

Liberal Democrats



Councillor Kath Pinnock Annual Report 2016 to 2017

Ward: Cleckheaton

Introduction

I continue to enjoy the privilege of being one of the 3 elected Liberal Democrat councillors for the Cleckheaton ward. As part of the councillor team, I am committed to doing my best to stand up for local people and the town so that we get a fair share of Kirklees Council services.

In May 2016, I was very pleased to be re-elected to serve the Cleckheaton ward with 56% of the vote cast. This is some indication of the trust that local people have in me and my fellow ward Councillors, John Lawson and Andrew Pinnock.

Council Meetings Attended:

I have attended meetings of Full Council. I have served on the Corporate Audit & Governance Committee; Kirklees Health & Well Being Board; Child Sexual Exploitation Panel; the Batley & Spen District Committee; Oakenshaw Forum; and the Spen Valley Neighbourhood Management Group.

Participation on Outside Bodies:

Since 2014, I have been a member of the House of Lords as a Life Peer. This has given me a wonderful opportunity of raising issues affecting local people in Parliament. I have spoken about the Government's plans to create a new "council" for West Yorkshire, possibly with an elected Mayor. I have spoken extensively about child care, planning, housing, Local Government finance, and education.

I continue to be a Governor at Whitcliffe Mount School. I have been closely involved with the planning for a new school building on the site. The school continues to provide very good outcomes for all students and it is very rewarding to be able to contribute to such a successful school which has served the local community for over 100 years. I am a trustee at the Scholes Village Shelter which has continued to improve its facilities.

I support the Friends of Scholes Rec and the Friends of West End Park and the Friends of Cleckheaton Library all of which are doing great work in sustaining and improving Council-owned facilities.

I have been appointed to the Council of the University of Huddersfield which is a good opportunity to improve the already positive links between the Council, the town and the university.

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.

I use **Twitter and Facebook** 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 on Twitter [@kathpinnock](https://twitter.com/kathpinnock) and I use #Cleckheaton for local issues and events. My Facebook page is at Cllr Kath Pinnock.

With my colleagues, I have campaigned on several major issues affecting local people which are a consequence of the significant reductions by Government funding for local government:

Cleckheaton Library: all three Cleckheaton councillors, led by Cllr Andrew Pinnock, and working with the Friends of Cleckheaton Library, have campaigned very hard to protect Cleckheaton Library and keep it in its current building. Fortunately, the campaign was successful and the Library will remain open and run by the Council though on much reduced opening hours and relying on volunteers. The latest data shows that Cleckheaton Library is the second best used library in Kirklees and the case is very well made to keep this flourishing library serving our community.

In another blow to local people, the Council adamantly refused to replace the **Whitcliffe Mount Sports Centre**. The current building has been demolished in order for the new school building to be constructed on the site while the school remains fully working in the existing building. The new school build will have a single sports hall for school use, and community use after school hours. However, this is a big reduction on what was there, and was very well used. We have continued to argue for a second sports hall to be built at the same time as the school building, sadly, the Council has failed to agree. Our **Save Spen Pool** campaign was organised and led by Ward colleagues Cllr John Lawson and Cllr Andrew Pinnock. Spenborough Pool was opened in 1969 and is built of concrete and is coming to the end of its life due to the quality of concrete used at the time. The Pool is on the Council's risk register. As a result of our strong campaign, the Council has agreed to build a replacement pool on the same site. We keep asking questions as to when it will be built with, so far, no definite date.

I am delighted that September 2017 will see the new school building at **Whitcliffe Mount** open its doors. As a governor of the school for many years I am very pleased that local young people will have modern learning facilities so they can make the most of their talents. What is sad is that the Foundation Building of the original school is to be demolished as part of the new development. We made the case for retaining the building before the contracts were signed and planning consent given. Cllr Andrew Pinnock asked the Spen Valley Civic Society to apply for the building to be listed which

they did. Historic England sadly turned the application down. The Council did not want to keep an Edwardian building with all the ongoing costs and asked for the building to be demolished as part of the development project.

I have continued to work closely with the local **Chamber of Trade** to get improvements to our town. The Chamber is very active and have done a huge amount to promote our town.

Westgate derelict site was cleared in 2012 and a planning application approved for 217 housing units. However, the manufacturing business in the centre of the site has to be re-located before development can start. There have been protracted negotiations about this but so far no solution.

Local Plan: the Council published their draft proposals for a new Local Plan which allocates land to be developed over the next 15 years for housing and business. There are a very large number of sites allocated in our ward. We ensured that all residents directly affected by the plan had a letter which provided information about the proposals and how to send in comments. We also distributed a FOCUS giving the information as it affects the whole ward to every household – 8,000. We also held a several public meetings in **Hunsworth** and supported residents in publicity about their objections.

Housing: several sites in Cleckheaton already have planning permission. When all these are built there will be an additional 600 new homes which is good news but we remain concerned at the consequent shortage of school places, GPs, and dentists. The lack of gulleys on part of **Bradford Road in Oakenshaw** has been a constant problem. Work has now been done to put in new surface water drains which should prevent the road from subsiding further. Following our constant complaints, the road will be re-surfaced from the church towards Chain Bar.

Friends of Scholes Rec.: plans for a major improvement to the Rec. were agreed by the village. We continue to help the Friends when they have planting or clearing days. I have continued to campaign with local residents against the plans by **Redrow** to build houses on virgin green fields round Lower Blacup farm which is one of the oldest buildings in Cleckheaton dating back to the early 16th century. Despite winning the

planning appeal, Redrow have not made a start on building. We will remain vigilant on this issue.

With my ward colleagues I have ensured that we tackle **speeding traffic** in Oakenshaw and Moorside / Moorbottom, Rawfolds, and Hunsworth Lane by the use of a Speed Indicator Device.

Mann Dam and the viaduct –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 on a very wide range of issues including housing, social care, speeding traffic, litter, council tax, school admissions, noise nuisance, anti-social behaviour, and many others.

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.

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.

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.

Contact me:

kath.pinnock@kirklees.gov.uk

0797 659 1945 or 01274 876995

@kathpinnock

Facebook - Cllr Kath Pinnock