

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

We were nearly overwhelmed with the number of you who returned our Winter Survey. It has been the best community response we've ever received!

It was great to read that many of the areas we have been campaigning hard for are so important to you, and you have provided some really helpful ideas, suggestions, and issues. One key message was that many of you enjoy

and support our local independent traders and businesses and are keen to see improvements in the town centre. The district council will be discussing the **Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan** in the coming weeks, and your feedback and ideas will be used to guide our response and future campaigning.

f CastleWard f TivertonLibDems



Looking along Fore Street, Tiverton town centre, by Lewis Clarke

WE ARE ALWAYS WORKING FOR YOU

Every time we write to update you on Castle and Lowman, we always ask you to get in touch with any local issues. This isn't an empty courtesy, community engagement is an important part of the Liberal Democrat ethos — **it's what sets us apart from others**— and we are pleased that many of you do pick up your phone, send us an email, or write to us on Facebook at **f CastleWard**.

We are not an inward team - many of the issues that affect you extend outside of Tiverton, Mid Devon, and Devon.

Cllr Alan Connett, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group at Devon County Council, worked hard to ensure a planned £300k cut in money to fix potholes across the county was reversed. **This was a big win for our roads and pavements.**

Since the last Focus, **David Wulff** has helped to get damaged signage repaired, road flooding investigated, gulleys cleaned, and is working to resolve an anti-social behaviour problem. **Cllr Ben Holdman** is looking into a number of flooding, sewer and planning issues in the town, and **Cllr Irene Hill** is working to improve road safety and lighting along Hillcrest, and for the Town Leat weir repairs to be completed once lockdown is lifted.



David Wulff on Bolham Road

WELCOMING MATT FARRELL TO THE TEAM

Matt is an experienced local Councillor and IT professional working within financial services and the entertainment sector. After becoming interested in local government, he was elected in Hertfordshire in 2016, serving on Standards and Licensing committees and as vice-chair of Scrutiny.

Matt has a strong desire to help with the COVID recovery. He has a family with young children and is motivated by the challenges faced by young people and the wider community.



Matt Farrell

MAKE SURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD

Decisions taken by politicians on your behalf affect every aspect of your life. The quality of life for you and your family is dependent on their decisions:

- how much money you have in your pocket and how you can spend it.
- the quality of your housing.
- the schooling of your children.
- your health and how long you will live.
- the environment and development.
- your ability to work safely and enjoy your leisure time.

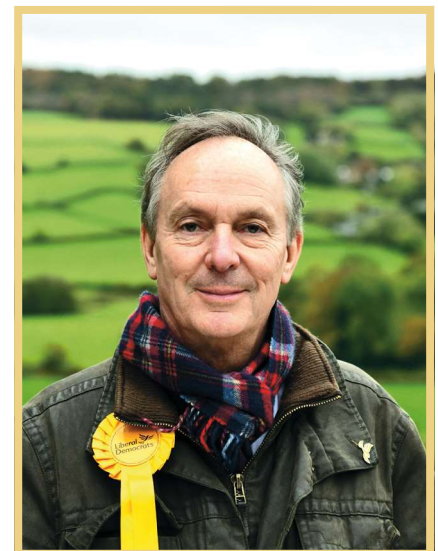
From the moment you turn on a light in the morning (and whether electricity is actually delivered to your home!) until the time you go to sleep, every second of your day is influenced by the decisions made by a politician acting in YOUR name. **Elections decide our politicians, and elections are decided by YOU.**

"Democracy" means "Power of the People" and for it to function it requires the engagement of citizens and for them to VOTE. Without a functioning local and national democracy, a society can quickly fall into anarchy or tyranny.

The Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality for all and community, and in which no one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity.

If these are your values too, please give your support to the Liberal Democrats at the ballot box in May. Contact us if you would like a postal vote application form.

