

## **Councillor Charles Greaves**

### **Annual Report 2015/16**

I would like to thank everyone who voted for me in my re-election to Kirklees Council and to everyone who has helped and supported my campaign and our work over the last year. Holding the seat and having a majority greater than the votes cast for any party are real signs of the trust that people have put into myself and other independents, and I appreciate that trust.

Honley, Meltham and Brockholes are alive with community groups who are tackling problems head on, organising events and festivals and contributing towards making our village's better places to live. Without a strong community we would not be able to accomplish much, and our close relationships mean that people know who to turn to, and how to get the help that they need. Working together for the benefit of our community, people can see what we have done, that they know how we do things and, most importantly of all, that we care.

Government funding cuts are biting hard and are set to worsen as the impact of all of the cuts finally works their way through to front line services and support. We are seeing a major backlog of road works being neglected because of the lack of funding. There are no easy answers and there will be more impacts on local jobs and services, but we are committed to doing everything that we can to limit the impact on the services and facilities that people need. The prospect of even more cuts to come is very worrying and if it wasn't for what was happening locally it would be all doom and gloom.

We work hard to make sure that the voice of our community is heard and is listened to. We are keen to see a real devolution of power, not just from Westminster but from Kirklees as well – to give power back to people to decide what is important for them – the council has already started to make some progress with this but only time will tell if the Council has a genuine desire and commitment to provide the resources to make it happen.

Fitting in the competing demands of family, job, voluntary work and council duties is always a challenge and it means that my diary is always full– but I like to play an active part in village life and over the year I have continued to build our connections with local groups and organisations.

There have been some great successes in our ward, with bigger and better community events, the completion of many local projects and the launch of many more. Honley in Bloom is a partnership between local community groups and Kirklees, and the Friends of Honley library are working hard to encourage everyone to come to library events. In Brockholes road safety dominates our work and we have put improvement works to the pedestrian crossings high on our agenda. In Meltham the highlights have been the continuing progress of the Carlile building with the refurbishment of the community space, and the landscaping and lighting works to the Meltham skate park.

There are very few things that we do that aren't linked into the work of local groups – carnivals, events, planning issues, roadworks, footpath problems, anti-social behaviour, dog fouling, and sports and leisure provision – are undertaken as a partnership, and our successes are truly the achievements of our community in which we play our part.

There have been much good work in our ward, but there have also been many challenges. We have major problems with new developments, dog fouling, potholes, speeding traffic, parking and congestion - and in response to these we have funded additional potholing and road patching work all across the ward, the "Speed Indicator Devices" on our roads, introduced parking restrictions on dangerous areas and eased restrictions to free up parking - and we are looking at further measures alongside the Police and Kirklees Highways.

I am and always will be an independent, and I will continue to work hard for the people that I represent, alongside anyone who supports people before politics. I am happy to explain my actions and to be honest about what I do, and I am happy to work alongside all of the established parties.

We have ongoing dialogue and discussions with all political groups, and whilst Town Hall deals have limited our ability to bring about a co-operative approach to politics, we remain committed to bringing councillors together to work for the good of all our residents.

I look forward to another year representing all the people in Brockholes, Helme, Honley, Meltham, Oldfield and Wilshaw and to doing my part to keep our villages special places in which to live. If you have an idea, issue or a concern, please get in touch – and I will do what I can to help.