

Best Wishes for 2017 from the Parklands Focus Team



Parklands Ward

Useful Numbers & Contacts

EMERGENCIES

Fire / Ambulance / Police	999
Police (Non Emergency)	101 ext 62793
NHS (Advice Line)	111
Electricity / Power Cuts	105
Gas Escapes	0800 111 999
Water/ Sewerage	08457 171 100
(Env. Agency) Floodline	0345 988 1188

LOCAL SERVICES & INFORMATION

Addictions	206 1100
Airport	0871 882 1121
Age UK	232 6488
Benefits Helpline	277 2627
Bus / Metro Information	202 0747
Careers Centre	275 5060

CONTACTING THE PARKLANDS FOCUS TEAM

Cllr Pauline Allen - 0191 263 5947
 Cllr David Down - 0191 236 3161
 Cllr Robin Ashby - 07947 114820
 Email - parklands@newcastle-libdems.org.uk
 Post - 9 Chelton Close, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 7NF
 Twitter - @parklands_ward
 Facebook - Parklands-Ward-Liberal-Democrats
 www.newcastle-libdems.org.uk/en/page/parklands-ward
Surgeries :
 Gosforth High Street - 1st Saturday of month 10 - 11 am
 Gosforth Library - 1st Saturday of month 11:30 - 12 noon

Could you help the Parklands Focus Team?

Your regular Parklands Ward FOCUS newsletter is written, produced and delivered by voluntary effort. It is paid for by local donations - not from your Council Tax. Could you spare as little as one hour each quarter to help deliver FOCUS in your neighbourhood or help with some clerical work at home? If you would like to get involved please contact the Focus Team - see the contact details above.

LOCAL SERVICES & INFORMATION cont.

Citizens Advice	0344 499 4717
Civic Centre (City Council)	278 7878
Cold Calls (Trading Standards)	211 6119
Debt Advice	261 8522
Envirocall (City Council)	278 7878
Hospitals	233 6161
Housing & Homeless Advice	277 1711
Housing Office (YHN)	277 4360
Job Centre Plus	0800 055 6688
Law Centre	230 4777
Library (Gosforth)	277 4138
Private Rented Advice	277 1438
Rail Enquiries	08457 484950
Repaircall (YHN)	277 8888
Samaritans	08457 909090
Social Services	277 2500
Street Lights	0800 085 7307
Swimming Pool (Gosforth)	255 9828
Warm Up North	0800 294 8073

LOCAL SCHOOLS

Gosforth Academy	285 1000
Gosforth East	285 1793
Gosforth Central	266 8389
Grange First	285 2954
Gosforth Park First	285 2559
St Oswald's RC	285 2437
Broadway East First	285 5141
Brunton First	217 0045

Gosforth eFOCUS

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The Gosforth-wide eFocus brings you up-to-the-minute news and views from your Gosforth Lib Dem Cllrs. To subscribe for free send your email address to:

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Parklands Ward FOCUS

Delivered free throughout
 Parklands Ward for over 40 Years
 Paid for by Pauline, David & Robin
 Edited by Cllr Pauline Allen
 Volume 43 No. 1

STOPPING COLD CALLERS

Following a spate of complaints about cold callers during the Autumn, the Focus Team have joined with North Gosforth Parish Council to reinforce the message that the whole of Parklands Ward is a "No Cold Calling Zone".

Many residents already display a sticker near their door and there are street signs erected across the area. New posters will also be displayed on the notice boards.

If you are concerned about an aggressive caller at your door then ring the police on 101, or in an emergency ring 999. Companies can also be reported to Trading Standards on 211 6119.

Cllr Pauline Allen has also asked the Police to contact colleagues in Middlesbrough to get them to discourage licensed peddlers travelling up the A19 to Gosforth.



Cllr Pauline Allen and Parish Cllr Adele Mears, display the No Cold Calling stickers by one of the signs

COUNCIL TELLS YOU ONLY HALF THE STORY ON BUDGET CUTS

In proposing its budget for next year, as usual the Labour-controlled City Council prefers to focus your attention on Government cuts and not on things that it could do differently and better.

WHAT THE LABOUR COUNCIL DOESN'T MENTION

The Council says it needs to make savings of over £30m next year - BUT over £24m is a result of internal "cost pressures" rather than cuts to Government grants

In 2015/16, the Council spent a massive £865m which was TEN MILLION POUNDS more than in the previous year. The greater part of the money that it spends still comes from Government grants, with the rest from business rates, fees and charges, rents and council tax.

WHAT THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS SAY

The Council has to be held accountable for the choices it is making.

