

HAPPY NEW YEAR?

(Really? Is that the best we can do..?)

We all want and need a happy 2017 after a turbulent 2016: war, terrorism, and murders; ever-deeper cuts from government; no-one seems happy about Brexit (people are either upset we're leaving, or about the way we're leaving!); the crazy US election; job losses at places like major local employer OneSubsea; the Rhinos had a crap year; and much more.

So, yes, happiness is in order. But surely, we also need a bit of passion (you might even call it anger) to balance things out. I'd argue it's right and proper to be riled about stuff like... Growing **government cuts**, and the resulting loss of key local services, care homes, and more. The slow, sly privatisation of **the NHS**. **Tax dodging** by big business. Environmental destruction. **War-mongering** and terrorism. Deceitful and divisive media coverage. Rising rail and bus fares. Crooked payday loans companies and doorstep lenders. **Crime and anti-social behaviour** in our communities. Dog fouling, flytipping, and litter. And so on.

Interestingly, Gandhi spoke fondly of anger – as a raw material for us to transform into **action for change**. And there are great local examples of people getting mad – then not just moaning, but taking a stand and making a difference (see pg 2).

So, I do genuinely wish everyone a **lovely, fantastic, positive 2017** – but please let's not lose our passions! Cheers, Ed



I recently had the pleasure of welcoming Caroline Lucas – the widely-respected co-leader of the Green Party, and MP for Brighton – to Leeds. As someone (a Labour member, as it happens) said to her: "This country needs more free-thinking politicians like you."

Amongst other things, we took her to find out about the hugely inspiring and innovative **Leeds Community Homes** scheme – which is aiming to raise £360,000 via crowd-sourced public subscriptions, to start building affordable green homes for the city. They aim to build 1,000 in the next ten years.

To find out more, visit leedscommunityhomes.org.uk, or I can put you in touch. The initial **deadline to invest is 31 Jan.**

STILL HERE, STILL BOTHERED!

I pitched into this local politics malarkey a couple of years ago because **I love this part of Leeds**, and was frustrated that the elected councillors weren't working hard enough for our communities here.

So, although I didn't win the elections last year or 2015 (many people assume I did!), **I'm still very much out and about**, listening to and advising local people, groups, and businesses – and **helping make good things happen**. For example...

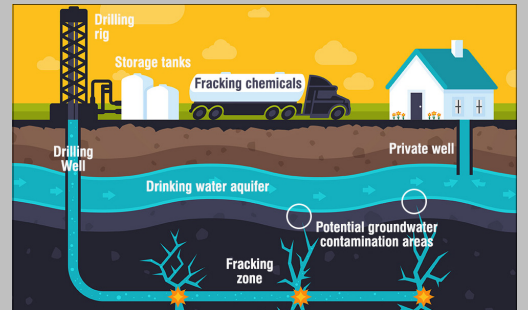
It's great to see the **Friends of Hunslet Moor** group taking off: join our action days on Sat 14 Jan and Sat 4 Mar. **Leeds Repair Café** is going strong: the next one is Sat 4 Feb. The **Junk Boat Challenge** is back on 24-25 June, and we're now open to applicants. And the **Holbeck viaduct** project continues to progress.

But just as important, it's great to work with and support local people to tackle **day-to-day issues**: crime, waste and environment, schools, housing, volunteering, highways, developing grassroots campaigns, public art, employment, and more.

And I'm really heartened that the local Labour party have been out door-knocking for the first time in decades, also helping people get things sorted. (According to friends of mine in the party, they've been prompted to do so by us!) I hope that between us all, we can help make things a bit better.

To find out more about any of this, to get involved, or to request help, please **get in touch anytime** (see pg 1).

WHAT THE FRACK?



Fracking is a controversial new method for blasting gas out of underground pockets. I hadn't looked into it until recently, and was undecided on it: was it a necessary evil, whilst we develop a long-overdue low-carbon energy system?

But proposals are afoot to ship in large quantities of waste fluid (from fracking sites across the North) to Leeds – for processing and release just outside the city centre, opposite Hunslet on the River Aire.

So I've now looked into it, and am pretty sure **it's all-round bad news**, and worth looking into and resisting. Visit frackfreeknostrop.wordpress.com for more info or to get involved, and there's a public debate on Wed 1 Mar.

FREE SEED GIVEAWAY!



Like last year, we're offering to send **FREE seeds** (tomato or sunflower) to anyone in the local area; just get in touch (see pg 1) with your address, and we'll send you a pack.

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Green Party
 for the common good

Representing Leeds Green Party in City + Hunslet, the city council ward made up of Beeston Hill, Hunslet + the City Centre.

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