**🏠 <https://tivandhonlibdems.org.uk>
f TivertonHonLibDems**



Dr John Timperley
Parliamentary Spokesperson



▶ Focus

MID DEVON LOSES £650K IN SOCIAL HOUSING FUNDS

Mid Devon District Council was forced to hand back more than £650k of funding contribution that was made available for social housing, and a further £565k is at risk of being handed back due to a persistent lack of direction and no coherent plan to spend it.

We need to build about 100 socially rented houses a year across Mid Devon, but in recent years have built none. We also need about 70 or 80 affordable homes each year, but only 38 affordable houses were built in the last 4 years.

The £650k of funding that was first made available in early 2016 had not been taken advantage of by the Conservative Cabinet that was in place until May 2019.

For two and a half years the funds were ignored, with the needed matching funds instead loaned to the loss making 3 Rivers Developments Ltd. When a new more representative Cabinet was

formed after the 2019 elections the presence of this funding was not disclosed in time, and the Conservatives have now been placed back into Cabinet.

This ongoing mismanagement of our social housing need is a serious concern and we need to address it.



LETTER FROM CANDIDATE DAVID WULFF

What a year 2020 was. I can't believe it has now been a year since we started dealing with COVID. I know many of us have faced financial uncertainty, worries about our health and that of our friends and families, and great anxiety. Some of us have faced isolation and loneliness, and you may have lost loved ones and struggled with the cruel reality of not being able to grieve with others.

Social distancing has been so important in slowing the spread and devastation of the Coronavirus. Social media and video calling has its place in keeping us connected but there is something terribly inhuman about not being able spend time with friends, hug our families, and connect with each other as shared lives. As we move into a second year the pain of this distancing may feel overwhelming. If you are struggling to cope, please reach out.

Help is available. You are not alone.

Mind, the mental health charity, have excellent resources on their website on coping with isolation and anxiety: mind.org.uk or ☎ **0300 123 3393**.

The Samaritans are available 24-hours a day on ☎ **116 123**.

If you don't want to call you can text **SHOUT** at any time to ☎ **85258**.

If you, or someone you know, needs help accessing food and household essentials, collecting shopping or medicines, meeting other basic needs, are feeling isolated, struggling financially, or you are not sure where to go for help or advice, then help is available through Mid Devon District Council's Community Support Hub:

📍 <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/COVID19CommunitySupport>

✉ covid19.support@middevon.gov.uk
☎ **01884 234387** (Monday to Thursday 8:30am - 5:00pm, Fridays 8:30am - 4:30pm, excluding Bank Holidays.)

Or you can get in touch with one of your local Lib Dems and we will contact the hub on your behalf.

And yet despite all of the difficulties this year has created, there are many good news stories. We are already well on our path to vaccination and a return to normalcy is within reach - the result of unprecedented scientific and international cooperation. Locally we have seen the community spirit surge and pull together to support those most in need, and bright new businesses have opened amongst the closures. We will get through this, and our community will emerge stronger for it.

Stay safe, and best wishes,

David Wulff

MORE INFORMATION

Please get in touch if you have a query or an issue that you want us to consider, would like to become a registered Liberal Democrat supporter or member, help with local campaigning, or make a donation.

ClIr Irene Hill ☎ 01884 562800 ✉ irenekaz@gmail.com
ClIr Ben Holdman ☎ 07757 651807 ✉ bholdman@middevon.gov.uk
David Wulff ☎ 01884 220002 ✉ hello@davidwulff.co.uk

You can find us on Facebook where we post regular updates on local issues affecting Castle and Lowman Wards. 📘 **CastleWard**

✂ PROTECT YOUR VOTE

Thousands of people have already applied for a postal vote to make it easier for them to vote if they are unable to get to their polling station this May. If you would like an application form let David know (details above), or print one here and return it to Mid Devon District Council:

📍 <https://www.mytiverton.co.uk/vote>

Liberal Democrats

📘 **TivertonHonLibDems**
libdems.org.uk/get-involved

