

**Councillor Maria Watson**  
**Clifton East**

I was first elected in May 2019, and what a busy first year it's been, working hard for Clifton East with my fellow Nottingham Independent Councillors.

It's an absolute privilege to represent the ward that we all love, and we hope we're doing a good job representing the citizens of Clifton East. It is our number one priority to put the views and opinions of our residents to the Council.

Prior to Covid-19 making in-person meet ups difficult, we held regular advice surgeries and were heavily involved in local community groups and schemes. We all look forward to returning to this next year, as soon as we're able.

Before being elected, I was heavily involved in Clifton, organising children's fun days, community events and groups for helping struggling families and for keeping Clifton litter free. I cherish Clifton, and as an elected Councillor I hope to help the community even more.

**Council Involvement**

- Chair of the Clifton East and West Area Committee.
- Member of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
- Member of the Corporate Parenting Board.

**Community Involvement**

- Member of the Highbank Association Management Committee.
- Member of the Clifton Green Team litter picking group.
- I regularly attend Summerwood Day Centre to offer support and build relationships with service users and staff.
- Councillor surgeries have been suspended but I am available via my NCC Email address and NCC phone number.

**Ward Work and Achievements**

We have been heavily involved in consultation with projects in the ward, including planning applications, the new road layout scheme on Green Lane, the new school crossing in Glapton Lane and the resident's parking scheme for Swansdown Drive and surrounding area.

We have, and will continue to, campaign on issues including day care centres, like the Summerwood Centre.

I have personally raised several questions in Full Council on this issue. Due to Covid-19, ward walks have been suspended but they were valuable in highlighting neglected areas and parts of Clifton that needed attention. We met with residents to talk through their concerns and tried to rectify any issues as quickly as possible. We also worked closely with the local polices and CPOs in identifying sources of anti-social behaviour and drug paraphernalia. I look forward to resuming my surgery meetings and local ward walks in 2021.

Earlier this school year we purchased Parking Buddies – cut-outs of children that are placed near schools to make people aware of how their parking affects children walking to school safely. The response has been overwhelming, and more importantly, the roads have been clearer!

We recently undertook the mammoth task of planting 30,000 bulbs in Clifton Flower parks to make it a beautiful place for residents to visit. We are also replacing the old rusty litter bins and will hopefully adding new benches and new flower beds in the spring. We also had the original Clifton Community Notice Board repaired, cleaned up and returned to its original place outside Clifton Library.

We have worked closely with our Neighbourhood operations manager to try and help ease the issues of overgrown vegetation and fly tipping. We went out to cut long grassed areas and to tackle weeds to ease the pressure on our cleansing teams during periods of staff shortages and high demand.

Inspired by Marcus Rashford's recent school dinners' campaign, we helped fund a breakfast club in Clifton as part of "no child goes hungry". We believe it is a vital part of our roles to help end child poverty in Nottingham, so as well as funding this for those in need, we also wrote to the Leader of the Council and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, encouraging them to show leadership and end this wholly solvable issue.

#### **Use of Budget and Area Capital Fund**

- Green Lane resurfacing Phase One and Two.
- Clifton Flower Park rejuvenation.
- Christmas lighting along Green Lane.
- Installing a new memorial bin.
- Added extra car parking spaces to the future residential development on Southchurch Drive.
- School Street Project.
- Entertainment for a socially distanced Christmas Carnival.
- Resurfacing of a large section of Summerwood Lane
- Funding secured for the garden redevelopment at Holbrook Court.

#### **Aims for Next Year**

We hope to play a much bigger part in next year's budget with the current issues surrounding Robin Hood Energy, the Broadmarsh Development, the Audit Report in the Public Interest and the Non-Statutory Review which have made this a very difficult year for Nottingham City Council. We aim to make sure the Council is much more prudent with its finances going forward and will challenge any rate rises.

We want to champion more social housing being built in our ward, to help get as many people off the waiting list as possible and to make sure Clifton gets a fair proportion of the funding for this.

We will continue to campaign on adult day service provision in Clifton.

We will look to press on with working with the Environment Agency on creating a children's water play area within Clifton Flower Park, something we had hoped to complete for this summer but was postponed due to Covid-19.

We also aim to complete phase two of the Green Lane road resurfacing and the rejuvenation of Clifton Flower Park.

We will continue to work closely with the police, CPOs and with Neighbourhood Operations to ensure Clifton is a safe and pleasant place to live.