

**NORTH  
EAST**

The North East Party



**Think  
Bigger.**

**2018 MANIFESTO**

# FOREWORD

The North East Party was founded in May 2014.

We are a progressive, democratic political party which is building from the grass roots in North East England, we are one of many regional parties developing across the UK and the world.

We contest elections at all levels. In 2017 we won the majority of seats on Peterlee Town Council and three seats on Durham County Council.

We have a monthly all members meeting, a monthly executive and an Annual General Meeting. Everybody who shares our commitment to North East England is very welcome to join.

Help us build the North East Party & let's change North East England for the better, for all its people.

**Mary Cartwright**  
**Leader of The North East Party**  
**and Mayor of Peterlee**



# OUR VALUES

Everybody matters, everybody is important.

Everybody is entitled to accurate information, to be able to participate, to have the chance to vote and the opportunity to have their say.

Everybody should have a fair share of the world's resources and an equal opportunity to make what they will of their lives without harming others.

We don't expect the people of North East England to be treated any better than people anywhere else, but we will never accept that they are treated any worse. We will always stand up for the best for North East people and our region.

We encourage people to be ambitious for themselves for their families and communities. We refuse to accept that 'things will always be this way' or 'nothing can be done.' We support local people in demanding ever better standards where they live.

We believe in the principle of subsidiarity, that social and political issues should be dealt with at the most

local level that is consistent with their resolution. That's why we support Devolution.

Political Parties can bring people together to campaign coherently and democratically in pursuit of common policies. However, we support independent thought, value conscience and always promote accountability to people over Party.

We enjoy and seek out opportunities for debate. We listen to others and will work together respectfully & openly with others at every opportunity.

We will always campaign with respect, warmth and a sense of humour.

Democratic politics is really important because it's how ordinary people, people like us, can change the world. Politics is about giving people a proper say in the big issues, so that we can all have better lives. Politics is simple and exciting. Those telling us otherwise are just trying to keep us in our place.

We campaign for change.



# OUR PLAN

**BUILD**  
A MOVEMENT



**REPRESENT**  
COMMUNITIES AS COUNCILLORS



**ELECT**  
ACCOUNTABLE MPs



**DEMAND**  
REGIONAL DEVOLUTION AND FAIR FUNDING

# REGIONAL RENEWAL

**We want a fair share of the prosperity of the United Kingdom, nothing more or less than that enjoyed by people in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This would produce an annual bounty for our region; compounded by savings from integrating public services at regional level and running them much better, with improved quality and greater value for money.**

## **One strong voice for the region**

We campaign for democratic devolution agreed by a majority of North East people voting in a referendum. We want a 51 member Regional Government, elected by proportional representation with the resources and devolved powers of major government departments. All the relevant policies of Education, Health and Social Care, Employment, Economic Development, Housing, Transport, Planning, Energy will be decided here, in North East England, by elected people .

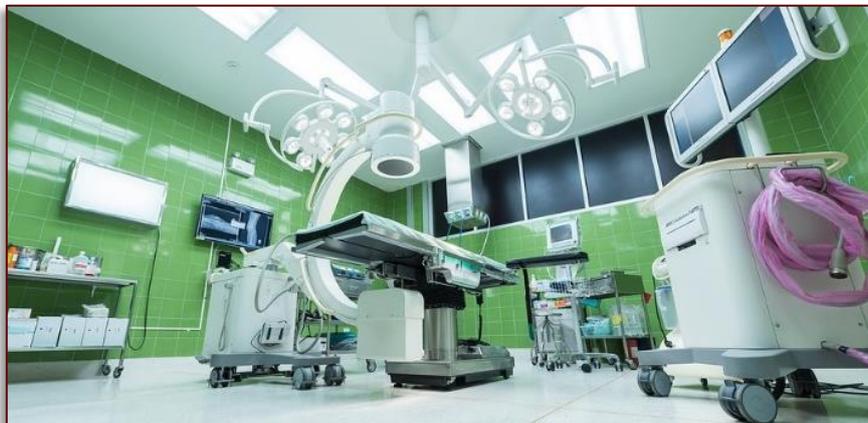
## **A fair share of resources**

We seek the abolition of the unfair Council Tax. We would replace it with

a Land Value Tax of £100 per annum on every acre of England and of 0.5% on the value of every home. Collected nationally and re-distributed to each region on a per capita basis this would return an extra £1.5 billion per annum to be used to benefit people in North East England and to free people and business from other forms of taxation.

