

# Focus on

Issue 156 - Annual Report

# Whickham North & Swalwell

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## Lib Dems oppose 5% Council Tax Hike Council have over £40M in reserves



Gateshead Council have set a budget for the year ahead. Key features include:

- Council tax will increase by 4.99%, the highest increase allowed without a referendum
- Labour have put up council tax by almost 5% when the council already has £41 million in reserves.
- People in Gateshead are paying the highest council tax (Band D) of any metropolitan council.

Lib Dems put forward a motion at the Annual Budget meeting to freeze Council tax by using £4.8M from reserves - to give the people of Gateshead a break this year. This was voted down by the Labour run Council by 47 votes to 11.

### Planning updates



3 Ts, Swalwell

Permission is being sought to have an off-license for the site of the former 3Ts Public House in Swalwell.

The decision as to what happens next with this building is now with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. A hearing will be held later in the year and your ward councillors will be appearing at the hearing.



Bank Top, Whickham

### Lib Dem - Six to Fix



Tell us what you think about our Six to Fix.

On 6th May, you will be able to vote in the local elections. The Lib Dem "Six to Fix" priorities for our area are:

1. **Scrap the Council Tax increase.**
2. **End Labour waste.** There are far too many examples of

- wasteful spending by Labour. That has to end.
3. **Making Gateshead the green capital of the region** by planting more woodland, saving the greenbelt and stopping traffic measures that often cause more pollution and congestion.
4. **Providing homes that people need** - not executive houses that many can't afford.
5. **Revitalise Gateshead High Street.** For years the Council has neglected the High Street. Lib Dems will work with developers to regenerate it.
6. **Improving street cleaning** - Gateshead has only one dog warden and spends the least on street cleaning in Tyne and Wear.

## Another year of action from your local Lib Dem Focus Team

# Liberal Democrat Focus Team Caring About Our Community

## Helping with people's concerns and issues

We've not been able to hold our usual library or street surgeries, but we have held an on-line surgery each month instead.



Street surgeries have been cancelled due to the pandemic.

Between the three of us, we have 55 years experience of being a ward councillor and we have continued to help with issues that residents have raised with us, for example:

- Road repairs, Grass cutting, School queries
- Housing problems, Planning issues
- Anti-social behaviour, Dog fouling
- Fly tipping and littering, Bin collections
- Traffic concerns, Broken lamp posts.

**We are always here to help if you need us.**

### Surgeries:

Your local Lib Dem councillors are running virtual surgeries until further notice.

Every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month  
10am - 11am

Join via Google Hangouts:  
[meet.google.com/ynm-zpue-rar](https://meet.google.com/ynm-zpue-rar)

or by phone:

020 3937 1322 PIN: 282 579 909#

If you need help getting logged in just give one of us a call.

## Supporting local community groups



We've been in lockdown for most of last year and community events were cancelled, but we've still been able to:

- As active members of Lighting up Whickham and Swalwell Community Group, help to provide Christmas trees for the community.
- Meet regularly with fellow Friends of Chase Park trustees to look after our park.
- Provide financial support for the local planting groups in Whickham and Swalwell.
- As Trustees of Whickham Volunteer Library Association, work to keep the library open whenever it was safe to do so.
- Assist individuals and groups to be able to lay their Remembrance wreaths in line with government restrictions.
- As trustees, ensure that Swalwell Community Centre has a new team of volunteers managing this community asset.



**To keep  
a strong  
Focus Team**

## Lib Dem Focus Team

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**Sonya  
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**On 6<sup>th</sup> May**