

FOCUS on Whickham, Sunniside, Marley Hill and Byermoor

Issue 153 Summer 2020

FOCUS is Back!

Back Page:

Shop Local Growing it in Gateshead News from our Community Fly Tipping Alert

Whickham in Lockdown



Recent Whickham Focuses. Focus is now being produced again in the 3 Whickham wards.

Along with everyone else we've been in lockdown and as a result our usual newsletter service to residents has been on hold.

We suspended our Focus newsletters during the lockdown period, but increased the frequency of our email version; eFocus to once every ten days. Please see below for how to sign up for this.

In eFocus, we have been updating residents with news of Council services as things have changed. Many people have found this to be a good way of keeping in touch with the current situation.

As government relaxation of the lockdown rules progresses, we are restarting Focus deliveries, but instead of delivering ourselves, at this stage we are supporting local delivery companies who have restarted work.

And for the time being, we are keeping party politics out of Focus. There is a time and place for it - but not at the moment.

How to get more local news

As well as this regular newsletter your Lib Dem councillors provide an email update full of up to the moment local news - in between Focus releases.

If you would like to receive eFocus, email the message "subscribe" to jonathanwallace329@gmail.com. Please include your name and address.

The lockdown has shown communities at their best and we've been proud to be part of those communities, battling against the coronavirus, the biggest threat to our country since the Second World War.

Cllr. Peter Maughan said, "Whether it is helping to make sure that neighbours have everything they need, clapping NHS and key workers, self-isolating from others, working from home or choosing to use locally owned and run shops, we have all done our bit in our own area to help us get through the crisis."



Shopping in Whickham with social distancing.

And Cllr. Chris Ord added, "Despite the easing of the lockdown the virus has not gone away. It is very important that we all remain vigilant and continue to follow government advice and guidelines."



2 minute silence

People across the UK joined in a moment of Remembrance at 11am on Friday 8th May, the 75th Anniversary of VE Day.

A single bell at St Mary's Church rang out from 10:30 to 11:00 am to mark the occasion. This was followed by a 2 minute silence on Church Green.

In other locations around Whickham people observed their own 2 minute silence in their own homes or gardens.

Garden Parties

In Whickham and other parts of Gateshead, working within lockdown rules, to celebrate VE Day 75, many families brought out their tables & chairs to the front of their houses, decorated their gardens with bunting, flags and posters, held a picnic and played 1940's music.

Some even dressed up in either 1940s costumes or red, white & blue.

A good time was had by all and it was all achieved safely.

Grow it in Gateshead



The pandemic has brought home to us just how dependent we are on long distance food supplies.

As a result, demand has rocketed for locally produced foods such as eggs and rhubarb.

In response, as things start to return to normal, Gateshead Lib Dems will be working on ideas for how we can produce more food locally.

“We think that growing more food in Gateshead would be good for local businesses and for the environment,” said **Cllr. Jonathan Wallace**. Please let us know your ideas.”

Shop Local

During the pandemic lock down, many residents have been using our local shops much more often than in "normal" times. And this has given us an insight into what life would be like if we did not have these local lifelines.

Many local businesses such as pubs, gyms and barbers and hairdressers have been closed and others such as cafes and restaurants have been restricted to takeaway and home delivery. Life without these businesses in the future would mean our communities are so much poorer.

While the big grocery chains are well placed to get through the lock down (and in some cases are benefiting from increased sales as households spend less on eating out) small businesses often don't have the reserves available to national retailers.



Garden centres are open again but local shops also sell plants for our gardens

“So we are urging people to support local businesses”, said **Cllr. Vicky Anderson**. “They have been a vital service during lockdown and often have stocked items that we couldn't get in the larger shops.”

Cllr. Peter Craig said, "The lockdown has reminded us just how important local businesses are to how we live. Buying goods and services in local shops and outlets means more money circulating in the local economy. Please, shop local and support our local businesses where you can."

Community News

- Whickham Library has been closed but Trustees have held video meetings to plan a safe reopening, starting with a book return and collection service on 6th July.
- As Government restrictions eased, Planting Up Whickham decided to go ahead with the Summer Planting. Volunteers followed social distancing guidelines to keep our village looking bright.
- Friends of Chase Park have had to cancel the May Fayre and the Fun Dog Show, planned for August.
- Community Centres were closed, but Trustees have monitored the situation regarding when to reopen.
- Lighting Up Whickham has been unable to fundraise this year for the Whickham Christmas tree - a sponsor is being sought otherwise there may be no tree this year. Please contact **Cllr. Sonya Hawkins** if you can help.

Fly Tipping Alert



Cllr. Marilyn Ord reports “Please be aware that the Council are treating rubbish left at local recycling sites as fly tipping - and some prosecutions have taken place as a result.”

The car parks in Oakfield Road Co-op and behind the Gibside are two of the sites where action has been taken.



Focus Team for Whickham



Cllr. Vicky Anderson
07568
600 397



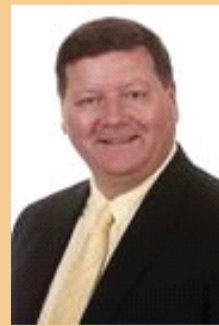
Cllr. Peter Craig
0191
488 0787



Cllr. Sonya Hawkins
0191
422 2206



Cllr. Peter Maughan
07786
647 333



Cllr. Christopher Ord
0191
488 2545



Cllr. Marilyn Ord
0191
488 2873



Cllr. Jonathan Wallace
0191
488 3190

Surgeries have been suspended during lockdown but we have remained available to help you with any issues. Please get in touch.