

## SUPPORT FOR ELTHAM'S SHOPS

### Pro-small business budget backs up local efforts

Local Conservative Councillors Charlie Davis and Spencer Drury welcomed the Autumn Budget's support for small business as reinforcing their own efforts to help Eltham's shops thrive.

The Chairman of the Federation for Small Businesses greeted the Budget with the words "The Chancellor has shown that he is now listening to the small business community" pointing to action on High Streets, VAT and the Employment Allowance as highlights.

In Eltham, the Budget will help reinforce Charlie's and Spencer's efforts to support our shops which have included arguing for free parking on Glenlea Road at the weekends, trying to prevent the removal of parking spaces on Well Hall Road (see overleaf) and successfully reducing the price of parking permits for businesses at the top of the High Street from



Councillors Charlie Davis and Spencer Drury are working for Eltham's shops.

£400 to £200. Also following complaints from residents & shoppers about a range of issues, including parking around the High Street, Charlie and Spencer have asked for the publication of the review of the Eltham Regeneration report in the New Year.

Charlie commented "Parking remains a concern around Eltham, but the Labour Council opposes the reintroduction of free parking which is essential for our area to be able to compete with Woolwich and Charlton. We will keep working to support all of our shops."

## WARD BUDGETS RETURN FOR 2018-2022

Following a motion proposed by Eltham Councillor Spencer Drury at the June 2018 meeting of the Full Council, it has been agreed that the 'Ward Budget' scheme will be reinstated for this administration.

The 'Ward Budget' scheme was originally proposed by Spencer prior to being adopted by the Council in 2015. It allows each ward £30,000 to spend on local projects over the next four years. Previous bids for funds proposed by Spencer and Cllr Charlie Davis included the re-etching of the names on the Eltham War Memorial, a van for the Greenwich Foodbank and reading sheds at the Gordon School. If you have an idea which would benefit our community, please do contact Spencer or Charlie to see how the Ward Budget may be able to help.

## DEFENDING OUR SCHOOLS

With GCSE results in English and Maths for Greenwich marked as the lowest in London for 2018, the Labour Council has attacked schools becoming academies in our Borough. At October's Council meeting Labour Councillors described some academy chains as "ruthless and predatory" and opposed John Roan's conversion despite low results in recent years.

Spencer argued for making the right choice for students rather than a dogmatic political opposition to a form of governance which has helped many schools.

## CONCERNS OVER COUNCIL HOUSE REPAIRS

Despite Backbench Councillor pressure and a campaign to address damp in Council properties by Cllr Spencer Drury, concerns remain about the performance of the repairs service.

At a recent meeting, Spencer questioned the Council's target of 92% for the proportion of appointments kept for non-emergency repairs. Greenwich's performance of 92.93% looked like a success, however, the worst performing Councils in London (4th quartile) achieve 93.4% and the average is 95.8%. So Greenwich's target is to be among the worst in London, which it achieved. The work being done by Backbench Councillors to address this issue is ongoing.



Conservatives campaigned hard on the state of Council housing in May

# IMPROVING ELTHAM'S CYCLING QUIETWAY

*A story of how democracy fails to improve decision making in Greenwich*

In September a cross-party committee of Councillors heard from Cllr Spencer Drury, Cllr Charlie Davis, cyclists and local businesses before voting unanimously to ask the Cabinet Member in charge of a scheme to improve cycling through Eltham to revise their plans as they had got the 'Quietway' route wrong. By the start of October, the Cabinet Member had decided to ignore all of the objections and push ahead with the scheme without any alteration.

Local Eltham Councillors Spencer and Charlie decided to 'Call-In' the 'Quietway' cycling route plan as it removed parking from Well Hall Road near to the railway bridge, making it harder for customers to visit shops and Dunvegan Road looked a difficult road for beginner cyclists to ride down, with a hard junction to cross at Westmount Road. Spencer and Charlie's

concerns were reinforced by conversations with local shops (especially the florist) who were worried about the impact making it harder to park would have on their business. On the evening, of the meeting a representative of Greenwich Cyclists turned up to reinforce the argument that the parallel Glenlea Road would be a much better, safer route for cyclists than the busy, car filled Dunvegan Road. Having also heard from the Cabinet Member and Council Officers, the committee of two Labour and one Conservative Councillors (all of whom were Eltham based) agreed with the concerns and asked for the plan to be reviewed.

Less than a month later the Cabinet Member published another report on the Eltham Quietway ignoring all of the

objections made in favour of the initial plan.

Charlie said "I was shocked that the Council refused to listen to the concerns of almost everyone affected by this project. Spencer and I genuinely hoped that once the Call-In Committee had decided our concerns were valid there would be a serious rethink but instead the Woolwich based Council simply ignored Eltham once again. We will keep trying, but this story shows why a strong Opposition is vital."



Charlie and Spencer spoke with shop owners when the decision was published.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT A REVIEW OF THE 2018 COUNCIL ELECTIONS

“ The three of us would like to thank everyone who took the time to vote for us in the May 2018 Council elections.

In Eltham North, there was an expectation that Labour would take all three seats, but in the end we managed to retain the two seats we already held, although unfortunately Brenda could not take the third one. It was very close with Charlie topping the poll with 2,195 votes and the fourth placed candidate only 56 votes behind.

Elsewhere in Greenwich there was no change, with 42 seats held by Labour and 9 by the Conservatives. The new Plumstead Party made an impact in the north east of the Borough but did not take any seats.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve. As in previous years Charlie and Spencer will continue to provide a strong voice for Eltham on the Council and clear opposition to the Labour Party. If you have any issues, please do to get in touch.

*Charlie, Spence and Brenda*



## YOUR LOCAL CONSERVATIVE TEAM



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## Council stops listening

By the end of October 2018, the new Labour Council had decided on a strategy of undermining democracy in Greenwich. They immediately restricted the ability of Opposition Councillors to ask questions, put public consultation meetings on hold and voted through a controversial £15,000 pay rise for their own members. No compromise with those don't agree was the clear message.