

ST HELENS BOROUGH LABOUR GROUP



JUNE 2021 REPORT

ST HELENS BOROUGH LABOUR GROUP

JUNE 2021 REPORT

ARMED FORCES DAY

St Helens Borough Council have marked this year's Armed Forces Day with several online events but one event did take place in-person: a special ceremony at Victoria Square to unveil a new name on the Cenotaph, that of Pte. Ralph Mercer, a St Helens soldier who was killed in action on 6 March 1943 at the age of 31.

Pte. Mercer served in India with the 13th Battalion, The King's Regiment (Liverpool) during the Second World War and was a recipient of the Burma Star. He is commemorated in Myanmar. The event was attended by members of Pte. Mercer's family, including his daughter Mrs Beryl Williams, who joined Mayor of St Helens Borough Cllr Sue Murphy to unveil the name (pictured right), council leader Councillor David Baines and our Armed Forces champion, Cllr Lynn Clarke.

Find out more about the events held to mark Armed Forces Day and our support for the Forces and Veterans: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/06/26/saluteourforces/>.

REFUGEE WEEK: #WeCannotWalkAlone

We celebrated Refugee Week with a programme of inclusive events organised by the council's dedicated Resettlement Service celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees and people seeking sanctuary here.

The theme of the week was 'We Cannot Walk Alone', and around the borough a series of painted footsteps have been placed to signify the journeys people have made to come here. They feature the slogan 'Our Warm Welcome', which is a local charity working to support asylum seekers and refugees in our communities. They were also heavily involved in organising the many great events which took place last week.

Two friendly football matches took place between councillors and members of the borough's refugee community, kindly hosted by Newton Sports Club (pictured on the front cover of this report and right) and Thatto Heath Crusaders; a range of crafts, classes and reading sessions were held at local children's centres; and Café Laziz, a popular community café, hosted events at The Hope Centre in Windle (pictured right). Local schools got involved too, with a variety of online dance and creative writing workshops.

Thank you Cllr Jeanie Bell and all the organisers, and well done to everyone who took part in the activities.

Find out more about the work of our Labour council and community groups all year round to support refugees and everyone in our communities: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/06/18/refugee-week-a-huge-success/>.



ST HELENS BOROUGH LABOUR GROUP

JUNE 2021 REPORT

NEW WAYS TO WORK CENTRE OPENED TO OFFER SUPPORT

Mayor of St Helens Cllr Sue Murphy and Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram were among those today at the opening of a brand new centre in St Helens to help jobseekers and businesses with employment issues.

Located on Bridge Street, the Ways to Work centre will see experienced St Helens Borough Council staff who are part of the Liverpool City Regions flagship Ways to Work programme, collaborate with Career Connect and Jobcentre Plus to offer a one-stop shop service to support local people through mentoring, coaching, advice and guidance, and job searching.

Since launching in 2016, the St Helens Ways to Work team, who prior to Covid-19 were based in St Helens Town Hall, has helped more than 1,200 people into employment, training, and education – 230 of those coming in the past year during the coronavirus pandemic.

Joining the Mayor and Metro Mayor were Council Leader David Baines, Town Centre Labour councillors Carole Ann Gill, Anne McCormack and Michelle Sweeney, and Councillor Kate Groucutt, St Helens Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Business. Find out more: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/06/30/new-drop-in-centre-for-jobseekers-opens-in-st-helens-town-centre/>.

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES

During the pandemic our Labour council and City Region was the only area in the country to offer significant financial support to businesses including those excluded from government schemes – over £45m was distributed across our region. And we marked Independents' Day by showing our appreciation and support for those local small businesses who have found the last year extremely difficult and who need our support more than ever.

Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram, Council Leader David Baines, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Business Kate Groucutt, and council officers visited just a few of the many fantastic local retailers and hospitality venues in the borough to give our thanks and talk about what more we can do to help.

ASHURST SCHOOL REBUILD APPROVED

Following last month's news that the rebuild of Penkford School has been approved, in June we got confirmation that our plans to redevelop Ashurst Primary have been signed off too: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/06/30/ashurst-primary-school-rebuild-approved/>. This is great news for the children and staff, and follows a lot of hard work by Blackbrook Labour councillors Anthony Burns, Linda Maloney, Paul McQuade and Conor McGinn MP.



