



**LIBERAL
DEMOCRATS**

www.stocktonlibdems.org.uk

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Focus funded by local **LIB DEMS**

Eaglescliffe Focus

January 2011

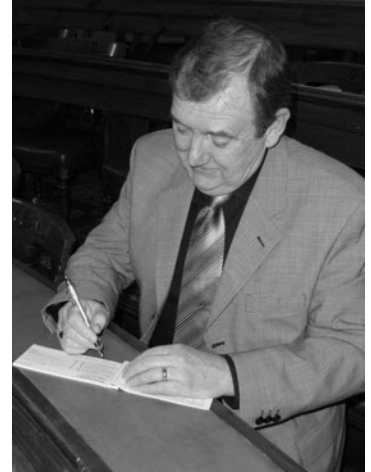
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SAVE OUR CHEQUE CAMPAIGN HOTS UP

Local Liberal Democrats kept up the campaign to save the cheque this month. A passionate speech from Cllr Alan Lewis persuaded the Council to urge our MP to support moves in Parliament to save cheques. Alan said "I understand that handling cheques is a bit of a pain for bank staff but many jobs have an element to them that people don't like doing and it would be wrong if cheques were lost just because they're inconvenient for the banks."

Stockton Council handled about 4500 cheques every month last year - thousands of residents and small businesses who'd have to find another way of paying.

You can write to your MP at House of Commons London SW1A 0AA and add your voice to the campaign.



DID THE BUS MISS YOU?

Eaglescliffe people have complained about having to wait up to 40 minutes for a **No.7** bus when it should be every 10 minutes. John has taken up every complaint with *Arriva* but with little response until they met face-to-face at the Stockton Public Transport Users Forum.

Arriva have blamed the December weather & Yarm traffic jams, but are working on improvements (but we don't like one idea of having a bus due only every 15 minutes!). For months their radio system wasn't working, so *Arriva* didn't know where their buses were held up.

If you have a complaint please tell us exactly when and where (preferably keeping your ticket, which is unique) and we'll take it up. John spoke to Lib. Dem. Transport minister Norman Baker about bus unreliability - he replied that it was on the agenda for the next national meeting with bus operators.

Watch *Focus* for future reports.



MONEY MATTERS

Everyone will have heard talk of cuts in Council services as a result of the Labour legacy.

John, Alan and Maureen are on committees looking at Stockton Council's services, asking 3 questions:

- Is it mandatory?
- Is it wanted?
- Is it value for money?



Every year the Council gets some money from central government and a much smaller amount from Council Tax to pay for all that it does. This year and next a lot less will come from general taxes and no-one wants to put up Council Tax so savings have to be made.

Some services will be reduced, others will be done differently. Some savings from previous years will be spent, some things will cost more. Local Liberal Democrats have protested to the government about the scale of the cuts in Stockton's budget but ministers haven't listened. We councillors scrutinise proposals with a fine-tooth comb, constructively challenging. We can't guarantee they won't hurt, but we'll do our best. We sympathise with all whose jobs are threatened by cuts and are thankful that Council workers continue to serve us all despite their uncertain futures.

Liberal Democrats - Delivering for Eaglescliffe

PLANNING

Applications for a brand-new *Nifco* works next to **Durham Lane Garage** and for extending Wilkinsons' garden centre on the **A67**.

Stockton Council planners have given retrospective permission for changes to **15 Station Road**.

An application is being prepared for up to 1000 dwellings, community facilities, several retail units & a care home on former RN land at **Allen's West**.

Meanwhile Maureen and Alan are fighting through the Western Area Partnership and within the council to get more protection against garden grabbing built into Stockton Council's policies. Maureen says "It's no good the government changing the rules if Stockton Council doesn't take action too".

HOW WILL YOU VOTE?

Election Day, May 5th, will soon be upon us. You need to be registered to vote by 5.00 pm on Thursday 14th April.

Anyone can apply to vote by post if that would be more convenient for any reason. The last date for returning your postal vote application is also 5.00 pm Thursday 14th April.

The date for (non urgent) Proxy votes is Tuesday 21st April.

You can contact the Council's electoral registration department on 526196 or electoral@stockton.gov.uk.

You can also contact us for more information.

Don't forget the referendum - you'll have the chance to vote to change to a fairer voting system on the same day.

Yes!

DO YOU CYCLE TO SCHOOL (or TESCO)?

Stockton Council is planning to improve the route from Yarm Rd to Elton Lane and Eggescliffe Comprehensive. The steps to Aspen Rd would change to a slope. It would be easier to ride a bike or an invalidity scooter but would it be too slippery in icy weather? If you have internet access the plans are on our website: <http://tinyurl.com/6h3vx6h> or ask one of us to show you a copy.



THANK YOU

Many people have said how pleased they were that bins were emptied and recycling collected all through the bad weather. Also that paths were cleared near places where a lot of elderly



people are known to live. We passed on the thanks to the teams concerned and also to the gritting crews who worked so hard

to keep the main roads clear.

SNIPPETS

Following the collapse of a roof at **Junction Farm School**, similar roofs were checked at **Eggescliffe, Durham Lane, Eggescliffe CE & The Links** Schools and shown to be safe.

Urlay Nook Crossing will be closed from 2300 on 5 Feb. to 0600 on 7 Feb.



WE KEEP IN TOUCH Alan, John & Maureen will see anyone who calls on

Fri 4 Feb Trinity Methodist Ch, Witham Ave. 6.30-7.30

Tues 15 Feb Eggescliffe Parish Hall, Butts Lane, 6 - 7 pm

Friday 4 Mar Trinity Methodist Church, Witham Ave. 6.30 - 7.30

Tues 15 Mar Eggescliffe Community Centre, Durham Lane, 6.30 - 7.30

Contact us any time at:

John Fletcher, 3 Hoylake Way, Eggescliffe. Tel 787652. john.fletcher@stockton.gov.uk

Maureen Rigg, 4 Monmouth Dr. Eggescliffe. Tel 785689 maureen.rigg@stockton.gov.uk

Alan Lewis, 4 Broomfield Ave, Eggescliffe. Tel 784910 alan.lewis@stockton.gov.uk



Don't forget your MEP: Fiona Hall can be contacted at 55A Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HN, 0191 383 0119, e-mail fiona@fionahallmep.co.uk

Liberal Democrats still working for you