

Marsh Community Centre Back on Track

After closing for a week following £3,500 of vandalism to the kitchen and office, the Marsh Community Centre has re-opened. The attack resulted in broken kitchen equipment—such as the microwave, freezer and hob —, smashed cupboards and a broken lock on the office door. A local man pleaded guilty to the offence in court. Centre manager Rebecca Novell will be leaving the centre in September to take up a position at the County Council working with refugees.

Next Lune Clean-Up in September

Following the successful clean-up of the estuary bank in April, another event will be held on September 22nd, from 10-12. Meet at the bottom of Aldcliffe Hall Lane or at Conder Green car park. Bags, pickers and gloves will be available but please bring your own if you can. At the April event (pictured), around 30 people attended at Aldcliffe, and a further 15 at Conder Green.



**Volunteers and rubbish from
first clean-up in April**

Green Investigation Shows that Labour Administration is Wasting Taxpayers' Money

Green Party councillors say that the Labour administration is undermining the City Council's finances by spending money on highly-paid agency posts and consultants. The administration also supported a top management restructure likely to add even more to the council's wage bill. Lancaster City Council is currently spending up to £5,400 per week on just two of its interim agency posts whilst planning to create three highly-paid director jobs.



In a separate examination of the City Council's accounts, it was found that the former head of Regeneration and Planning was given a pay-off of £35,000 and two months' salary. Marsh Ward councillor Jon Barry said:

"There is no need for the City Council to be filling posts with expensive agency staff. And to give large pay-offs to staff who have resigned is a poor use of taxpayers' money. Clearly, Labour's lack of grip on the council's finances will result in unnecessary service cuts and Council Tax rises in future years."

Greens welcome new opportunity to develop the Canal Corridor

Green councillors are delighted that the City Council has finally given up on an outdated retail-dominated scheme for the development site between St Leonardgate and Moor Lane, and terminated its agreement with British Land. Instead a new proposal for a mixed use 'Canal Quarter' has been drawn up, which bears a striking resemblance to the approach that the Greens have been promoting since 2006.

Cllr Nick Wilkinson said: *"In the last two years alone, the Labour-led Council has spent £288,000 on external consultants, and wasted thousands of hours of officer time pursuing a development that was never going to stack up financially, and had never been to public consultation."*

"The scheme's inevitable collapse provides an opportunity for the City Council to really listen to residents and local businesses, and develop a unique scheme for Lancaster".

Ashton Memorial turns blue for ME awareness week

After a request from Scotforth green councilor Abi Mills, the Ashton Memorial was shining blue for ME awareness week in May. ME is a debilitating illness which affects 250,000 people in the UK. At County Hall, Cllr Gina Dowding (pictured) was delighted to get cross party support in her call for MPs to promote more research into ME and more care for sufferers.



Cllr Gina Dowding

Parking Consultation promised

Following widespread dissatisfaction with the County Council's new residents' parking regime, it has promised to consult all residents about the new permit arrangements 'later this year'. At a very well attended public meeting organised by Green councillors in April, County's Parking Manager also agreed to reintroduce carer's permits, and to conduct reviews of some parking zones.

Cllr Dave Brookes said: *"Normal practice is to consult on changes before they are made, not after, but residents will now at least get an opportunity to make their views known, and Green councillors will continue to push for a system that actually works for Lancaster."*

Council speeds up adaptations for disabled residents

Green councillors welcomed the private occupational therapists (OTs) taken on by City Council officers to speed up assessments for home adaptations.

Cllr Tim Hamilton-Cox said: *"The city council is doing as much as it can to shorten the waiting times for people struggling to cope in their homes. The long-standing delays experienced waiting for Lancashire county council's OTs have been unacceptable. We congratulate officers on their decisive action."*

Dance for fun and health

Ludus Dance community charity, based above the Assembly Rooms on King Street, is introducing new classes in September for adults and children. For more information please visit www.ludusdance.org or contact the team on 01524 35936 or info@ludusdance.org.



Railings on Quay

Many of the railings bordering the river have rusted badly. Green councillors have asked the City Council to carry out a full safety check.

Townley Close Flooding

Some Townley residents have suffered badly over the last year after blocked drains led to silt and water flooding garages and front gardens. County engineers have pledged to install new gulleys and to ask the owner of the private road above Townley Close to try to prevent mud washing from their land.

Long Marsh Lane Gardens

The Long Marsh Lane Community Gardens Group raised £55 at their annual summer picnic on Furness Street Green. The group has worked to enhance the Green whilst still awaiting agreement with the developers of the Luneside East site, which would allow a plot of land off Long Marsh Lane to be developed into a community garden.

Assembly Rooms Wi-Fi

Wi-fi has finally been installed in the Assembly Rooms, on King Street. The new café Rustic Bakes (rusticbakeslancaster.co.uk) is also open for business.

Quay Flooding

Prompted by many complaints by residents, Cllr Gina Dowding has been trying to resolve surface flooding at the west end of St George's Quay for many years. Finally, surveys by the County

Council show that the problem has been caused by the flood defence wall, built by the Environment Agency. The agency has been asked to remedy the situation by the end of October.

Freeman's Wood

The Freeman's Wood Town Green application was to be published by the County Council in mid-July. Whether there are objections to the application will dictate how it is dealt with.

Chancellor's Wharf

A planning application (18/00570/FUL) has been made by the university to install security gates, walls, a hedge and signage, all to dissuade members of the public from using the footpaths across Chancellor's Wharf as a pedestrian through-route. This is despite a legal agreement signed at the time of the original construction requiring a defined public footpath route through the site to be maintained 'at all times'. The university also intends to discourage people using the path around the blocks, next to the canal. Gina Dowding said: *"We are against the university's proposals. These footpath routes are well-used and need to be preserved."*

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