

Focus on Whickham North

Issue 165
Autumn
2022

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Chase Park updates

Progress on anti-social behaviour incidents

A number of incidents of anti-social behaviour have been reported to us which have occurred in Chase Park or nearby.

Ward councillors and members of the Friends of Chase Park recently held a meeting with Gateshead Council's Community Safety Officer and members of the Police to pass on details of the incidents that we are aware of and to ask for advice as what can be done to address these.

The Police were aware of all of the incidents that we raised and those involved. They are dealing with the issues via a number of mechanisms available to them. Gateshead Council and the Police are continuing to manage the recent rise in anti-social behaviour incidents in the Chase Park area via the Community Safety Board.

Reporting incidents

We have been encouraged by the Police to report every incident however small via 101 or 999. And we have been advised that the greater the number of times that incidents are reported, the greater the priority that the Police will place on addressing these incidents.

The government guidance is: "Call 999 if you or someone else is in immediate danger, or if the crime is in progress. Call 101 to contact the police if the crime is not an emergency." For 101 incidents, as an alternative to calling the number, these can also be reported via the Northumbria Police web-site. You will need to know the postcode of Chase Park, which is NE16 4QA.

Peter Craig said "Your ward councillors are also in direct contact with our local Police Community Support Officer and will report any incidents that they are aware of directly to him."



Housing Plans approved

Labour-led Gateshead Council has approved plans for an exclusive housing development in Chase Park.

The historic Georgian stables and the old library will be replaced by four executive homes.

The plans were agreed at the Council's Planning Committee meeting on 28th September. 80 letters of objection and one in support were received.

Lib Dem councillors **Peter Maughan** and **Peter Craig** spoke at the planning meeting against the application on behalf of the many residents who have objected.

Residents had raised concerns about the loss of local heritage, poor and potentially dangerous road access and a precedent being set for building houses on parks.

Designed to keep out people visiting the park, this will be a gated housing development which the public will be prevented from entering.

Hospital bus service saved



Following a meeting with Councillors in Gateshead, Nexus have agreed to keep the 69 bus service for the next three years.

Plans by Go North East to reduce bus services had sparked concern that many communities would be without a working bus service.

"This is welcome news." said **Chris Ord** "We had raised concerns that we would lose a direct link to the QE Hospital, and also that some people would lose access to Whickham shops, so we are pleased that the service has been saved for now."

Warm spaces

We are very conscious that there is a cost of living crisis at the moment and people have been very worried about how they can continue to heat their homes this winter.

A number of local organisations, including Whickham Volunteer Library Association have declared themselves as "warm places" where people can go to stay warm and enjoy a little company and some hot refreshments.

Sonya Hawkins advised "The Council is creating a network of warm spaces and you can find other places where this is happening by referring to the directory on the link below."

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/21258/Warm-Spaces-directory>



You will be able to find details of the scheme on the Library website.



Survey Results



Last year we carried out a survey - collecting the views of residents, so that **we can continue to focus on the things that matter to you!**

We had a huge response to our survey and it has taken us time to go through the forms.

We are continuing to work on the responses and have further updates for you below.



Trees

During our survey, we asked residents to suggest places where trees could be planted.

We have had dozens of suggestions and these have now all been passed to the Climate Change team who will incorporate these into the Council's Climate Emergency Plan.



Charging points for electric cars

As we move towards having more electric vehicles, this is becoming more of an issue for residents as charging points are often not working.

The service has been arranged via the North East Combined Authority and there have been some issues, but we are pushing the Council for a swift resolution.

Update on banking in Whickham



Both Barclays and Lloyds Bank closed their Whickham branches in September.

Your ward councillors wrote to both banks and as a result, held a meeting with representatives of Barclays Bank, raising several concerns from residents.

Barclays will maintain a presence in the village, with a weekly session arranged in Whickham Library on a Tuesday from 09:30 to 15:30 - this will continue for at least a year.

Residents will be able to get advice, but no banking services are on offer.

The advice given is to use other local branches or our post office.

Focus is produced several times a year, but if you want to keep up to date with local news on a more regular basis, there are two ways that you can do this:

Sign up to our email newsletter; eFocus by contacting one of the Focus Team with your email address or visit our Facebook page: Focus on NE16.



Banktop inquiry complete - at last



We now have the results of the public inquiry for Bank Top which took place in February to resolve a long running planning dispute.

Local residents together with ward councillor, **Peter Craig**

Craig all gave evidence at the enquiry, which lasted three days.

The decision of the Inspectorate will require alterations to the scheme that was originally approved:

- Remove the pitched roof and replace it with a new flat roof,
- Alter 2 windows with obscure glazing and remove another,
- Implement a Tree Planting and Hedge Planting scheme.

This work must all be completed within 104 weeks of the Order being granted.

Whickham Voluntary Library 5 years old

Whickham Voluntary Library is now 5 years old. Trustees and volunteers celebrated the birthday in July with a cake in the form of a book.



The voluntary library took over the previously council run facility after a review by Gateshead Council led to a number of closures. A team of dedicated residents now keep the library in operation.

"The volunteers have ensured a library service continues to function in Whickham, serving not only the village but surrounding areas such as Dunston, Lobley Hill, Sunnyside and Swalwell," said **Chris Ord**, one of the library's trustees. "The Library are also looking for new trustees who can help run the organisation. If you have the necessary skills and experience, please visit the Library on Tuesday or Wednesday mornings."

Cut Gateshead Council down to size!



Liberal Democrats in Gateshead are campaigning for Gateshead Council to be cut in size. For the past 40 years, Gateshead has had 66 councillors. But while the number of councillors has remained the same, Gateshead Council's functions and budget have been reduced. Lib Dems want to cut the number of councillors by a third, saving quarter of a million pounds a year. If you support the campaign to cut councillors, please sign the petition on the link: <http://www.gatesheadlibdems.org.uk/cuttingcouncillors>.



LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
Focus Team

Write to the team or call them:

- **Peter, Sonya & Chris** are always available to help you if you need them.

Next ward surgery:

Saturday 26th November
10:30 am to 11:00 am
Outside Whickham Library

Peter Craig
73 Whaggs Lane NE16 4PQ
Tel. 488 0787
Sonya Hawkins
50 Kingsley Place NE16 4BQ
Tel. 422 2206
Chris Ord
35 Fellside Road NE16 4JR
Tel. 488 2545