## **World class public services for every community**

We would replace all twelve local authorities and unaccountable NHS boards with a network of directly elected Community Councils equipped with the Select Committee powers to hold local public officials



accountable for the delivery of world class, excellent services in every community.

### **UK Democracy**

We would improve Parliament by freeing it up to concentrate on 'reserved powers' in respect of macro-economics, reducing taxation, foreign policy, defence, Immigration and international development. We would seek to replace the House of Lords with a modern revising chamber with elected representatives of every country and region of the UK.

### **More power & opportunity for North East England under Brexit**

The North East Party supported the principle of holding a referendum on EU membership in our first manifesto ahead of the General Election in 2015.

As a democratic Party we thoroughly respect the result of the Referendum and seek the implementation of Brexit in the best interests of North East England and the U.K. as a whole.

We support colleagues from the devolved governments of Scotland & Wales in advocating that all EU powers in respect of devolved functions should be returned to them rather than Westminster. We demand the same rights & resources for the people of North East England as those enjoyed by our fellow U.K. citizens in Scotland & Wales:

Resources previously expended in Europe should be devolved on a per capita basis to North East England and other regions.

Grants previously obtainable from Europe should be transparently included in a properly resourced devolution settlement for North East England.

The powers liberated from Europe in respect of transport, environment, farming, fishing etc should be returned to an elected North East Regional Government rather than being withheld by Westminster.



# A THRIVING ECONOMY

**We want a fair share of prosperity and equal, world class, opportunities for all North East people. We want to live in an enterprising region that makes a positive contribution in the UK and globally.**

## **A Regional Investment Bank and Credit Union**

We will create a powerful source of finance for business and a vehicle for savings and affordable loans open to everyone.

## **A Business Enabling Team**

We will commission a Business Enabling Team from the private sector and challenge and licence it to jump-start new economic initiatives. The priority must be to boost employment and business growth in targeted sectors with financial breaks as well as tailored advice and mentoring in order to support enterprise. There will be a relentless focus on science and technology and the creation of new businesses, exploiting the region's strong Higher Education base and

attracting and retaining able people who are committed to building a prosperous and sustainable North East of England.

## **An Energy Powerhouse**

The North East Party supports development in all forms of energy generation which contribute to the quality of North East life, are safe, clean and carbon minimising as possible and provide quality jobs. The North East Party sees no need for 'fracking' when the world will continue to need coal, when there is still a national and international market for our coal reserves and when technological developments can increasingly reduce the impact of coal burning upon the environment. We would revive the coal industry in North East England.



# SAFE, VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

**Too often, the London media casts the North East in a bad light. We are proud of our cities, towns and rural communities - and we want to make them the safest places to grow up and live in the UK.**

## **Neighbourhood Local Plans**

Driven by local people based upon their own priorities for their own communities, with their own budgets to help them on their way. Instead of making everywhere look like everywhere else we can encourage distinction and difference.

## **North East Armed Forces Covenant**

We are very proud of North East people who have served in the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom for so long and with such courage and distinction. We will enact a North East Armed Forces Covenant to enable all retiring members to build successful lives and careers in civilian life. No-one who has served will go unheeded.

## **A new approach to tackling Crime**

Building upon the pioneering work of the Chief Constable of Durham Police and a successful approach to drug abuse in Portugal instead of criminalising drug users we will refer them to a drug treatment programme. We will make drug addiction a public health issue rather than a criminal matter allowing the police to focus on the criminals who supply illegal drugs and we will seek

to reduce drug dependency and deaths from overdoses. We would make cannabis available for pain relief on prescription. Over time we will promote a debate about the legalisation of all drugs in the same way as tobacco and alcohol, removing many criminal opportunities at a stroke and raising money to treat the victims of drug use from taxation.

## **We will dramatically improve Road Safety**

'Target Zero' is a continuous safety initiative for the North East Region. An information and statistics driven system with a goal of Zero Accidents it would seek to create shared spaces the envy of the world with speed limits on residential streets reduced to 20mph.

## **We will embed a Safer Schools and Neighbourhoods policy**

Actively combatting discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexuality, race, religion and differing ability. Countering bullying and encouraging young people to discover and define their own identity in their own way and own time.

