

Editors :
Cllr Julia Cherrett
785473
Cllr Suzanne Fletcher
786456

Bishopsgarth & Elm Tree
FOCUS
No 206



BRRRRR ! COLD WEATHER ISSUES

Cold Weather Payments

The recent cold snap has highlighted the issue of pensioners and others on low incomes who are afraid to turn up the heating to keep warm because of costs and so are at risk of hypothermia.

The current system for cold weather payments is complicated. The £25 a week payments are issued automatically when temperatures are below zero for 7 consecutive days. For the TS19 area this was for 2 weeks over the icy spell. However, they go unclaimed by as many as 1.7 million in the UK and 2,500 in the Stockton South area who may be entitled to them.

The claims system is complicated. This is why Jacquie Bell, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate is calling for a simpler system without all the form filling.

It's important to make claims to the benefits you deserve and are entitled to. The Citizen's Advice Bureau or Department of Work and Pensions Office can assist in making sure that you have the correct benefits.



WARMFRONT LATEST

The millions of pounds announced by the Government to be spent on helping people keep warm is no such thing, Lib Dem MP Simon Hughes has found out – it is just money to make up for an overspend in previous years and there is nothing new at all. There is no money to make up for the slashed funding next year. Parliamentary Candidate Jacquie Bell says this is disgraceful. ***“It is bad enough cutting the budget for Warmfront for next year, but to pretend they are putting more money into it for the future is appalling. Liberal Democrats will bring forward plans for improving energy efficiency – creating more warmth and more jobs.”***



THE SNOW MIGHT HAVE GONE BUT...

Many of you contacted us about problems with the big freeze that we have had. All of your many comments have been put forward into the review of winter maintenance that the Council is now doing.

All of the planned waste and recycling collections did take place, though, and many workers were called in from holidays and worked through the night to deal with the freezing conditions. Information about winter conditions is now on the website, for those who can access it, at : www.stockton.gov.uk/gritting and has some “frequently asked questions”. Let us know if you would like the questions and answers sending to you. Suzanne has asked the Council to have a message service by phone for those with no access to a Computer.

THE ELECTION IS COMING.....

None of us know the date of the General Election, but it will have to be on or before the 3rd of June. If you think that you might not be able to go to the polling station for any reason at all for an election then, or in May, you can apply for a postal vote. Also if you were not registered to vote at your present address for the European Elections in June last year, and haven't filled

in a form to register to vote since, you need to register now. Contact us or the Council's electoral registration department on 526196 or electoral@stockton.gov.uk.



POTHOLES

There are lots of potholes appearing after the effects of snow, ice and salt, Please do let us or the Council know if there are any you know of.



LIBERAL DEMOCRATS - STANDING UP FOR YOU

SPRING INTO MAPLIN VIEW

Before Bill, a resident on the Council estate, died last year he kindly bought some bulbs to be planted on the estate. Some children from St Mark's School came and helped plant the bulbs and a tree to replace one that had died and had to be removed.. Thank you to the children and to Bill for your part in making the area nicer for everyone



New Tristar Patch Manager

The new Patch Manager for Tristar is Helen Gerhard and she can be contacted on 526444.

Estate Walkabout

The next estate walkabout with her, Care For Your Area, enforcement team and police is on Tuesday 16th February starting at 10.00 am from Medina House. Let us know if there is anything you would like us to look at.

HELP WITH FINDING A HOME

If you want to apply for a home with Tristar this is now done by bidding on-line under a scheme called Compass. If you don't have access to a computer this can be done at Stratford House in Ramsgate, Stockton or at Elm Tree Community Centre. Ring the Community Centre on 611333 first to check

Cuppa with a Copper

Call in at Elm Tree Community Centre for a cuppa with your local beat officers P.C. Ian Brown and P.C.S.O. Liz Stephenson on Tuesday 9th February from 5pm – 6pm. A good chance for an informal chat.



COME DANCING

There is a TEA DANCE at Elm Tree Community Centre each Thursday from 1.30 to 3.30 p.m. On **Thursday 25th February** it will be a special Fairtrade tea dance. All are welcome, just come along then or any other Thursday for just £1.85



STOP PRESS - ALFORD LANE PATH

We have just heard that the bid for funding to make up this path has been unsuccessful. We'll be doing our best over the coming weeks to try to find other sources of funding.

SNIPPETS

Powburn Close lights have been not working for too long, and that is being chased up....The part of the **cycleway** to the north of **Harrowgate Lane** has been looking scruffy and is being tidied up now... Faulty lights at **Medina Close** reported for repair...numerous potholes in **Elm Tree Avenue** and **Felton Lane** reported



CONTACT US BY

Letter - Julia Cherrett, 12, Holywell Green, Eaglescliffe, TS16 9HH
or Suzanne Fletcher, 3, Hoylake Way, Eaglescliffe, Stockton on Tees, TS16 9EU
or - Julia Cherrett or Suzanne Fletcher or Jacquie Bell FREEPOST, NEA 765, STOCKTON-ON-TEES, TS16 9BR (no need for a stamp)
Phone - 01642 785473 (Julia) or 787652 (Suzanne)
e-mail - julia.cherrett@stockton.gov.uk (Julia) or suzanne.fletcher@stockton.gov.uk (Suzanne)
Or visit us at our **ward surgeries** at
Elm Tree Community Centre

Tuesday 9th February, and 9th March
6.00 pm to 7.00pm

or Bishopsgarth School (with local Police)
Before **Bishopsgarth Association of Residents** meeting at 6.30 p.m - all welcome.
Monday 1st and 29th March, 6pm to 6.30pm

PARLIAMENTARY SPOKESMAN

Jacquie Bell
jacquie.bell50@googlemail.com
07772 383 564



MEMBER OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Fiona Hall MEP
Fiona@fionahallmep.co.uk 0191 383 0119
www.fionahall.org.uk



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