

ST HELENS BOROUGH LABOUR GROUP UPDATE

JANUARY 2021

VACCINATIONS AND TESTING

On 15th January we had the confirmation that Saints would be the site of Merseyside's first mass vaccination centre:

<https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/15/vaccination/>.

It's a fantastic coup for St Helens, and it is credit to our local NHS, council officers and to Saints for working together to make it happen. Our thanks and admiration go to all those involved for working so quickly and effectively.

Community testing is continuing at the three sites in our borough at St Mary's Market, Grange Valley, and Chester Lane, and this week we had the news that more than 50,000 tests have been carried out at these sites since they launched in December:

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/news/2021/january/26/50-000-symptom-free-tests-completed-in-st-helens/>.

Find out more about testing and vaccination programmes and links to lots of advice and support at

<https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/coronavirus/>. #StHelensTogether is here to help anyone who needs support – call 01744676767 if you or someone you know is isolated and needs help.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Our MPs Conor McGinn and Marie Rimmer, Council Leader David Baines and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Business Kate Groucutt wrote to Education Secretary Gavin Williamson calling for more support for children learning at home during lockdown:

<https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/11/local-labour-leaders-call-for-more-support-for-children-and-schools/>.

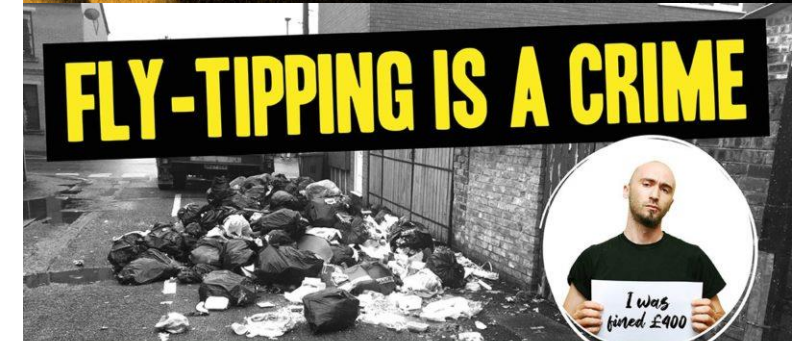
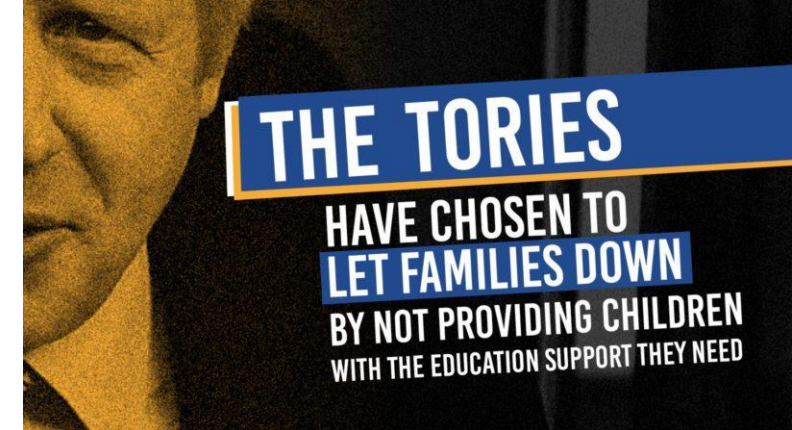
Government must act urgently to close the digital divide and make sure no child is left behind, especially with this week's news that schools won't open fully until 8th March.

The Tories have let down children and families throughout the pandemic, and that's why we've called on Gavin Williamson to resign:

<https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/19/williamsonresign/>.

TACKLING FLY-TIPPING AND ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

This month we launched a campaign against fly-tipping, asking people to #ThinkTwice: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/20/flytipping/>. And thanks to the hard work of Labour ward councillors and Cabinet members the council has taken action against an illegal and dangerous business on Merton Bank Road: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/13/mertonbank/>.



#STHELENSTOGETHER

#THINKTWICE

ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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BUDGET CHALLENGE

Like all public services, for ten years our council has suffered huge government cuts under the Tories. In 2010 St Helens Council received a government grant of £127m, and in 2020 this is just £13m. Because of the impact of austerity and the ongoing impact of Covid we now face a budget gap of up to £20m, and sadly the Tories have repeatedly ignored requests for support from us and many other councils in the same position.

We've launched a public consultation on the budget for 2021/22: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/21/budget/> and you can download a summary booklet here: <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/media/331553/budget-challenge-2021-2022.pdf>.

This week Labour MPs brought a vote in parliament to try and force the government to give councils the funding they need so that council tax rises aren't needed: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/26/labour-call-on-tories-to-scrap-the-council-tax-hike/>. We're grateful to our MPs Conor McGinn and Marie Rimmer for supporting this and fighting for council taxpayers and council services.

PROGRESS ON RECOVERY, REGENERATION AND INVESTMENT PLANS

Earlier this month we launched our draft post-Covid Economic Recovery Plan. We're still in the middle of the pandemic, but we need to plan for future recovery now: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/07/economicrecoveryplan/>. Have your say on the plan here: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/KO21LU/>.

Cabinet have agreed the Town Investment Plan which has been produced by the Town Deal Board, a partnership between local private, public and third sector organisations: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/27/townimprovementplan/>.

Along with our partnership deal with English Cities Fund this bid has the potential to bring huge benefits not just to St Helens town centre but to the whole borough.

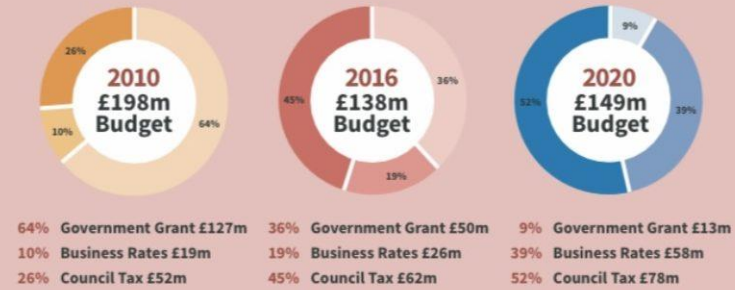
And next month work will begin on demolishing Chalon Way car park, opening up the canal area of St Helens town centre for redevelopment: <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/news/2021/january/25/contractor-appointed-for-chalon-way-car-park-demolition/>.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE COUNCIL'S NEW ARTS STRATEGY

This week Cabinet have published a new Arts Strategy for the borough: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/01/28/artstrategy/>. Like our Covid response, the Town Deal Board, and the Economic Recovery Plan, this is another example of great partnership working and the #StHelensTogether ethos. Follow the link to have your say.

COUNCIL FUNDING

Funding from Business Rates, Council Tax and Government Grant is illustrated below:



**TOWN
INVESTMENT
PLAN**

CONTACT YOUR LABOUR COUNCILLORS:

Find your councillor:

www.sthelenslabour.org/your-labour-councillors

STAY IN TOUCH ALL YEAR ROUND:

Twitter, Facebook and Instagram:

Search @StHLabour

Online:

www.sthelenslabour.org

APPLY FOR A POSTAL VOTE:

In May 2021 elections are scheduled for the council, Metro Mayor, and Police and Crime Commissioner.

Don't miss your chance to vote early and safely for Labour:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote



Published and promoted by David Baines on behalf of St Helens Borough Labour Group