ST HELENS BOROUGH LABOUR GROUP

JUNE 2021 REPORT

LABOUR ANNOUNCE GRANT SCHEME FOR GREEN PROJECTS

As a Labour council we are committed to tackling the climate change emergency. In addition to taking action including setting up a Climate Change Commission, bringing together a panel of experts for us to work with on this important issue, we have now launched a fund which will support bids up to a maximum of £10,000 to encourage small businesses and community groups to reduce carbon emissions or to increase their resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Details of this funding and how to bid can be found at www.sthelens.gov.uk/climatechange and if you know or are involved in a community group or SME that might benefit, please apply.

Tackling the climate emergency is more than a soundbite on a leaflet, or a simplistic approach to creating the jobs and homes our community needs. It requires actions both large and small, and we hope this funding pot will demonstrate our backing of local green initiatives and provide an incentive to make a difference. Find out more: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/06/29/new-grant-funding-for-green-schemes-launched-by-labour-council/>.

CELEBRATING PRIDE MONTH

The council flew the flag for diversity in June with a number of activities undertaken to celebrate the local LGBTQ+ community.

Among the celebrations, and to help preserve stories for future generations, St Helens Archive Service is calling on members of the LGBTQ+ community to upload photos and memories directly to St Helens Community Archive – and contribute to a St Helens Oral History Project – a range of interviews range to reflect the many communities that call St Helens Borough home: <https://www.sthelenscommunityarchive.org.uk/>.

Find out more: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/06/28/st-helens-to-fly-the-flag-for-diversity-this-pride-day/>.

CREMATORIUM INVESTMENT BEGINS

Our Labour Council has committed £3.5 million to the refurbishment of St Helens Crematorium building. Despite Tory cuts we are working to fund projects across the borough that matter to our community, and the Crematorium is one such initiative.

The importance of our Bereavement Services has never been in such sharp focus as during the coronavirus pandemic, which is why Labour has prioritised the investment so that they can continue to provide meaningful and dignified services in a safe, suitable and fit-for-purpose setting.

Find out more: <https://www.sthelenslabour.org/latest-news/2021/06/14/work-begins-on-3-5m-crematorium-improvements/>.



SPECIAL FEATURE:

WORKING TO IMPROVE SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS

Making sure services for residents are continually improved is a key priority. One of the ways Councillors achieve this is by attending regular Scrutiny committees, a statutory Council responsibility since the Local Government Act 2000.

In these meetings Councillors review services provided by the Council itself and with our partners such as the NHS, education, the police and many more.

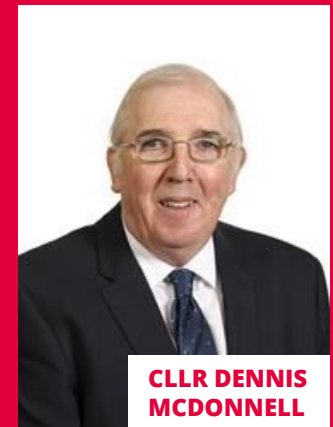
Cllr Mancy Uddin is Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission which oversees all Scrutiny work as well as giving Councillors and members of the public the opportunity to improve the quality of council services and help shape council policy. The Commission plays an integral role in setting the Council's budget for the year ahead and St Helens Labour is committed to ensuring our residents get the best value for money.

Cllr Trisha Long is Chair of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee which monitors services that help our borough's children and young people get the best start in life. Recent outcomes include recommendations resulting in improvements in mental health services, work-related experiences and the protection of our children from criminal exploitation, alongside monitoring support for schools during the pandemic.

Cllr Robyn Hattersley is Chair of the Place Services Scrutiny Committee. Recently, the committee has undertaken work around the Council's Prevent strategy; the Council's use of paper and plastic and the Council's Domestic Abuse strategy. This year, the committee has a full work programme and will be looking at the Council's waste collection service, the library service and the effects of the new fire station.

Cllr Dennis McDonnell is Chair of the Adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee which scrutinises NHS services and care for our elderly and vulnerable adults to ensure high standards are maintained. The committee also monitors services' responses to the pandemic to make sure residents are protected. and scrutinises initiatives to prevent suicide.

If you would like to find out more about scrutiny get in touch: call 01744 676277, email scrutiny@sthelens.gov.uk, write to Scrutiny Office, Town Hall, Victoria Square, St Helens, Merseyside, WA10 1HF, or contact your local Labour councillor.



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



 **Labour**
ON YOUR SIDE