# WORLD CLASS PUBLIC SERVICES

**All North East people are entitled to integrated public services that offer everyone the opportunity to make the very best of their lives.**

## **Empowering People**

What if we empowered young people to help run their own care services and schools ? If older people and their families were put in charge of residential care and day-care and home- care perhaps we'd break down barriers and create services that people really need ? Why don't we welcome new people coming to our communities, open our arms to people coming to North East England to learn, to work, to seek refuge from violence and oppression across the world and encourage them to use their skills and build commitment and friendship within their new communities?

## **Education for life**

We will raise awareness of the importance of good mental health for children, young people and adults : through mental health studies in school curricula, teaching life skills in schools, running a home, shopping on a budget, much greater awareness of the services and support available to promote good mental health and well-being.

## **A North East Work Training Programme**

A new approach to training young people for real jobs in the real world of work. Where attitudes to punctuality, team work, the acquisition of basic practical skills, high levels of literacy and numeracy are critical and where lifelong learning is the order of the day. Where we train young people



not for obsolescence doing the things that machines will increasingly be able to do, but for critical roles in science, technology, engineering, in making and developing and fixing things, in nursing, social work, community development, computing, and new creative approaches to leisure, recreation, tourism, healthy lifestyles and sharing skills.

# REBUILDING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

**The North East initiated a transport revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and transport is the key to our revival in the 21<sup>st</sup>. We refuse to hang on the coat tails of a Northern Transport Policy focussed on Leeds- Manchester and will develop our own solutions here.**

## **Integrating our Regional Economy**

We will establish a North East Transport Authority with a 'smart card' technology operating across a simple, affordable and integrated public transport system.

We will introduce free public transport for all young people under 25 in work, training or education.

We will abolish air Passenger Duty for North East airports.

On the roads, our priorities will be dualling the A1, A69 and A66 and building a new Tees Road Crossing east of Middlesbrough.

## **Key Railway Investment**

We will demand the extension of HS2 to Edinburgh, rather than making do with a link to Leeds. We will call for

new mainline services for Sunderland, Hartlepool and Stockton.

We will also link Tyneside, Wearside and Teesside with a new high speed passenger service via the Stillington Line, the Blyth and Tyne line, Tees Valley Metro and rural lines from Northumberland into Cumbria and off the East Coast Main Line. Extending the Metro using existing lines to Hendon, Grangetown and Ryhope.

## **Driving Export Growth**

We will invest in effective rail freight and road links to Teesport. The ports of Blyth, Newcastle/North Shields, Seaham, Sunderland and Hartlepool will be assisted to develop coastal and North Sea/Baltic links.



# PETERLEE: POLICY INTO ACTION

**It's sometimes hard to believe The North East Party was only formed four years ago, particularly when you consider what the party has achieved in such a short space of time – certainly in political terms.**

Yes, we've had some bumps along the way and we've made a number of mistakes, from which we have learned valuable lessons but credit where credit is due. Despite Peterlee Town Council being under Labour control for over forty years, since mid-2015, The North East Party has been the dominant party in the council chamber at Peterlee and the words "This is a Labour area and a Labour Council and there's nowt you lot can do about it" fade into the distant past!

But the achievements of The North East Party in Peterlee were not high on the political radar for 2015 because of the general election that year. Even so, The North East Party candidate for Easington, Susan McDonnell, who was one of four candidates standing for The North East Party, still attracted attention from Tyne Tees Television; who followed her through the election campaign as 'the underdog'. That said following the election, with only 833 votes and a lost deposit, Susan and the North East Party had four minutes TV news coverage after the election, which was more than any MP in the area who won.

Fast forward to the local elections of May 2017. We ignored the continued apathy, rolled up our sleeves and with a lot of continued hard work, dogged determination and at times, sheer bloody mindedness; we won one seat at Shotton Parish Council, two seats at Horden Parish Council and we not only won control of Peterlee Town Council, taking almost all of the 22 seats; we also took three of the five County Council seats – something even we were surprised at!

Still, no time to sit on our laurels, as on April 18th – two weeks prior to the Durham County local elections, Theresa May called a snap general election for June 8th. And the decision was taken by the party to stand one candidate from the Easington Branch, Susan McDonnell.

