

What a Result!

The Liberal Democrats won 72 seats in the recent General Election — the party's best result for over a century!

Jamie Rickelton, our candidate for Jarrow and Gateshead East, has expressed his thanks to everyone who voted at the recent General Election. Jamie said

"Although we didn't win here, the Lib Dems are now the third largest party in Parliament! I want to thank everyone who supported us to this fantastic result. Our MPs will encourage the new Government to fix our broken NHS and social care, stop the scandal of sewage in our rivers, and lift the child benefit cap."



GE Candidates Jonathan Aibi and Jamie Rickelton



The new group of 72 Lib Dem MPs in Westminster

Councillor Ian Patterson would also like to thank everyone for their support in the May 2 Council elections. Ian said "I am honoured to have been re-elected to represent Pelaw, Heworth, and Bill Quay for another term."

The Gateshead Focus Team also won an additional seat in Birtley, and we are now the largest opposition group on the council in over a decade.

Grow Your Own

A number of local community organisations have come together to develop two underused community allotment spaces in Pelaw and Bill Quay, and they are looking for more people to get involved!

There are two community garden spaces, one at The Lawnmowers on Shields Road and one at Bill Quay Allotments near the farm. Residents can bring their expertise or come and learn to grow some fruit and vegetables. The goal of the project is to get people to use the produce from the gardens and share it with others! Tasks include everything from weeding to building new raised beds, and there is almost always something ready to harvest.



If you are interested in sharing your knowledge, learning new things, or just spending some time outside in the allotment then let one of the Focus Team know and we will connect you to the groups involved in the project. Or you can come to The Lawnmowers on Shields Road every Monday 1.30pm-3.30pm.

Be sure to wear gardening clothes and sturdy footwear!



It's a Great Time to Get Involved!

It's a great time to join us if you want to help win a Fair Deal for Gateshead!

The Liberal Democrats work all year round to keep you informed and hold the Labour group to account. With our record of success and growing strength, now is a great time to get involved.

There are many roles that you can help with from delivering leaflets to joining meetings and having your say on the future of Gateshead. You might even decide to stand for election yourself!

If you want to be a part of the team, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Contact any of the Focus Team or email us at hello@gatesheadlibdems.org.uk



Amanda delivering leaflets

Local news and action

Local Updates

Jordan Engineering: Following a series of small fires at the former Jordan Engineering site, Cllr Patterson has worked with the Fire Investigation and Arson liaison officers who will be taking several measures to prevent future disturbances. These include working with the site owner on new security measures and gathering evidence. Ian will continue to keep an eye on the situation.



Ian, Paul, and Amanda at Pelaw Library

67 and 69 Bus: Earlier this year Go North East proposed to curtail the 67 and 69 bus services running between the Queen Elizabeth hospital and Wardley. After councillors across the borough raised concerns, the plans were revised and with additional Nexus funding GNE will continue to run the service as before.

Community Woodland: Amanda participated in a tree health check at the recently planted woodland near Felling Cricket Club. As well as healthy young trees, a number of small creatures have begun to move in, including voles and butterflies.

Library Refurbishment: The Pelaw Library has reopened after a refurbishment. Amanda, Ian, and Paul visited to see the new facilities. As well as new furniture there is also now a large screen for presentations and displaying community notices. The library is available for community groups and as a meeting space —contact the staff for more details.



Vole nest at the new woodland

Scrutiny for NECA Mayoral Authority

Liberal Democrats across the region are pressing for the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority to ensure effective scrutiny of decisions of the new body. It's concerning that the new body will have responsibility for decisions affecting people from Barnard Castle to Berwick, but will only have a single scrutiny committee to examine plans. What's more, this committee is currently set to meet only a few times a year!

Lib Dem Cllr Dawn Welsh, of Low Fell, was quoted in the Chronicle saying that "North East devolution is a fantastic opportunity but we need to get it right... The scrutiny function is crucial, [and] four meetings a year is nowhere near enough."

Previously there were dedicated committees examining vital areas of responsibility including transport, but these have now lapsed. Major transport investment and public transport performance are vitally important and cannot be left to the Mayor and council leaders to deliver without scrutiny and challenge. We will continue to advocate for more opportunities to make sure that decisions are made with enough information and that possible issues are not missed.

Ian has been appointed as a representative on the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service as well as the NECA Audit and Standards Committee. Amanda has been appointed as a substitute member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Liberal Democrats have called on the new Labour government to rethink cuts to the Winter Fuel Allowance. The loss of this benefit will have a major impact on residents, and Parliament has not been given an opportunity to properly examine the issue.

Only those who receive Pension Credit or other means-tested benefits will receive the allowance. If you were born before 23 September 1958, check whether you are eligible and apply at:

<https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim>
or call the Pension Credit claim line at 0800 99 1234

We also want to remind you that there are several Warm Spaces in the area, including the Age UK hub at St Mary's Heworth, Pelaw library, Wood Green, and Edberts House.

Gateshead Pride and Bill Quay Festival

Liberal Democrats from across the borough took part in the first-ever Gateshead Pride celebrations over the summer, including attending the family picnic at Saltwell Park and entering a team in the lawn bowling competition at Pelaw Bowling Club. We had a lot of fun even though our enthusiasm was greater than our skill!

The Bill Quay Summer Festival was once again a resounding success, creating a vibrant atmosphere filled with music, entertainment, and a strong sense of community spirit. It was nice to see many families and young people enthusiastically dancing and even taking to the stage as local band *Point Blanc* made their debut.



Amanda has a go at bowling



The picnic at Saltwell Park

Attendees enjoyed a variety of stalls including face painting, games, and food, providing a welcome boost to the local economy. The Pelaw & Heworth Focus Team's continued support for the fair highlights our commitment to fostering

unity and supporting local initiatives, including raising funds for youth sports.

The Summer Festival has become a cornerstone of community life in Bill Quay and we look forward to next year's event.



A band at the Bill Quay Summer Festival



Scan the QR code to visit the Gateshead Liberal Democrats website at:
www.gatesheadlibdems.org.uk

Find Pelaw and Heworth Focus on Facebook:
facebook.com/pelawandheworthfocus/

Or contact us at:

Ian Patterson
6 Loveless Gardens
Wardley NE10 8ER
(Tel 07523944921)
cllr.ipatterson@gateshead.gov.uk

Paul Diston
98 Wealcroft
Leam Lane NE10 8QR
(Tel 0191 4423219)
cllr.pdiston@gateshead.gov.uk

Amanda Wintcher
Civic Centre, Regent Street
Gateshead, NE8 1HH
(Tel 07517499093)
cllr.awintcher@gateshead.gov.uk

