

# Focus on Whickham North and Swalwell

Issue 181  
December  
2024

Liberal Democrats: 'None should be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity.'

## By-election result

Susan Craig has been elected as a councillor for Whickham North and Swalwell in the recent by-election in October, with a majority of 617 and a percentage vote of 64.6%.

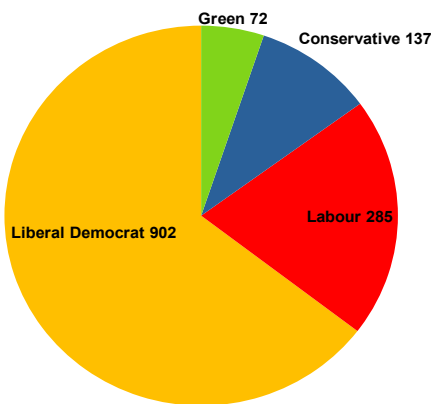


Susan said "May I take this opportunity to thank the people of Whickham and Swalwell for their support.

"I will continue to work hard for residents with my ward colleagues, Chris Ord and Peter Craig.

The three of us act together to make a strong team of active councillors who work hard for our area and speak up for residents.

We will continue to keep you up to date with issues and local news via our all year round Focus newsletters."



Back page:

News on Dunston Pool  
Swalwell plans rejected  
Post Box knitters  
Openreach telegraph poles  
Merry Christmas

## Warm Spaces details



Swalwell Community Centre is running a Warm Spaces project again this year.

Further details:

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/21258/Warm-Spaces-directory>

Following the new Labour government decision to remove the Winter Fuel Allowance for many people, It is important for folk to know where our local Warm Spaces (now renamed Warm Welcome) projects are running. "We are looking to see if we can use the Local Community Fund to support some of the projects." said Peter Craig.

- Fellside Methodist Church, Ancaster Road, Whickham NE16 5BQ
- Holy Trinity Church Hexham Road, Swalwell NE16 3AD
- Swalwell Community Centre, 74 Clavering Road, Swalwell NE16 3EX
- Whickham Volunteer Library, 9 St Mary's Green, Whickham NE16 4DN



## We will remember them



Councillor Susan Craig (above) laid a wreath on behalf of Whickham North residents on Remembrance Sunday at the cenotaph in Whickham.

"This is a very important event for Whickham." said Susan. "Residents turned out in large numbers to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice and 54 wreaths from people representing all sections of our community were laid."

And at the Swalwell War Memorial, Councillor Chris Ord (below) laid a wreath on behalf of the residents of Swalwell as part of the 28 wreaths that were presented by residents, community groups and local businesses.

"We must never forget the people who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we can continue to live in a free society." said Chris.





## Openreach poles

“Many residents from all over the ward have contacted us to say that notices have been posted in their street stating that Openreach intend to install a new telegraph pole.” reports Susan.

Peter has contacted the Council’s Planning Team for advice and reports “This is to improve the broadband network, some of which still uses very old technology.”

“By law, Openreach must inform Gateshead Council, but they do not need planning permission unless the proposed installation is over 15ft high.”

“But residents are still able to object to the proposals, as the installers are bound by The Electronic Communication Code Regulations (2003).”

“Please do contact us if you require further information.”



## Dunston Pool update

Plans to transfer the management of Dunston Swimming Pool from the council to a separate operator have been given a cautious welcome by your local Lib Dem Councillors **Susan Craig, Chris Ord** and **Peter Craig**.

The plans, approved by Gateshead Council’s all-Labour cabinet on 19th November, will see an outside operator step in to take over the management of the facilities, though they will continue to be council owned.

Chris reports: “The Labour Council have struggled with operating Dunston Pool and other facilities in Gateshead and three years ago were threatening to close Dunston pool.

“Lib Dem councillors fought against those plans and were pleased to see them withdrawn. The aim of this handover is to phase out the subsidy that council taxpayers contribute to the upkeep of the facility. It is also hoped that the external operator will carry out improvements to services provided from the building.”

“Three other leisure facilities in Gateshead will also be transferred to the as-yet unnamed operator. A decade ago they set out to end the subsidy but have failed to do so. We are hoping the transfer to specialist leisure facility operators will secure the long term future of Dunston pool.”



## Local knitters aim to ‘put a smile on your face.’



Above: A Halloween theme and Top right: Remembrance Day topper



Have you ever wondered how the post box decorations happen or where the Christmas angels that mysteriously appear in our community come from?

This is all the work of Whickham Woolly Minded Knitters - a local group who get together once a month for a cuppa and a chat - and produce knitted items for charitable causes.

They meet in The Bridle Path on the first Thursday of the month from 10:00 am until 12:00 and are always looking for new members, younger or older, male or female. The group are hoping to expand into other locations, so the more the merrier.

As well as knitting our local post box toppers, the group knits for the Needles and Hooks Angels and Preemies charity and for Feeding Families. But they do love to see people smiling when they see the knitted toppers.

If you can’t knit or crochet, don’t worry, there are plenty of other jobs to do, or just go along for a coffee. Everyone is welcome!

Find the group on Facebook: Whickham Woolly Minded Knitters

## Swalwell planning application recommended for refusal

**DC/24/00597/FUL**

A planning application for a change of use and conversion of the basement to form three residential units (Use Class C3) has been recommended for refusal by Council planning officers.

In October, residents met with Cllr. Peter Craig in Swalwell Community Centre to discuss the details of the application for 23 - 27 Clavering Road in Swalwell and to receive information regarding the planning process and how to make a comment either in favour or against the proposals.

29 objections have now been received and the application has been dealt with via officer delegated powers. The concerns included national space standards for the new dwellings, highways safety impacts and the effect on residential amenity.



**Merry Christmas...** and a Happy New Year from your Lib Dem Focus Team!



**Focus Team**

Facebook: Focus on NE16

Website:

[www.gatesheadlibdems.org.uk/](http://www.gatesheadlibdems.org.uk/)



Write to the team or call them:

**Peter and Susan Craig**

73 Whaggs Lane NE16 4PQ

Telephone 488 0787

**Chris Ord**

5 Calow Way NE16 5RP

Telephone 488 2545