Thanks need to be recorded to both Seaham Community Party and The Haswells Community Party, who on hearing about the general election, immediately offered their support in leaflet distribution and campaigning for Susan in their respective areas, which are within the Easington Constituency boundary.

Although she didn't win, we took the results as a form of victory for The North East Party:-

- 3,304 candidates stood for the 2017 election
- Only 1,736 retained their deposits, Susan was one of them with over 2,300 votes
- She was third from a six candidate list: beating UKIP, Lib Dems and Greens.

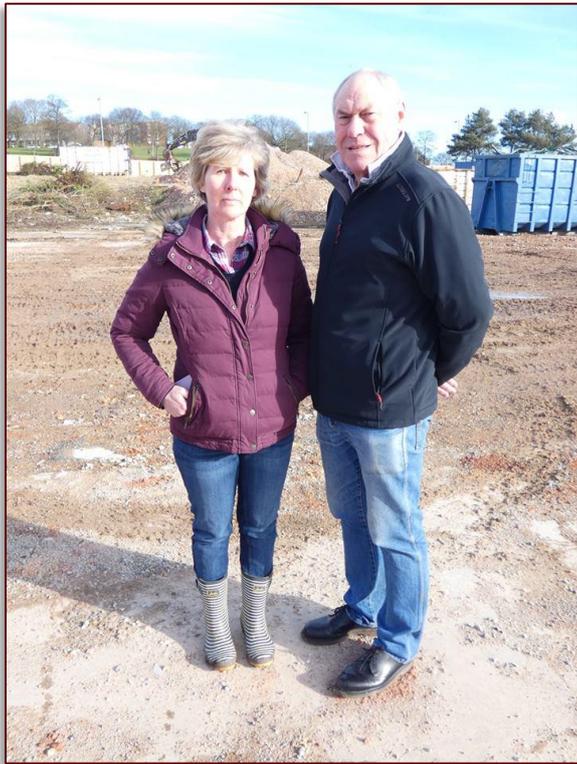


So what have we been up to since then:-

Recognising that while we are the opposition at both Horden and Shotton Parish councils, we support our members in those parishes wherever and whenever we can, while continuing to being frustrated with the lack of democracy and transparency.

In Peterlee, however, it's a slightly different story:-

- Council Tax – we continue to reverse a five year labour high of 34% increase in the town council precept and now see a 0% real term reduction for three years in a row. In other words, as soon as The North East Party was the dominant party at Peterlee we stopped the town council increasing the council tax bills for the people of the town.
- The North East Party is the driving force behind efficiency and savings for Peterlee Town Council. No longer a rubber stamping exercise under the previous labour control; the members of The North East Party scrutinise spend across all areas of the council to ensure that best value is not only achieved but can be demonstrated to the people of Peterlee.
- A restructure of the council, one of the largest town council in terms of precept, turnover and staff numbers will finally conclude in 2018 (previously stalled/obstructed in 2014/15 under labour control). This will see the performance and capability of Peterlee Town Council improve to ultimately demonstrate best value to the tax payers of Peterlee.
- The members initiative funding is now distributed fairly across the town with ALL members having an equal contribution to make to their local community.



- We approved additional funding to the Citizens Advice Bureau who urgently needed more resources to cope with supporting residents in the area. This funding means that the centre is now open 5 days a week instead of 3.
- The formation of an active events committee within the town council has seen a number of events significantly improve in terms of participation and feedback. We pride ourselves as a 'can do' council who are always looking for opportunities to bring events and activities to the town for the benefit of the people we represent. We accept that there may be times when we get it wrong but move forward into 2018 having achieved a tremendous amount that was 'right'.

- The Peterlee Show 2017 - Despite reservations about some of the changes that were made to the format, the 2017 Peterlee Show was hailed as 'the best yet' and 2018 will be seeing at least one 'first' for the town show yet - still under wraps at the moment!
- Fireworks – after The North East Party re-instated them in 2016, this year, following noise complaints from across the town, The North east Party have agreed to hold this year's display using 'reduced noise' fireworks. This is a controversial decision but it is a good demonstration that we listen to the people we represent. Further views and opinions will be sought following the event to establish if it will continue with the quieter format.
- Fake Festival – May 2017 saw the first ever Fake Festival being brought to Peterlee. Undoubtedly a resounding success with volunteers from the council staff and North East Party members helping to run the event – which will be even bigger and better for 2018!
- Fun Days – now with more 'fun days' than ever before, utilising the parks and town council facilities to provide either free or low cost activities for children and young people across the town.
- Oktoberfest 2017 – Another first for Peterlee Town Council which certainly won't be the last. Tickets were sold out well in advance of the event with

people taking to social media asking for spare tickets right up until it started.

