Katie Scott
Co-ordinator
Rothbury CAN

rothburycan@gmail.com

Mary Finn

8th April 2025

Dear Mary

Election of County Councillor for the Rothbury Ward

I am writing to you on behalf of members of Rothbury CAN. We are a group of residents who aim to do what we can to help mitigate climate change and help nature. You can find out more about us here: www.rothburycan.org

We are surprised, and delighted, that so many candidates have put themselves forward to represent our community. However, we are disappointed that it has been impossible for a Hustings to be organised. We feel we need to know more about what you stand for, in terms of environmental matters.

Because there are so many candidates, we decided to write to you all with the same set of questions, which are of major importance to us. We look forward to reading all the replies, so we can make a balanced judgement about who is likely to represent our views, most sympathetically.

Questions

1. What can you/ do you intend to do to help remove sewage from our waterways?
   Do you feel developers should share the cost of upgrading sewage treatment plants that are beyond capacity to get planning permission?
   What will you do to ensure new development does not increase flood risk?
   I understand the river Coquet was polluted 161 times in 2024 and Northumbria Water has upgraded part of the sewerage network at the cost of £500,000. The river, as should all water ways, be monitored to ensure it is safe and pollutant free. The CEO of Northumbria water's salary and with bonus's in July 2024 was £842,000 as customer of Northumbria water I want to understand how this level of remuneration can be justified. Developers should be sharing the cost of the infra structures required in new developments and all planning applications need to be closely

scrutinised to ensure flood risk and infra structure considerations are fully explored .

2. How would you ensure that all residents, particularly those in social or rented housing, have access to solar energy and battery storage to reduce their household bills and reduce global warming?
   EV Charging: residents who cannot park near enough to their homes to have a home charger. What will you do to ensure these residents can cheaply and efficiently charge their cars?

Working in conjunction with the Mayor's office to fulfil the 5 missions

Home to a growing and vibrant economy for all

Home of the green energy revolution

A welcoming home to global trade

A North East we are proud to call home

The home of real opportunity

3. Compared to many other counties, the provision for doorstep recycling in Northumberland is extremely limited. What will you do to improve this and increase the proportion of waste that is recycled?

At present Northumberland's recycling record is disappointing the Labour group is determined to improve this it will rollout improved glass collection for recycling, ban single use plastic in all council buildings and expand the range of items for recycling by working with recycling plants .

Hedge-cutting and chemical spraying. What are your views on when hedges should be cut, and how? Will you join with us to request an end to the spraying of pollinator killing weedkiller, by NCC on our paths and building edges, etc?

Hedge cutting should be as per regs outside the nesting season (March/Aug) and the 2 metre buffer strip observed.

As a beekeeper I worry about the use of neonicotinoids and the impact upon bee and other pollinators however I am also aware of the concerns farmers have about how best to control pests. I would like to see a positive plan of education explaining why it is important not to clear road edges and paths and encourage the planting of wild flower meadows on available spaces (see Morpeth Meadows) .

4. What would you do to increase biodiversity at the Parish level?

   Support initiatives with the Wildlife Trust to educate and inform myself and others about how this is best achieved

5. How do you feel about the purchase, by the Wildlife Trusts, of the Rothbury Estate?

I am pleased it appears future of the estate is secured and I look forward to the meeting in Rothbury on April 24 when I understand the Trust will asking for input from the community and discussing their plans .

Please could you respond to this email by Tuesday 15th April. This will give our members time to digest and compare the views of you all.

We plan also, to publish the responses, so that the wider community may also know how you view environmental issues.

Do please take this opportunity also, to tell us what you feel are the most important aspects in representing the Rothbury Ward? What do you feel the main role of a County Councillor is?

Anyone representing Rothbury needs to respect the diversity and independence of the community listen to all

recognising they are the representative of the whole community.

The main role is to be a vocal advocate for the whole constituency regardless of how individuals voted or chose not to

We really look forward to hearing from you, and we thank you in advance for your response.

With all good wishes

Katie Scott
Co-ordinator, Rothbury CAN