



## Local campaigner and Moreton resident: Debbie Caplin

Debbie lives in Moreton and grew up here with her family. Debbie previously campaigned in the EU Referendum, opposing Labour's attempts to 'remain', ignoring the views of so many Labour supporters. Then, following work with former Leasowe & Moreton East Councillor Ian Lewis, Debbie was put forward to be our new, truly local councillor.



# First 32,000 vaccinated locally

**By the end of February, 31,749 people in the Wallasey Constituency had received the first dose of the vaccination.**

**Thanks to a huge effort by the NHS staff and volunteers, 20 million people across the UK have had their jab of the new coronavirus vaccine.**

The vaccine roll-out in care homes in England began a week before Christmas. Since then, the rate of vaccination has increased as more doses become available.

The vulnerable and most at risk are being given priority. So far,

this includes 4,381 people aged over 80 in our area as well as frontline health and social care workers.

Here in Wirral, vaccination centres have been set up at Clatterbridge, Woodchurch Leisure Centre and The Oval in Bebington as well as GP centres.

While the UK leads the way in the vaccination effort, the NHS continues to expand the supply to help everyone get back to normal in the coming months.

Thanks also to the Government's Vaccines Taskforce, 400 million doses have been ordered.

Patients require two doses of the vaccine for the vaccine to be at its most effective.

Vaccination is only available from the NHS and is free. Wirral's GPs and hospitals are now vaccinating thousands each week.

More details can be found on our [www.wallaseyconservatives/coronavirus](http://www.wallaseyconservatives/coronavirus)

## All rough sleepers homed

**When the pandemic started, councils, including Wirral, were instructed by the Government to provide accommodation for all those who were homeless or sleeping rough.**

The instruction was backed up with hard cash - as part of more than £170 million given to Wirral Council by the Government to help with the effects of the pandemic locally.

This enabled some of the local housing associations, homeless charities and the Council's housing staff to ensure all rough sleepers were found accommodation.

A further 774 people have been found short-term or permanent housing, including people at risk of becoming homeless

It has also emerged that the usual grant the council receives for supporting homeless and rough sleepers will be increased again - from £301,000 last year to £513,000 this year.

## Inside:

### Ditton Local Nature Reserve:

Debbie is campaigning with residents for this site to be classed as a new 'Local Green Space' in the Council's Local Plan. More details on [Page 2](#)

### Supporting the least well off:

The National Minimum Wage will rise to £8.91 from next month. The extra £20 a week for Universal Credit will continue for a further six months.

### Relocating Castleway:

The Council has announced Castleway Primary is to be relocated to the Early Years Centre, with the land sold for housing. See [Page 3](#)

### Road and pavement repairs:

Debbie and the team have submitted a further list of road and pavements for repair, following last year's campaign that saw £10m used for works: [Page 4](#)



## Reporting back...

### More allotments:

Following a campaign by residents and Wirral Allotment Society, the council has agreed to invest £127,000 to provide more allotment plots around the Borough.

### New members:

Welcome to those residents who have joined us over the last 12 months. Every new member makes us that bit stronger. It costs just over £2 a month and details are at [www.conservatives.com/join](http://www.conservatives.com/join)

### New Freeport on the way:

The Port of Liverpool is to be one of eight new freeports set up now we've left the EU; attracting more international trade, creating new jobs.

### 372 more police:

Merseyside Police Force has so far recruited 372 new police officers, as part of the national plan to put 20,000 additional police on the beat.

The Force has also seen an additional £19 million awarded for its budget this year by the Home Office.

### Future High Streets:

The Council has, so far, been awarded £3.2 million for New Ferry and £24.6m for Birkenhead town centre improvements from the Government's Future High Streets Fund. We are also pushing for cash to be used to improve Liscard and Moreton, both of which have been left behind by the Council for too long.

### New CCTV:

Clapped out and faulty council CCTV cameras at various places around the Borough are set to be replaced, whether on council buildings or in public areas. As well as helping to make communities safer, the move will also help to reduce the running costs of the old equipment.

# (Finally) getting the lights fixed at Leasowe Rec

**While the Council invests in new street lighting around the Borough, it's been revealed that not all council lighting has been run by the Council's street lighting department.**

Following requests from residents, we discovered that different departments have been managing different street lights, depending on where the lights are.

The lights on the approach road to Leasowe Recreation Centre and Leasowe Community Centre have been faulty for years.

The Street Lighting Department has now agreed to take on the responsibility of lighting here, and to replace the current lights with more modern units.

This will help those residents who visit and use either centre,

especially late at night or in the winter months.