Paying big salary increases (of up to £24,000) to the Chief Executive and other top staff is wrong and unfair - and we opposed them.

Spending £45 million on refurbishing the Civic Centre is not justifiable.

We are concerned at council cuts to social care and to services for the care and protection of vulnerable children and young people - but we agree that many of these services need to be re-modelled, to reduce demand and deliver services in a more effective and better-targeted way.

Many of our streets and neighbourhoods are now very dirty, and we think that cuts to local environmental services have gone too far.

Some specific cuts are simply not justified - plans to stop all but two of the school crossing patrols are not acceptable. We proposed reductions in the number of councillors but Labour turned it down - the savings would have covered the costs of the school crossing patrols.

We do think that the Government revenue support grant cuts are too much and that for Newcastle and similarly disadvantaged areas are disproportionate to the overall level of reductions that local government as a whole faces. However, there are tens of millions of pounds of additional, specific government grants that are rarely mentioned, and councils like Newcastle still (quite rightly) get more than the average.

WHAT THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS WOULD DO

The Council's "reserves" (money held back for future projects) have grown by around a gigantic £30 MILLION over what was predicted less than a year ago. More of these reserves need to be spent now to support local services.

Finally Newcastle's Labour-controlled Council is one of the slowest in the country to look at sharing services with neighbouring councils. We say let's look at how we could combine services with North Tyneside Council - including having only one senior management team.

Working for Parklands - All Year Round

Liberal Democrats - Standing Up for Parklands

Brunton Lane - Traffic Calming Petition



Local residents have collected a petition door-to-door across **Warkworth Woods** to ask for traffic calming measures to reinforce the 30 mph speed limit on **Brunton Lane**.

Pauline Allen, Robin Ashby and **David Down** asked the Police to carry out speed checks. Their results confirmed informal observations from the illuminated warning speed warning signs, showing some traffic exceeding the 30 mph limit by a significant amount.

The residents' petition was presented to the Newcastle City Council meeting on Wednesday 11 January 2017. The Labour Councillor responsible for road safety said he would speak to the Police, but we have not yet received details of any proposed actions to reduce traffic speeds. More in the next edition of Focus.

Broadway Crossings - Petition Response

We reported back on the petition Cllr **Robin Ashby** submitted to the Council in November in the last edition of FOCUS. Robin has now had a response to the petition from Council Officers saying that they are still reviewing the results of the independent safety audit of the entire scheme between **Hollywood Avenue** and **Broadway**.

We'll continue to keep you informed about any progress and to push officers to look particularly at the problems encountered by pedestrians, cyclists and drivers at the crossings on **Broadway East** and **Broadway West**.

Broadway East - School Crossing Patrol

Newcastle's Labour-controlled Council has announced plans to cut funding for school crossing patrols across the City, claiming that budget cuts have forced them to take this decision.

However, most parents and their children welcome the help crossing busy roads given by their familiar lollipop women and men.

Responding to concerned parents at Broadway East School, **Robin Ashby, Pauline Allen** and **David Down** have requested a meeting with Council Officers to explore the practicalities of a parent-funded extension to the service provided by Jim - the popular crossing warden on the route to the School.

We will keep parents and residents informed about the outcome of the meeting in future editions of Focus.

Caught on Camera - the Latest Figures

The FOCUS Team asked the Council for details of the number of fixed penalty notices issued to motorists who have fallen foul of the cameras aimed at enforcing traffic restrictions on **Brunton Lane** and **Netherwitton Way**.

The latest details make remarkable reading:

	Brunton Lane	Netherwitton Way
	Total issued	Total issued
May-16	366	119
Jun-16	413	107
Jul-16	417	102
Aug-16	381	109
Sep-16	390	115
Oct-16	375	140
Nov-16	220	145

As each ticket costs up to £60, potentially more than £200,000 has been made by these two cameras since May. This money goes into the City Council's coffers rather than being used to improve local footpaths as argued by the Focus Team.

Across Newcastle, bus lane cameras have raked in over £2 million so far this year. So, **Robin Ashby** presented a petition to the City Council, on behalf of the Liberal Democrats, asking for the proceeds of all these cameras to be used to repair local footpaths across the city.

GNR Service Road - Access Remains Open

Council highways engineers agreed to keeping open access to the service road from **Polwarth Drive** to **Brunton Lane**. Despite the Council's Regulatory Appeals Sub-committee being sympathetic to residents' worries on two-way cycling on the service road, along with a road hump at the entrance and yellow lines, they were over-ruled by the Delegated Officer, so these changes will still go ahead - so much for democracy!

