

FOCUS

Edited by Amanda Wintcher &
Councillors Ian Patterson & Paul Diston

Delivered free to 4,000 homes in Bill Quay, Heworth, Pelaw and Wardley

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www.gatesheadlibdems.org.uk



Council Tax up again!

Lib Dem councillors Ian Patterson and Paul Diston voted against yet another Council Tax increase at February's budget meeting but Labour councillors voted the rise through. Residents' bills will go up by 3.2% including increases for Policing and Fire as well as Council services.



Ian and Paul voted against the Council Tax rise - but Labour Councillors voted it through

Paul Diston said "Gateshead Council already charges the highest rates of Council Tax of any Metropolitan Council. People in Band D properties pay over £200 a year more than people in South Tyneside and more than £350 more than people in Sunderland. We just don't think that the services in Gateshead are that much better so Council Tax should not be going up again."

Local campaigner Amanda Wintcher said "We have the worst of both worlds – a Tory Government that is cutting resources to councils and a Labour Council that thinks it can get away with charging residents ever higher tax."

Amanda chosen for May election

Local Liberal Democrats have selected Dr Amanda Wintcher to be our candidate in May's local elections. Amanda has lived in Pelaw for 14 years and is an archaeologist who regularly volunteers at Jarrow Hall museum. Amanda often joins the Wardley Wombles litter picking group, and last year she was part of a team that won a £500 prize in a UK-wide contest for the most rubbish collected in a weekend.



Local resident Amanda has been chosen to be the Focus Team's candidate in the May elections

If elected, Amanda wants to build on the things that make our area a nice place to live. Her priorities include improving public transport, making sure that new developments are sustainable and working with the Police to improve public safety. She also wants the Council to do far more to bring derelict buildings back into use.

Ian Patterson said "I am impressed by Amanda's commitment to the community and I hope she will be joining me and Paul on the Council in May".

Tackling crime in our area

Over 300 residents filled in the Focus team's 'Police and Crime' survey. One in twenty residents had been victims of crime in the past year but less than one in two felt safe or very safe.

Residents' priorities were more visible policing, tackling dangerous bikers and dealing with anti-social behaviour and speeding cars. We have sent these results to the Gateshead Police.

Nearly 95% of residents agreed with the Lib Dems that the Police and Crime Commissioner position should be scrapped.

Amanda Wintcher said "I want to thank everyone who took the time to complete and return our survey. Everyone deserves to live in a safe area. Working with Ian and Paul, I will continue to raise issues with the Police".



Lib Dem Focus - working for you, all year round

Local news and action

Helping tenants with bills?

In February, Newcastle Council were awarded £3.2 million from the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation scheme. Sunderland received £1.2 million and Durham County Council £6 million. This means that their tenants will get energy efficiency improvements lowering bills and helping the environment.

Local campaigner Amanda Wintcher "This is a really helpful Government scheme and Labour-run Gateshead Council did not even apply for this funding. They are letting tenants down."

Heworth baths under threat?

The Council has just closed its latest consultation on the future of Leisure Services.

Paul Diston said "We will be watching this closely at the Council because the last thing we would want is for Heworth baths to be under threat. It has excellent facilities which need to be better promoted and we hope that the Council decides to do this."

Calls for safety barrier to be replaced

The safety barrier near the bus stop at Bevan Gardens is badly damaged and we have asked the Council to fix this.

Ian said "It's important the Council keep on top of things like this as we want our area to look nice".



News in brief

- Congratulations to pupils from **Bill Quay Primary** whose safety posters will be displayed at the new Metro compound at Wardley. They should be really proud when they visit them at the site.
- A new proposal has been made to build houses on the former **Tyne View Social Club Site**. Residents can see and comment on the proposals on the Council's Planning Portal at www.gateshead.gov.uk



- Regular users of the Fewster Square shops will have noticed that the seating is now in a poor condition. We have raised this with the Council and asked that they be improved.
- We have asked the Council to investigate the pooling that occurs in the dip of the road, under the Blue Bridges. Ian said "it is a busy road and becomes waterlogged even after moderate rainfall. We have asked the Council to check if the drains are running to capacity".



Have your say, get involved:

Please use this space to tell us what you think needs doing in Pelaw and Heworth, or to let us know of any local problem needing attention - and if you can help the **Lib Dem Focus Team** get more done, please let us know.

- I want to receive your email newsletter (please state email address below)
- I want to join the Liberal Democrats. Please send me details
- I can spare 1 or 2 hours every few months to help deliver 'Focus' newsletters

Name: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

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Can we keep you updated about our activities including campaigns, events, fundraising and details about how to get involved? Yes please No thanks The Liberal Democrats will use your contact details to send you information on the topics you have requested. Any data we gather will be used in accordance with our privacy policy at libdems.org.uk/privacy. To exercise your legal data rights, email: data.protection@libdems.org.uk.