

TWO MISSED CHANCES TO SPEND YOUR MONEY BETTER

Council Tax this year will not change, thanks to a Coalition Government subsidy. Stockton Council, run by Labour and Conservatives, is finding ways of saving your money. This month Liberal Democrats suggested two budget changes. These were both defeated by the other parties.

We called for an early review of councillors' allowances, last reviewed in 2008-09 before the state of the economy was known, so that they were properly debated in time for 1st April 2012 (the earliest date they could now change). When we are telling staff that their jobs might disappear and the public that we are cutting services, it is only right that we should reconsider our

The other parties say they care about people, but not enough to make these two changes - shame on them!

allowances

We wanted money to keep those youth clubs in other areas of Stockton earmarked for closure open for a few months to give local people a chance to find alternative ways of funding them. Otherwise, money spent already on equipment for young people to use and enjoy there will be wasted. We found that the same council department was sitting on a reserve just in case any schools failed, while telling us that all Stockton schools were wonderful! The council has other emergency money - in these difficult times we can't sit on money "just in case"!



Snippets

A brand-new *Nifco* works next to Durham Lane Garage has planning permission & is to be built. This will keep jobs in our area.

The cycle route from Yarm Road to Egglecliffe School is going ahead.

Stockton Council's Planning Committee refused permission for extending Wilkinsons' garden centre on the A67.

There are plans for an exciting new play area in Preston Park - watch it grow as you visit over the next few months.

Do You Need a POSTAL Vote?

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. If you will be away from home from then until May 5th you will need to appoint a trusted person to vote on your behalf (a Proxy).

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.

Contact us any time at:

John Fletcher, 3 Hoylake Way, Egglecliffe. Tel 787652. john.fletcher@stockton.gov.uk
Maureen Rigg, 4 Monmouth Dr. Egglecliffe Tel 785689 maureen.rigg@stockton.gov.uk
Alan Lewis, 4 Broomfield Ave, Egglecliffe Tel 784910 alan.lewis@stockton.gov.uk
Lesley Lewis 4 Broomfield Ave, Egglecliffe mrs.lesley.lewis@sky.com

Or see your councillors at Ward Surgery:

Fri. 1 Apr 6.30 to 7.30 p.m. Trinity Methodist Church, Witham Ave
Tues. 19 Apr 6 to 7 p.m. Egglecliffe Parish Hall, Butts La.

NB No Ward Surgeries can be arranged for May until after the election.

Don't forget your MEP:

Fiona Hall can be contacted at 55A Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HN,



Focus - The Original and the Best. Now in its 24th Year



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Egglecliffe

Focus

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Goodbye from John - Welcome to Lesley

John writes: It has been a privilege to represent my area on Stockton Borough Council for the last 24 years – I am grateful to all who have voted for me as their borough councillor in seven elections and to everyone who has helped me to help you. My wife Suzanne (who represents another ward) and I feel that it is now time for us to retire – a decision made easier by knowing that Alan and Maureen are standing again for the Borough Council and are being joined by Lesley. Please give them your support. Thank you, everyone!



Lesley writes: I am a committed Liberal Democrat and keen to represent the people of Egglecliffe. I was born in Preston and the local area is very dear to my heart. I am Chair of the Governing Body of Junction Farm School and have been involved in the past with the PTA and Friends of Egglecliffe Music at

Egglecliffe Comprehensive.

I have helped with the production and delivery of Focus for the past 5 years. Your Liberal Democrat Councillors have helped make Egglecliffe a very desirable place to live and I promise to carry that on.

Alan says: I have known John since I joined the Liberal Democrats in 2004. By his attention to detail and diligent observations of what is going on around him, John has established himself as one of the most respected Councillors on Stockton Council. John has set down the blueprint on how to be a respected Councillor. The candidates for the elections on May the 5th this year promise to carry on the good work.

Maureen says: I've known Lesley for 5 years now and I'm convinced she's the right person to represent Egglecliffe on Stockton Council. I was delighted when she agreed to stand for election in place of John. Many of you know how committed she is to this area so please vote for her on May 5th and ensure that we have 3 Liberal Democrat councillors working for Egglecliffe ward.

Speaking of Coalitions - Did you know

that Labour and Conservatives have been in coalition on Stockton council for the last 4 years?

