements:

- 8 million low- and medium-income families have been given an average £1300 tax break due to the raising of the tax threshold - a key 2010 manifesto commitment. The Tories said this couldn't be done at the time, now they're trying to take credit for it!
- Record numbers of students from low-income backgrounds are now attending University, showing you have to look beyond the headlines on tuition fees. Labour's mooted proposal to cut fees would only benefit those people on the highest salaries after graduation.
- In December, the Lib Dems' 2 million apprenticeship target was met, showing our commitment to non-academic routes into work.
- The attainment gap between primary schoolchildren from poor backgrounds and their better off counterparts has *narrowed* for the first time in living memory. This is testament to the Lib Dems' efforts to target the gap with measures such as the £2.5 billion Pupil Premium.
- The UK was rated the *third* best industrialised nation at tackling climate change by the UN, beaten only by Denmark and Sweden. This shows how effectively Lib Dem Energy & Climate Change Minister Ed Davey has battled George Osborne on green issues.
- The Lib Dems have increased pensions by £800 a year since 2010 - and state pensions will always rise with inflation, earnings or 2.5% - whichever is highest. We have also guaranteed 9 million people an automatic workplace pension, which their boss and the government pay in to, giving everyone the confidence to save.



Wendy Taylor gets the MBE!

We are delighted that the dedication of local Lib Dem councillor and Newcastle East Parliamentary Candidate Wendy Taylor has been recognised. Wendy, pictured here with Gareth Kane, was awarded the MBE in the New Year's honours.

News Shorts

In our last Focus, we reported that the Council refused to fund the Heaton Park Road improvement scheme. We are delighted that Sustrans, who are co-ordinating the project, are able to fund some of the work. We have asked the Council to prioritise the scheme if they receive more Government Cycle Ambition funding which has put up for grabs.

Work is taking place on South View West to install high kerbs on the railway side. This work is part of a nationwide programme to target areas where vehicles could crash onto the tracks following the Great Heck rail disaster in 2001 where 10 people died.

At this year's elections, residents living in the area bounded by New Bridge Street, Gibson Street, the River Tyne and the Motorway will get a new polling station, location to be confirmed. This is due to the number of students now living in the Battlefield area.

We are still pressing for no-dumping signs in the back lanes after the much hyped poster campaign launched by the Council turned out to be inappropriate for tackling the problem.

We got the Council to speed up the replacement of the pedestrian crossing on Portland Rd which was out of action for weeks.

We are still waiting for the water supply to the Stadium allotments to be connected. We are assured by officers that a committee will be appointed in the coming weeks to take things forward.



Stephen Howse on Coquet Street where he stood up for residents who had been disturbed by out of hours work on the building site. Your Lib Dem team have also tackled mud left on this road by construction vehicles.



Stephen Psallidas with the CCTV he got installed on the City Stadium following a number of crimes and some anti-social behaviour.

City Stadium Update

We're getting overwhelmingly positive feedback from residents about the new cycle/pedestrian path across the City Stadium. The project is almost finished, but we've been busy chasing up a few outstanding points.

Most residents like the gravelly surface on the pedestrian side, particularly on icy mornings, but some have expressed concern about the quality of the surface. We've taken this up with officers but they claim that this is normal as the surface beds in. We're not entirely convinced and we'll monitor the situation.

Unfortunately, the cycle side of the new path turns into a skating rink on cold mornings. We have requested grit bins at each end.

You may have noticed the new trees planted on the stadium to replace those removed to accommodate the wider path - as promised!

Stephen Psallidas got CCTV installed on the City Stadium following a number of crimes and some anti-social behaviour.



Letting Boards Success!

The ban on letting boards is having a really positive effect on the streets of Heaton and Shieldfield. If you spot a letting board (including those that say "For Sale or Let"), then you can report them by:

Phone: 0191 277 8946

E-mail: planning.control@newcastle.gov.uk

with the address of the house concerned and, if possible, a photo of the offending board.

Contact your local Lib Dem Team:

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