Former local Councillor Ian Lewis (and mask) seen here with Debbie

Caplin said: "Let's hope this is sorted once and for all. The Rec and the Community Centre will be back in use soon - it would be great to having the lights by then."



## Special Report: draft Local Plan published soon

# Ditton Nature Reserve update

**Many residents will be aware that the council has been in breach of a 2004 Act of Parliament, passed by the previous Labour Government, requiring a 'Local Plan' to be produced.**

Every council is required to produce a Local Plan, to consult residents and to then have it approved by an independent inspector.

The plan designates how land in each area should be protected or developed, where houses should be built or new industrial sites located.

Since Labour lost their majority in the Town Hall, all parties have been working together to produce a draft Local Plan for residents to read and is due out soon.

One part of the plan includes designating some land as 'Local Green Space'.

Debbie and local campaigners have nominated the privately-owned Ditton Local Nature Reserve for protection.

The site was first initially up for sale with estate agent Clive Watkin & Partners, before being withdrawn by the owners, following opposition from people living nearby on Ditton Lane and Reeds Lane areas, backed by Debbie.

Debbie said: "We can't leave this important local green space at the mercy of the property speculators.

"The long-delayed Local Plan gives us the opportunity to give this site the added protection of becoming a Local Green Space - sending a clear signal to

developers that it's off limits."

The Council will, shortly, start consulting with residents on the draft Local Plan, including this site. It's important for residents to give their backing to it.



Debbie said: "Too many green spaces, especially on the flood plain, have been built on. Ditton Nature Reserve must not be the next one."



# Councillors vote to relocate Castleway Primary to the Early Years Centre

**On March 1, Councillors voted to move Castleway Primary School to the Early Years Centre on Twickenham Drive.**

The plan would see the existing site on Castleway North released for new housing.

Residents living nearby have been asking about the future of the land

for some years, but rumours had always been denied by the council.

Now, the Council's budget for 2021/22 includes spending £1.2 million to make the move possible. The costs are likely to be easily recovered from the sale of the land to a house builder.

The three current councillors for this area voted for the plan.

Local campaigner Debbie Caplin said: "So far, there has been little consultation with residents about this proposal.

"Relocating a school always causes disruption to children and their families, while the neighbours of the current site will be concerned about the impact of more housing in an area that already suffers from flooding."

## Better deal for tenants of housing associations on the way

**Last year, before the pandemic started, Debbie and the team met with tenants about some of the issues they were having with their social landlords.**

Several had been in touch

following concerns that their housing association was not acting on issues and complaints.

Now, the Government is proposing tougher standards for housing associations and a better deal for residents.

The Ministry of Housing is also consulting on better measures to

detect fires and carbon monoxide in social housing. Debbie and the team have responded, backing the proposals.

Last month, Debbie wrote to 1,500 residents and tenants of housing associations, to ask for their views. You can also take part online at [www.wallaseyconservatives.com/housing](http://www.wallaseyconservatives.com/housing).



**Leasowe Road is one of the roads in our area that has been planted with new trees - 15 Himalayan Birch trees and 15 Cockspur Thorn trees - in case you wanted to know!**

**Last year, Debbie and the Action Team asked residents to nominate areas in our community for new trees, following an extra grant from the Government. Thank you to everyone who replied.**

The Council has now started planting at many of the sites suggested, including 30 new trees on Leasowe Road; 10 off Blackheath Drive; 10 on Castleway North; 20 in Meadowside and 20 along Twickenham Drive.

The trees are a mix of varieties, designed to be suitable for the roadside.

Debbie Caplin welcomed the planting: "The trees not only help to improve the local area, they will also help to reduce flooding and air pollution.

"More than 200,000 extra trees are going to be planted in Wirral and I'm delighted Leasowe and Moreton will be getting a share of them."

## Local issues, local action...

### Rubbish along the Birket:

Following complaints from residents, Debbie has asked the Council to remove accumulated litter along the River Birket.

### New litter bins:

Many of our local litter bins are damaged or worn and look a mess. We have urged the Council to apply for a share of a new Government fund to install new litter bins.

### Grass verges:

Following redeployment of the crew to Covid-related work in the summer, many of our local grass verges became a bit of a mess.

