

# Newington Matters

News from your local Town, District and County Councillors

DECEMBER 2018



## Protect our NHS for the future

### Vigil sends message to Health bosses

By Cllr Karen Constantine

**Dozens of concerned residents gathered in Margate for a candlelit vigil on 22nd November.**

We organised the event to raise awareness of current and proposed changes to our NHS services in Thanet. Changes include charging disabled blue badge holders to park, a decision which leaves me speechless.

Many supporters, including families and passers by, joined 10 of us to hold candles outside the Clinical Commissioning Group's Offices which are inside Thanet District Council.

It was very cold evening, but we handed out almost 1,000 leaflets and spoke to hundreds of people. The vigil was warm

and welcoming. We didn't sing or wave placards. We were very refined and subdued. Those present wanted to make a point about the fact that most people are now concerned about what is happening to our NHS in Thanet. It seems to be falling apart.

Some residents still don't know about the proposal to move the stroke unit out of QEQM to the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford.

Even though it had been very big news, people are unaware about the developing plans to change the hospitals in Kent.

As the Kent County Councillor with responsibility for the NHS I'm particularly worried about potential threats to the A&E and maternity unit.

**A Labour government will take 1 million people off the NHS waiting list.**

**Your Labour councillors in Newington:**



**Karen Constantine**  
Kent County Council  
Thanet District Council  
[karen@karen4labour.uk](mailto:karen@karen4labour.uk)



**Susan Kennedy**  
Ramsgate Town Council  
[laboursusan@gmail.com](mailto:laboursusan@gmail.com)



**We are concerned and angry about what is happening to our NHS in Thanet.**

**NO CUTS to A&E**  
**NO CUTS to Maternity**  
**NO CUTS to the Stroke Unit**  
**NO CUTS to GP local surgeries**  
**NO CUTS to our mental health services**

**Labour**

**Look out for our leaflets, posters and petition.**

***Labour will ban zero hours contracts – so that every worker gets a guaranteed number of hours each week.***



## **Your Councillor's Report**

**By Cllr Karen Constantine**

Representing Newington at Thanet District Council and Ramsgate at Kent County Council

There's been a lot of good stuff going on in Newington in recent months. We hope to bring back the 'Summer Kitchen' project soon, we are working on it. It was great fun in August thanks to all those who got involved.

A lot of my casework is concerned with housing and money. Or lack of it! There are some great local services who can assist you, CAB at the Green church and great advice (and coffee) at the Corner House on Newington road. I'm always pleased to support Newington residents in any way I can. Please call me.

Austerity is really biting now. I see the many ways it takes its toll on families, empty purses and wallets, insecure accommodation are no good for growing families.

Inequality seems to be growing unchecked. I'm especially interested to talk with local fathers about how they are managing. I'd be really grateful if you could contact me to help me put together a report I'm writing. Karen 07984 532212. I can assure you of confidentiality.

From getting your bins emptied, to getting the pot holes repaired, to supporting our fantastic local schools, assisting with stressful school appeals, to pushing TDC and KCC to do better, I am committed to fighting for improvements.

I hope you have a warm and safe winter, if I can help you please do get in contact.

Kind regards

Karen.

## ***DID YOU KNOW?***

***Your local Labour Councillors are campaigning for our kids' education.***

***Labour will ensure a decent education and a decent fair start for all our children.***

***When the 1945 Labour government established the NHS, it created one of the central institutions of fairness of the 20th century. The National Education Service, NES, will do the same for the 21st, giving people confidence and hope by making education a right, not a privilege, and building bridges where the Conservatives build barriers. We will protect our Sure Start Centres.***

## **My work experience with our local councillor has made a difference**



By Jay Reeves

For my week of work experience I shadowed our local District (Newington) and Ramsgate County Councillor, Karen Constantine.

Karen gave me the assignment of trying to help the local area to become pot hole free and to try to get the streets looking better and cleaner by getting the pot holes filled in. Being a local resident myself I have seen firsthand the damage that can be caused. I photographed and 'called in' dozens and dozens of pot holes. I like to think my work experience made a difference.

In my week of work experience I have developed great insight into the workings of local government both at Thanet District Council and at Kent County Council level.

I now know how our community is kept afloat and how vital local Government is.



Here I am with Labour Party member, Mark McGuinness at the start of the pot hole campaign.

# Little extras? You're having a laugh!



Chole Sadhu, a local Newington resident has written about education from her point of view.

With Philip Hammond's announcement of his so called 'little extras' for schools, this is just another point at the Conservative government not understanding the serious issues at hand.

If £1 billion can be given to the DUP then surely funding those who truly need it isn't hard.

