

Labour Local

ALL ABOUT THE DEVIZES CONSTITUENCY

April
2022



Cat Brown, our voice on Town Council

It is great to be back on Devizes Town Council as a Labour Councillor, representing Devizes South Ward.

Things have certainly changed since I served last time — from 1999 to 2007 (Mayor 2002–2003).

I'm really pleased that the town council has taken over services that were run by Kennet DC until 2009 when Wiltshire Council took them over. It is better that we now have



Picture by Bob Naylor

Cat Brown, Devizes Town Councillor for the South Ward

direct responsibility for them. I am determined that the council gets value

for money wherever we have to spend it. I sit on the newly formed Finance Scrutiny Committee.

The long-term sustainability of Devizes Markets, particularly The Shambles, is very important to me.

I am always keen to hear about anything you would like me to raise on your behalf. So please get in touch at:

catherine.brown@devizes-tc.gov.uk

Health services for Devizes update



Picture by Bob Naylor

Work underway on the long-awaited health centre in Marshall Road, Devizes

Work has finally started on the new Integrated Care Centre in Devizes, but will it provide all the services the community expects?

Labour members have led and supported campaigns over the past 30 years to save the hospital with all its previous services. They have all been met with broken promises. Once described as the Urgent Care Service, we

now know that the new Integrated Care Centre will not include a walk-in minor injuries unit or A&E.

There will be no in-patient beds and mothers in labour will still have to travel the best part of an hour to give birth.

The fight for the services we need must continue.

[READ MORE](#)

Youth services need a reboot

Wiltshire Council has savagely cut spending on youth services in the county over recent years and the Labour Party is campaigning for increased funding.

The pandemic has put extra strains on young people's mental health and wellbeing, so properly funded, professionally run services have never been more necessary.

In February Wiltshire Council met with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Danny Kruger MP and others to talk about youth services — or lack of them.

Danny Kruger asked: "How we can do more with the tight public budgets we have?" And this is a good question, since the Tory Council slashed £500,000 from the budget in 2014.

Danny Kruger went on to say: "The answer lies in mobilising communities themselves". But relying on overstretched volunteers to fill the gap won't deliver the better deal that young people need.

Find out how you can get involved on our website.

[READ MORE](#)

It's been nice knowing you, Devizes . . .

The latest proposed changes from the Boundary Commission will leave communities around Devizes isolated from their natural centre. Devizes and villages to the west will form part of a new "Melksham and Devizes" constituency.

But Rowde, Roundway, Horton, Coate and Etchilhampton, Urchfont and Lydeaway, and the Lavingtons, will be split from Devizes. Rowde and Roundway will be added to the Chippenham constituency. The others will form part of a new "East Wiltshire" constituency.

This rearrangement makes no sense to the communities involved. The limited public transport that we have links these communities to Devizes, not to Marlborough. Secondary school for most children will be in Devizes. Most people in these communities will have GPs based in Devizes. But their MP will have no interest in or influence over what happens in Devizes.

It makes much more sense to align the boundary with Wiltshire Council's Area Board. We can only hope the Electoral Commission takes notice of this.

We want to hear from you about:

- Issues that affect you
- Your views on local matters
- Ways that you can help us to make a difference in our area
- We will be supporting Swindon South in the May local elections — get in touch if you would like to join the team

Email us at:
info@devizeslabour.org.uk

Levelling down in Wiltshire? Labour and Trade Unions sound the alarm about the cost of living crisis

Labour Group Leader Cllr Ricky Rogers spoke up for care workers as Wiltshire Council tried to cut unsocial hours pay.

Local government funding cuts and Tory tax increases are putting pressure on the Council. But unsocial hours payments are key to retaining frontline staff such as care workers and social workers.

They face a pay cut of between 10% and 20%. After uproar from staff, the cuts have been paused but not taken off the table.

Facing an uncertain future, many staff have already left or are looking for other jobs. This will affect everybody who

needs the services they provide.

In a ballot, 97% of GMB members voted to reject the cuts and on 26th March they held a rally outside County Hall when they demanded: "Wiltshire Council hear us say, not a penny off our pay".

These proposed cuts are due to come in just as council tax and energy cost increases are hitting us all. Inflation is at a 30-year high and a decade of austerity measures has hit the most vulnerable. People are worried sick.

Labour stands alongside all the staff affected and calls for these vital staff payments to be retained. [READ MORE](#)



Picture by Carole Vallely

GMB workers employed by Wiltshire Council demonstrate against planned pay cuts outside County Hall, Trowbridge.

Communities come together to support Ukraine



Crowds gather in Devizes Market Place for an hour long silent vigil in support of the people of Ukraine on March 2nd.

People throughout the Devizes Constituency have come together to support Ukraine and sign up to offer room in their homes to the refugees when they start arriving.

Many individuals and groups throughout the constituency have already been organising collections and some have even travelled to Poland to transport essentials to those in need.

Frustration has been expressed at the bureaucracy and difficulties encountered with visa applications. Shadow Home Secretary Yvette Cooper MP has

described the visa system as "mired in bureaucracy and delay". Even our local MP Danny Kruger has said he "regrets the many stories of delay and bureaucracy" and that "we have to do more, and more quickly".

Locally, community organisers say that local networks can be used to check on people who are offering to take in refugees and that DBS checking must be simplified as it was during the pandemic. But Cllr Laura Mayes was clear, when she spoke in Devizes recently, that Wiltshire Council must follow the Government guidelines.

Picture by Bob Naylor

Future Labour Party members' meetings

Labour Coast and Country Campaign

By Jonathan Wallcroft

Proportional Representation with a speaker from Labour for a New Democracy

Further details will be sent by email

Find us at

Web: www.devizeslabour.org.uk

Facebook: [@devizeslabour](https://www.facebook.com/devizeslabour)

Twitter: [@devizeslabour](https://twitter.com/devizeslabour)

Email: info@devizeslabour.org.uk

Local history

Thirty seven Pewsey Vale men were transported to Australia in 1830 for their part in the Swing Riots.

Their story is told in a new history information board beside the River Avon in Pewsey thanks to local historian Richard Giles.

After suffering several years of declining wages and already facing starvation, they feared destitution when threshing machines threatened their jobs. They took things into their own hands, wrecking the machines and setting fire to



The history information board beside the river in Pewsey

Picture by Bob Naylor

hayricks. They were sentenced to transportation for 7 years, but none ever returned home.

Watching Danny Kruger



During the General Election Hustings Danny Kruger said that he would represent all his constituents in parliament, whoever they voted for — but that's not always reflected in his voting record!

You can keep an eye on his parliamentary activities by visiting: www.TheyWorkForYou.com

Also look at www.dannykruger.org.uk where you can sign up for his weekly newsletter to read what he says he's been up to — and find out where you can meet him in person to question or challenge him. He is holding meetings around the constituency as well as visiting local pubs from time to time.