- Armed Forces Day – This has been a longstanding day for the Town Council to show respect and gratitude to the brave servicemen and women who have defended our country, many of whom having paid the ultimate price with their lives. Now, with more contributions, support and planning for the event than for many years before, it is a tremendous and fitting celebration of our war heroes, past and present.

- Community Cinema – dare we say, yet another first for Peterlee Town Council! The Community Cinema, based at The Pavilion in Helford Road Peterlee will be a low-cost alternative to the people of the town and in particular families with children, to the mainstream (priced) cinemas. The logistics of making this happen shouldn't be underestimated and we know it will be a most welcome activity in the town. We also hope that having a big screen at The Pavilion will also enable the council to host groups for the big sporting events for the many sports enthusiasts who use The Pavilion as their base and for the townsfolk in general.

- A new Allotment building! – The town council provides allotments on two sites in the town, although it's fairly safe to say, that the site at Thorntree Gill has been the poor relation of the two. Without going in to too much detail on what has happened in the

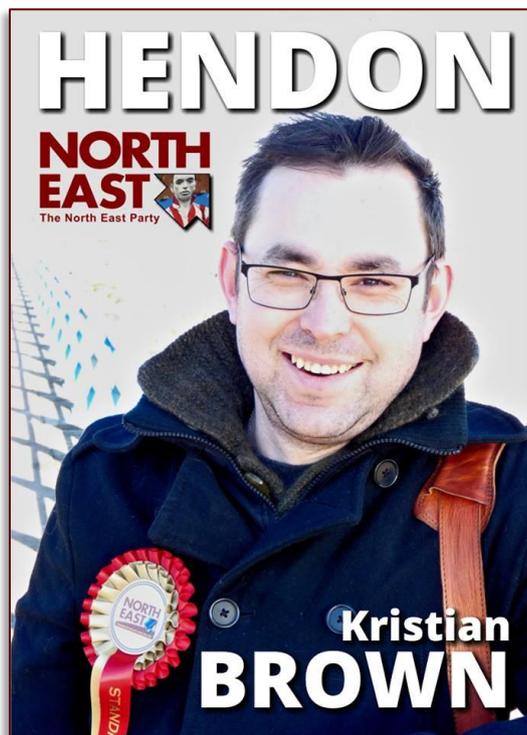
past, the North East Party members have finally got the go ahead and identified funding to provide the allotment holders at Thorntree Gill with a brick building which is secure and dry and which will enable them to maintain and grow their membership.

- Sports groups – Now, more than ever (certainly within the last few decades), Peterlee Town Council engages with sports groups of all ages in helping to promote their sporting activities and providing them with top class facilities to do so.

There is so much more that our councillors and members do and have done. North East Party Members in Peterlee have introduced 'Cuppa with a Copper and a Councillor', we have started doing a 'speed watch' at all school sites in Peterlee and, above all, we just get on with doing the job!

BUT remember; The North East Party was formed in 2014 – think about how much more we can do in the next four years!!!

# SUNDERLAND: HENDON RISING



Standing in Sunderland in May 2018 we will challenge the incompetence and inertia of a Labour Party which has mis-ruled Sunderland for far too long.

We will promote good value for money across all public services and open everything up to public scrutiny, consultation and accountability.

We will seek the wholesale reduction of Councillor posts across the board, with one Councillor elected in each

ward every four years. We will strengthen Councillor credibility, accountability and save money.

We will actively promote public participation in the redevelopment of Hendon, putting the community firmly in charge of the modernisation of parks and open spaces, radically improving access and amenity on the sea front. We will consult on the creation of a public stage for Hendon beachfront creating the possibility of concerts, brass band competitions and a whole host of attractive events.

We will aim to extend and strengthen Metro links extending the Metro using existing lines to Hendon, Grangetown and Ryhope as set out above.

The neglect of Children's Services and the subsequent takeover by Government have brought shame upon the City. We will strengthen the direct involvement of children and young people in Care in the new services which should be the centre-piece of Sunderland's approach to Sunderland's children and Sunderland's future.