The Tories easily let money slip out of their hands in order to prop up their government, yet they find it so hard to commit money to the public services that need it the most.

£400 million will not suddenly solve the fact that schools are unable to afford the essentials for children to thrive.

£400 million will not magically ensure that heating will be turned on throughout the day during the winter to keep pupils warm.

£400 million certainly won't secure decent salaries for teachers who work tirelessly and endlessly to make sure that students get the best education.

The pure audacity to give more money to potholes than to schools is simply nonsensical. As a country, we desperately need a radical change in the system. The Tories simply don't care.

We need a party that understands; that's the Labour Party. Under Labour and with Angela Rayner as the next Secretary of State for Education, we can be assured that we'll have a national education service that will overhaul the status quo.

The Tories can't go on for much longer extracting every last penny from education. They won't. We just need to make that happen.

***A Labour government will scrap the NHS pay cap and give our NHS workers the pay they deserve.***

## Kent County Council to slash Newington Library opening hours

We were utterly shocked and appalled to see how the opening hours at Newington's library are being cut from 40 hours per week to just 15.

These cuts are really disgraceful. Libraries are essential places, with many people using them on a regular basis. Once they are gone it will be very hard to bring them back.

There are so few other places people can go to in Newington. It is vital that we can visit the Library, not just to borrow books but also to get internet access and meet up with other people.

Also for our local students, it's a great place for them to study. Newington doesn't have a cafe or pub, so the Library is key.

Conservative controlled Kent County Council cannot be allowed to do this. They have a responsibility to address inequalities. We need to hold them to account.

It's great to see that an online petition has been started. Please take time to sign it.

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-newington-library>

Of all the proposed cuts, our Library is worst off.

### The weekly number and percentage of hours to be cut at Thanet Libraries:

Birchington	-3hrs	7%
Broadstairs	-18hrs	32%
Cliftonville	-12hrs	30%
Margate	-13hrs	23%
Minster	-10hrs	30%
<b>Newington</b>	<b>-25hrs</b>	<b>62%</b>
Ramsgate	-16hrs	30%
Westgate	-10hrs	26%

**Labour will implement a Minimum Wage of at least £10 per hour for all workers aged 18 or over.**



## **Leader's Column**

**By Cllr Jenny Matterface**

Is Universal Credit the current Tories' poll tax?

### **Introduced in 1990 the poll tax led to riots and eventually lost Margaret Thatcher her position as Prime Minister.**

Universal credit is six benefits rolled into one, paid four weekly to only one person in the household compared with some benefits being paid weekly or fortnightly to the individual claimant. Including housing benefit in the mix has led to tenants running up rent arrears to councils and housing associations totalling £24m nationally this debt building up has led to people being evicted. If there are rent arrears it is very difficult to get another rented property so families and couples end up in temporary accommodation that can be far from Thanet.

Families have been sent as far afield as Medway, Folkestone and Dover but with children in school and parents in work that has placed a huge burden on daily life.

Why has the change hit families so hard? For a start there is a delay in payment of officially five weeks probably going to be reduced to three, but for some the delays have been many weeks if there are complications in the claim so that rent isn't paid and when claiming universal credit all other benefits except child benefit stop. Only two children are counted and this impacts on families with children born after April 2017 in Thanet.

Paid once a month makes it very hard to budget as few have any savings to cover costs so other debts mount up

Families are struggling under our current benefits cuts, rising rents and low wages so universal credit makes life even tougher for families.

Most people receiving benefits are in employment and need a better deal from the government. Rents should be capped at a sensible local level. Benefits need to be more than just a sticking plaster and should keep pace with food and household costs.

## **FOR THE MANY NOT THE FEW**

### **Join The Labour Party**

Ever thought about joining us? Our membership is constantly growing.

The Labour Party is built on equality, social justice and compassion. Over half a million members share those values, and if you do too, then why not join us?

We invite you to join and to get involved in our local and national campaigns to improve our country for everybody.

From £3.00 per year for Students and £2.00 per month for others.

Call **0345 092 2299** or go on line **<http://www.labour.org.uk>**

### **Labour councillors in Newington are working with you to:**

- **sort out litter and rubbish problems**
- **improve children's play areas**
- **help with housing issues**
- **help with benefits issues**

#### **Winter surgery dates**

Monday 7th Jan 12noon - 2pm

Saturday 26th Jan 12noon - 2pm

at The Labour Party Office  
28-30 Newington Road

**Call Karen on 07984 532212**



Karen holds a surgery each month locally  
See [karen4labour.uk](http://karen4labour.uk) for details