As the cutting got back on track, Debbie has asked for 'spade edging' to verges in the following roads:

- Pasture Road,
- Murrayfield Drive
- Ravenhill Crescent
- Castleway North
- Farmside
- Blackheath Drive
- Reeds Lane
- Leasowe Road

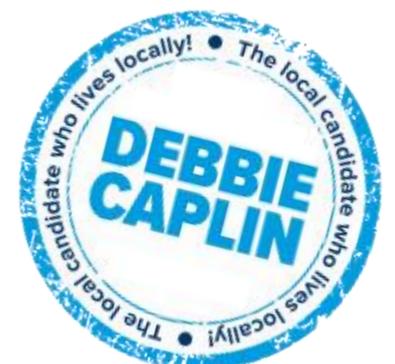
Some of the work has already been carried out - we expect the rest to be completed soon.

### Boost for local mums:

Mums in Leasowe and Moreton are set to benefit from the national new Health and Wellbeing Fund.

A project in the borough is one of 19 around the country to help to promote nutrition, learning, language development and mental health during pregnancy and post-birth.

Wirral-based Koala North West, working with The Foundation Years Trust, will deliver services targeted at 0-2 year olds until March 2023. Koala's current services will expand to target Leasowe and Moreton and provide support to improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and support children to thrive.



Join us at: [www.conservatives.com/join](http://www.conservatives.com/join)



## Covid-19: help is available!

So far, Wirral Council has been given more than £200 million extra by the Government to support those residents and local businesses that have been hardest hit by the pandemic.

Coronavirus has affected the financial situation of many of our residents.

### If you are struggling:

The 'Ask Us Wirral' service run by Citizens Advice Wirral can help if you need specialist benefits, debt or housing advice.

Call 0808 278 7848 and if the line is busy, leave a message for the team to get back to you.

You can also get advice if you have become unemployed, or are self-employed and this has resulted in changes to your income. Call the Citizens Advice Wirral 'Help to Claim' team on 0800 144 8444.

### Business support:

Helping businesses to survive, and protect jobs, is a priority for the Government and the Council.

A package of financial measures to support businesses during the COVID-19 outbreak has seen more than £50 million worth of grants issued by the Council, as well as national schemes such as furlough, self employed income support scheme and bounce back loans.

Further information is available from Wirral Chamber of Commerce which has opened a Business Support Helpline on 0151 650 6982 or by email to [policy@wirralchamber.co.uk](mailto:policy@wirralchamber.co.uk)

Keep a look out at [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) for all the latest advice and information - and remember to be wary of potential scams or fraudulent calls.

# Road repairs: a lot done, a lot to do

One of the top complaints from Leasowe and Moreton residents when the one-party 'Cabinet' ran the council was road repairs.

Too often, it seemed that roads, street lights and pavements in Birkenhead were given priority, while our area was left behind.

Now, following the scrapping of the Cabinet, the way in which money is allocated is decided by all-party committees.

Debbie and the team have been pushing for a fairer share of the Council's highways budget to be spent in Moreton and Leasowe.

**Roads and/or pavements we are asking for in the 2021/22 programme include:**

Murrayfield Drive, Ravenhill Crescent, Castleway South, Farmside, Wakefield Drive, Blackheath Drive, Birket Avenue and Leasowe Road.

## Scramblers: three more arrests

Three more people have been arrested by Merseyside Police, following complaints about scrambler bikes.

Inspector Bernard McHugh said: "Through Operation Brookdale, we will continue to work to eradicate the illegal use of these bikes, and I would like to emphasise how important the help of the public is in doing this. If you know of where these bikes are being ridden or stored, let us know so we can take action.

Anyone with information on the anti-social and nuisance use of off-road bikes or knows where off-road bikes are being stored illegally is encouraged to keep reporting incidents to call the police on 101 or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111



Highways Inspectors are assessing the roads and pavements requested by Debbie and will report back soon on which will be repaired, replaced or resurfaced.

Following our request, Inspectors from the Highways Department will now visit each one to see if they meet the criteria for being repaired or resurfaced. This will then go to a committee of the Council for approval, with work then scheduled for those roads and

pavements that are agreed. Work can take place anytime from April this year until March next year.

Thanks to everyone who contacted us - it's not too late to ask for repairs, go to: [www.wallaseyconservatives.com/roads](http://www.wallaseyconservatives.com/roads)

## A tale of two wards:

Last year, with the impact of the pandemic, more people than ever were needing help and support.

The latest figures released by the Town Hall under the Freedom of Information Act show that, here in Leasowe and Moreton East, your three Labour Councillors made 46 requests for help on behalf of residents.\*

In next door Wallasey Ward, the three local Conservative Councillors made 213 requests.

See the difference?

\* Requests made via the Councillor.Net system. Source: What Do They Know. com

**213 requests for help for local residents made by the three local Conservative councillors in next door Wallasey Ward**

**46 requests for help in 2020 made by your three Labour Councillors**

