

Guildhall

GreenLight



The Newsletter of York Green Party

January 2016

Meeting to discuss future of local open spaces

Wednesday January 13th 2016

Friends Meeting House, Friargate YO1 9RL

6.30pm informal surgery,

7.00pm – 9.00pm formal meeting.

This Guildhall ward committee (as always) is open to all residents in the ward, so if you are getting this newsletter you are very welcome to come along and input your views and ideas!

The main item on the agenda will be the new funding arrangements for parks and open spaces in the ward. From 1st April 2016 we have to save £29,375 out of an annual ward budget of £107,995 and the following year a further £18,952. Alongside this we have been allocated specific funds to help make the changes and where possible support residents and community groups in taking on more responsibility for open spaces.

The budget includes Clarence Gardens, Tower Gardens, the inside and outside of the city walls, many churchyards in the ward, grass verges and numerous shrubbed areas, flower beds, flower tubs and hanging baskets.

Green Party ward councillor, Denise Craghill, says: 'The Green Party believes local Councils should have sufficient funding to keep our neighbourhoods clean and pleasant. We don't support these cuts but we need to work with what is proposed or else the ward will miss out on opportunities that are available. By working with residents some positive things can come out of this – but we also support the view put forward by 'friends' groups in the city that residents can't be expected to take on day-to-day core services.'

Guildhall ward councillors will bring some proposed ways forward to the meeting, considering the fact that the ward includes the majority of the city centre, enjoyed by all York residents. Please come and

join the discussion. The agenda will include a report on the other ward grants, as well as an opportunity from 6.30-7.00 to talk informally to councillors.

Floods

Many residents in Guildhall ward have been battling with flooding not seen in York since the 1980s, following the failure of the Foss Barrier. Cllr Denise Craghill says: 'I will be asking why the vulnerability of the electrics for the flood barrier and pumping station was not identified as a priority and will try to get someone to attend our ward committee on 13th Jan. to answer questions. These floods would still have been dreadful with the barrier in place but the impact is far worse without it.' For enquiries about assistance with the aftermath of the flooding contact City of York Council **01904 551550** or ycc@york.gov.uk or cllr.dcraghill@york.gov.uk

A Guildhall Green Party team litter picking in the Groves Lane area in late October. To register with the Council as a volunteer litter picker ring (01904) 551835 or 551816.



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Council lets down our worst-off residents

On 17th December, City of York Council agreed to reduce the amount that York's least well off residents have to pay in Council Tax by just 7.5%, despite consultation results and research reports showing that a much bigger reduction would make a lot more sense. Greens and Labour both submitted amendments proposing a reduction of 13% - the level suggested by Advice York.

Denise Craghill said: 'It was very disappointing that York Liberal Democrat councillors chose to continue supporting their Conservative coalition partners in keeping the bigger tax contribution when, acting together, we could have made a real difference, helping our worst-off residents out of a spiral of increasing debt.'



Fossil fuels and climate change

York Green Party members joined the thousands in London on 29th November calling for a global deal to hold climate change in check (pictured above). We will keep on working nationally and locally for Government to implement the commitments the UK made in Paris. See www.campaigncc.org for info.

Cllr Craghill calls for Bootham Park Hospital Closure Inquiry

As a member of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, Denise took part in the meeting which quizzed the five or six different NHS agencies involved in the closure of Bootham Park Hospital at 5 days' notice last September.

She said, 'The fracturing of the NHS into different organisations meant that no-one was responsible for bringing everyone together to avert the crisis. We need clear answers about how this happened, which is why I support York Central MP Rachael Maskell's call for a public enquiry – as well as the plan for the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee to look at what happened.'

Guildhall Ward Surgeries

Denise and the other Guildhall councillors will be running ward surgeries as follows in 2016:

Sat 23rd January, 10am – 12noon Sycamore House Reading Cafe, 30, Clarence Street (next to York St John University campus)

Sat 20th February, 9.30am – 11.00am Bicis y Mas Cycle Café, 59-63, Walmgate YO1 9TY

Sat 19th March, 10am – noon, York Explore Library Café, Museum St YO1 7DS

Sat 16th April, 10am – 12noon, Sycamore House

Sat 21st May, Walmgate area tbc.

Sat 18th June, 10am – 12noon, York Explore Café

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York Green Party, 15 Priory Street,
York YO1 6ET

Tel: (01904) 636239

Email: greengroup@york.gov.uk

Web: www.yorkgreenparty.org.uk