Melbury - Good News on Street Lights

The Great Park Consortium have told the Focus Team that work on the street lights should go ahead over the next two months. This will then complete Phase 1 of the actions necessary for the roads across the estate to be adopted by the Council. Work on the other phases can then proceed, with the target for completion being November 2017.

Council Salaries - Just how is this FAIR?

Just weeks after Labour councillors voted through a massive pay rise for senior Council bosses (of up to £24,000 each), the Labour administration proposed cutting the wages for 1,800 of the Council's lowest paid staff, like care workers, by up to £3,000 each.

After an outcry by Lib Dem councillors and the trade unions, along with the threat of industrial action, the pay cuts proposal was withdrawn, but the pay rises to the Council's "*Fat Cats*" will still go ahead.

FOCUS ACTION UPDATE

Grange Cobbles - Replacement Agreed

We reported on YHN's refusal to replace the cobbles on **Park Avenue** as part of their "You've Got the Power" budget, in the last edition of FOCUS.

Now YHN have contacted Parklands' councillors to say that they have reviewed their original decision and decided to fund the replacement of the cobbles from their main investment budget. Approval for the scheme was given on 14th December 2016 and work is due to start early in 2017.

Action to Get Fitter - Measured Miles

New Year resolutions often include actions to get healthier. The Focus Team have been discussing (for some time now!) the concept of *Measured Miles* across Parklands which will enable you to see how far you've gone, and also to put up some information boards about what's on the route.

We've just walked round the first route we're suggesting to Council officials: starting and finishing at the **Three Mile Inn**. The route goes along **Mortuary Lane**, through **Whitebridge Park**, past the play area, onto the **Bridle Path**, north to **Melton Park** and the **North Gosforth Chapel**, then back out onto the **Great North Road** and return.

We're also pursuing routes on the **Great Park** with the consortium, and the possibility of one (mainly for serious walkers and joggers) around the outside of the **Broadway West/Kingston Park Road** playing fields. More when we have it!

Volunteering Projects across Parklands

With Labour's continued cuts to Council services, local people are having to do more for themselves. Across Parklands we have some great examples of volunteering.

These include the **Friends of North Gosforth Chapel** clearing up 54 bags of leaves in the autumn; regular litter picks across **Melbury** using equipment paid for by the Ward Committee; residents in **Burnside Road** clearing their grassed area; a Duke of Edinburgh candidate litter picking on **Whitebridge Park** and **Three Mile Allotments** members maintaining the flower beds near Three Mile and at Grange Shops.

We will continue to support initiatives like this where we can - let us know if you have any other ideas.

Sandy Lane Roadworks - Get the Latest News

The major roadworks, undertaken by North Tyneside Council, continue on Sandy Lane. If you want to keep up to date on progress and changes to road patterns as the work proceeds, you can subscribe to a regular e-bulletin by emailing roads@northtyneside.gov.uk.

Hadricks Mill - Roundabout Plans Update

Following public consultation, the Council has put in a planning application for the new roundabout at Hadricks Mill. The roundabout has been reduced in size to keep it further away from houses, but there are no changes to the suggested restricted turns.

A white bridge for Whitebridge Park?

The bridge at the entrance to **Whitebridge Park** is looking so scruffy that some have suggested changing the name of the estate to "*Greybridge (with Red Streaks) Park*".

Parklands' Lib Dem Councillors, **David Down, Pauline Allen** and **Robin Ashby** have been asking the Council to paint the bridge white for the last two years. They recently set up an enabling contract with the SkillMill to help out with basic maintenance tasks like this. So now the Council would not need to pay for the labour - only the paint. David, Pauline and Robin are now pushing for the relevant Council department to agree to the work going ahead. We'll keep you informed on progress.

Warkworth Woods - Mapping the Numbers



Delivery drivers and visitors to **Warkworth Woods** have long been confused by the house numbering system. Why is 61 only a couple of yards across the path from 128? Why doesn't 47 seem to be anywhere near 46 or 48? And why is 67 so much closer to 51 than to 68 or 69?

Ben Pullan (pictured here with **David Down** and **Robin Ashby**) has worked out where all the houses actually are. His map is to be laminated and put on the notice board on **Brunton Lane** while other options are pursued. So hopefully in future people won't be bothered by strangers knocking on their doors to say "Excuse me, do you know where so-and-so is?"

Support for Older People to Stay Independent

The FOCUS Team have received details on a group that aims to keep older people independent.

Chain Reaction Pioneers (supported by Newcastle City Council) gives individual support to aid independence and well being. They help find and access activities, advice and services ranging from budget planning to organising outings. You can get a referral from a health or care professional, or self-refer by ringing 0300 300 7070 or via their website at:

<http://www.chainreaction-newcastle.co.uk>.