Labour & Conservatives combined to spend your money on working out whether Egglecliffe school could be built on Preston Park

Labour & Conservatives voted against reviewing Councillor allowances in order to save money for essential services.

Stronger Together - Poorer Apart

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A RECORD OF ACTION IN EAGLESCLIFFE

EAGLESCLIFFE IN BLOOM



Lib Dem councillors fought for ward councillors to have the right to spend some money in their ward, making the improvements residents want.

One of the first things we were asked for was flowers - so daffodils and

crocuses are blooming along Durham Lane, Urlay Nook Rd, Yarm Rd and on the South View Triangle.

PRESTON PARK SAVED

Last year Conservative and Labour councillors backed a move by Independents to have Eggescliffe School rebuilt in Preston Park.

Lib Dem councillors argued against it and over 2500 people signed our petition.

Lib Dems organised public meetings and the **Protect Preston Park** group was born. They carried on the campaign, supported by Lib Dem councillors working inside the council. The idea was finally dropped in October last year,

Protect Preston Park is now "**Friends of Preston Park**", supported fully by your Liberal Democrat councillors.



John, Alan & Maureen have supported bids to Heritage Lottery for funds to improve the Hall and the Park. We all look forward to seeing the Hall re-open and the Kitchen Garden completed.

STREET LIGHTS, TARMAC & MORE

Using our ward budget on your suggestions:

Installed lighting on the paths from **St Andrews Close** to **Yarm Rd** and from **Birchfield Close** to **Finchfield Close**

Made up and lit the path from **West View Tce** to **Yarm Rd**

Levelled and surfaced the triangle between Eggescliffe Parish Church and the Cemetery

SAFETY ON DURHAM LANE

10 years of persistent work produced a footpath and cycleway linking Eggescliffe to Durham Lane Industrial Estate. We can now move safely to and from work and the Oakwood Centre, thanks to the perseverance of Lib Dem councillors and Stockton Council officers.

Vehicles should no longer be hurtling along Durham Rd from the A66 thanks to a 50mph speed limit and road markings, thanks to the work of the Western Area Transport group chaired by Maureen

WINTER SAFETY

Alan persuaded Stockton Council to grit Butts Lane and Station Rd regularly.



John argued for some of our grit bins to be kept when officers wanted to remove them.

Liberal Democrat councillors pushed for better information to be available to the public on gritting etc, so now it's available on the Council website, by Twitter and on Facebook with regular updates.

ON THE BUSES

Liberal Democrat councillors insisted on holding the Public Transport Users Forum, which meets several times a year with John in the Chair, enabling passengers to tell bus operators & the Council what they think. Alan and John have chased up your complaints about unreliability.

We made sure that the bus shelter on **Yarm Road** opposite **Sunningdale Drive** was replaced when it was demolished in an accident.

The 6.25 p.m. bus to Stockton, previously running "out of service", picks up passengers, thanks to John's insistence.

AND OF COURSE we have worked with and for numerous residents on personal matters related to the council, street light repairs, potholes, pavements, dropped kerbs, access to the temporary medical centre during the rebuilding, dog fouling, overhanging hedges, litter and much more.

As ward councillors, we're here all the year round and not just at election time.



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Your Liberal Democrat councillors play a full part in both the Western Area Partnership (chaired by Maureen) and Eggescliffe & Eggescliffe council. We have supported the Parish in getting funding for play area improvements through the Play Builder fund.

ALLEN'S WEST STATION

Flooding of the path to the station has been alleviated thanks to pressure from John.

PRESTON PARK EVENTS PROBLEMS

Parking chaos, loud music late into the night, huge traffic jams - these should be things of the past thanks to the work of John and Maureen in establishing a code of practice for events.

Now, your Lib Dem councillors sit round the table with Park management and work to avoid problems rather than apologise for them afterwards.

A PROMISE OF MORE

Over the next 4 years Liberal Democrat Councillors will:

Keep on working for you and with you for our area, making sure our voice is heard in Stockton Council

Work for an Area Plan to fight against the wrong kind of development in Eggescliffe

Support improvements in Preston Park

Work with Stockton Council engineers to reduce the number of HGVs travelling through Eggescliffe

Continue to consult on ways to spend our Community Participation Budget

Liberal Democrats - Up Your Street, Working with You and for You, All Year, Every Year