

Annual Report: Cllr. Kath Pinnock 2011/12

Introduction

Thank you to the people of Cleckheaton Ward who have re-elected me once more to serve them. I am committed to doing my best to stand up for local people and promote the wellbeing of all who live and work in the ward.

Participation at Council Meeting Committees

I have attended all meetings of Full Council. I attended meetings of the Personnel Committee; Budget Implementation Group; Leaders; Spen Valley Area Committee; Oakenshaw Forum; Neighbourhood Management Group; Spen Valley Housing Forum; North Kirklees Countryside Forum.

Participation on Outside Bodies

- I continue to be Chair of Governors at Whitcliffe Mount School. I am delighted that the school's Ofsted report showed Whitcliffe to be a 'Good and Improving' School. It is a privilege to be part of such a thriving student community at the heart of Cleckheaton and surrounding areas as it has been for over 100 years.
- I am a trustee at the Scholes Village Shelter, which has this year, put in a new disabled toilet and baby-care facilities. The number of local groups using the Shelter is increasing.
- I am Chair of the Cleckheaton First Community Trust which decides on applications to the Community First Fund. Cleckheaton Ward has around £7,000 for each of the next 3 years for local groups who want to improve local amenities or services to the community.
- I have continued to be a Board member of Yorkshire Forward which had the primary responsibility for regeneration of Yorkshire & Humber. Regrettably, the Government decided to close the Regional Development Agencies so my service on this Board ceases in 2012.
- I was elected to serve on the Local Government Association Children & Young people's Board where I have the opportunity to discuss national issues and challenge decision makers on policy.

Ward Work

Ward Work and Achievements

- The Cleckheaton Ward Liberal Democrat team keeps residents informed and involved all the year round. We produce and deliver a FOCUS news and campaigning leaflet which we deliver to the 8,000 homes in our ward at least 5 times during the year.
- I use Twitter to advertise local events, record some of the activities undertaken and comment on some political decisions of local and national importance. You can follow me @kathpinnock and I use #cleckheaton for local issues and events.
- I have a blog at www.kathpinnock.org.uk which I have used to let residents know what is happening locally.
- With my colleagues, I have campaigned on several major issues affecting local people including:

- opposing the poorly considered Boundary Commission proposals for Parliamentary constituencies. The proposal to put Cleckheaton in a Bradford city constituency breaks all community ties and would see the end of a Spen Valley constituency which has existed for over 130 years. Response from residents was overwhelmingly supportive of our opposition;

- proposals from the Mid Yorkshire Hospital Trust which envisage significant and serious dilution of services at Dewsbury Hospital. The cause of these changes is the rapacious need to fund the PFI built hospitals at Pinderfields and Pontefract. It is outrageous that hospital services for local residents should be cut back because the Trust cannot meet the financial demands of the PFI hospitals;

- I have led a strong campaign to ensure that the Council uses the office space in Cleckheaton Town Hall. Moving Adult Services staff from those offices to Dewsbury has caused a great deal of concern and anger in the town. The petition we launched has been signed by over 3,000 people. The Chamber of Trade supported the petition knowing that the loss of 30 employees from the town will have an impact on their businesses. Representatives of The Chamber presented part of the petition and spoke to a meeting of the Council in July 2012. I presented the rest of the petition at the same meeting. This campaign will continue until we have a satisfactory outcome for Cleckheaton;

- Westgate derelict site has been cleared and a planning application approved for 217 housing units. This is positive as the site is brownfield land;

- I continue to urge Tesco to respect our town and take responsibility for the dereliction their delay in building a new store is causing;

- I have continued to help the Scholes village Shelter and Wobbly Tots to improve their facilities. This year they obtained a further grant from the Area Committee in order to replace toilet facilities which no longer met modern standards;

- with my ward colleagues, I have helped residents in the Pyenot Hall Lane and Marsh area to find a solution to a difficult traffic problem. Work has been agreed by the Council and will be done this summer;

- the work of my ward colleagues and residents in Oakenshaw, a new puffin crossing is being installed in August outside St Andrew's Church. This will be an enormous improvement to road safety;

- in Hunsworth we want the Recreation Ground to have new land drains so that a large part of it is no longer permanently flooded and unusable;

- with my ward colleagues I have ensured that we tackle speeding traffic in Oakenshaw and Moorside / Moorbottom by the use of a Speed Indicator Device;

- I have continued to work with the Governors, staff and students at Whitcliffe Mount School to ensure that the very good work it does, is not undermined by the creation of a superfluous school in Birkenshaw. I was pleased that the plans for a free school on the site of Birkenshaw Middle school failed;

- Mann Dam and the viaduct - with ward colleagues and the area committee we are pursuing an aim of creating a countryside park and restoration of the viaduct;

- I have helped hundreds of local residents over the last year.

This is just a snap shot of the work Cleckheaton Ward Liberal Democrat councillors have done over the past year. Please get in contact if you would like more information.

Members Surgeries

Cleckheaton Ward councillors hold drop-in surgeries at the Town Hall and Scholes Church Hall every Saturday morning; at Oakenshaw Church Hall once a month; and at Turnsteads Community Centre once a month.

It is always good to meet residents of Cleckheaton and other wards who come seeking advice and support. We are always pleased to be of help.

Training and Development

On use of social media by councillors; planning; communicating with residents.