

Lanchester Parish Council

Annual Report 2015 / 16



Councillor Ossie Johnson, Chair of Lanchester Parish Council 2015/16

Welcome to Lanchester Parish Council's Annual Report for 2015 / 16. The Annual Report provides me with an opportunity to review the last 12 months.

The World War I memorial plaque was displayed until recently in the entrance hall at Park House. However following the sale of Park House and the relocation of the Parish Council to Lynwood House, it was felt that the memorial plaque should be relocated to a suitable venue in the community where members of the community could readily view it. On Saturday 11 April 2015 an event took place to unveil the plaque in its new location at Lanchester Community Centre. Approximately 50 people attended the event including representatives from the Consett Branch of The Royal British Legion. The Parish Council would like to thank Aubrey O' Brien for undertaking cleaning and restoration of the plaque in preparation for the event. It is hoped that the memorial plaque continues to be viewed by many members of the community.

The Parish Council made the decision early in 2014 to commence the process of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. Over the last year a working group of approximately 20 people including community representatives have met regularly to progress the plan. A Neighbourhood Plan is a document which will guide development, regeneration and conservation within our Parish over future years. The Neighbourhood Plan will set out the views of our local community in terms of planning issues and will contain a number of planning policies for the Parish. Once adopted Durham County Council will have to consult the Neighbourhood Plan when making planning decisions in our Parish. An early engagement questionnaire was administered early in 2015 which identified key themes and issues. Feedback on the results of this questionnaire were presented to the community in June 2015. This was then followed by a more detailed topic based questionnaire in February 2016 which identified draft vision and objectives. Work has also taken place on a Conservation Area Appraisal and a Heritage Audit. Both documents have involved considerable community volunteer involvement. These documents will be supplementary documents to the Neighbourhood Plan and will provide evidence to support the policies it contains. It is expected that work will continue throughout 2016 to progress the plan.

In 2015 the Parish Council sought a comprehensive report on the trees at Kitswell Park and on the Village Green which identified necessary maintenance works to the trees in these areas. The Parish Council appointed a local company who undertook the tree work ensuring that the trees are maintained and managed to an appropriate standard.

The Christmas Light Switch On event always proves to be a well attended occasion. The event on Saturday 28 November included a selection of Christmas Carols from Lanchester Brass Band and Lanchester Choral & Operatic Society. In addition volunteers manned a gazebo and gave away mulled wine, mince pies and cakes for the adults and juice, sweets and a lucky dip prize for the children. Several hundred people turned out to see the lights being switched on. The lights looked incredible and gave a great festive show.

The Lanchester Community Emergency Plan was adopted in February 2016 and was the first community emergency plan to be adopted in the County. Members of the community have been working on producing a Community Emergency Plan for some time supported by the Civil Contingencies Unit and Durham County Council. The plan includes actions to inform key groups and organisations in the parish in the event of an emergency, the use of equipment from the emergency sheds and opening of a number of safe rest centres.

The Parish Council have taken the decision to continue to cut the grass in the area either side of the Lanchester Valley Walk between Station Road and Newbiggen Lane. This followed a decision in 2012 by the County Council to stop cutting the grass in this area which they own. The Parish Council entered into a licence agreement with the County Council to cut the grass in this area during 2015 and are in the process of renewing the licence to cut the grass during 2016 also.

The Council has continued to produce the Annual Report and the quarterly Council Newsletter both of which have been distributed widely throughout the community. Within the village, the Christmas lights and summer hanging baskets once again showed off the Parish to its best.



Receipts and Payment Account

Year ended 31 March 2016

Payments

General Admin	£33,610.16
Donations / Grants	£800.00
Rec. / Envir. Facilities	£16,318.07
Leisure Amenities	£7,799.55
Development Projects	£3,486.20
Contingencies	£0
VAT	£3,839.36

Receipts

Council Tax Support Grant	£2,495.00
Precept	£53,185.00
Interest Received	£52.04
Garage Rent	£200.00
Bus Shelter Maintenance	£0
Sundries	£0
Wayleaves	£16.05
Grants & Donations	£5,688.00
VAT	£3,191.14
Total	£64,827.23

£65,853.34

Balance at 1 April	£100,639.00
Add Total Income	£64,827.23
	£165,466.23
Less Total Expenditure	£65,853.34
Balance at 31 March	£99,612.89

The Balance figure includes monies received as grants for specific projects as well as monies identified for particular works.

This statement represents fairly the financial position of the Council at 31 March 2016 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Schedule of Meetings

Lanchester Parish Council has 15 elected members who meet in full session 11 times a year. In addition there are a number of committees and working groups which deal with the important work of the Council. The committees in 2015 / 16 were:

- **Planning Committee**
- **Finance & Development Committee**
- **Recreation Committee**

Members are elected to the committees on an annual basis. All meetings are held at Lynwood House, Durham Road. Notice of all meetings can be found in the Library or the Parish Council notice board on the Village Green. The Parish Council have in place a Public Participation Policy. Public and press attendance & participation is welcome at all meetings.

Grants / Donations

The Parish Council has the powers to give financial support to local clubs and organisations. During 2015 / 16 the Parish Council awarded the following grants / donations:

Lanchester Brass Band	£90
Lanchester Choral & Operatic Society	£90
Royal British Legion	£50
Lanchester Parochial Church Council	£200
Lanchester All Saints Monday Club	£200
Lanchester Agricultural Society	£200
Great North Air Ambulance	£100
Lanchester Brass Band	£50
Lanchester EP Primary School	£75
Lanchester RC Primary School	£75

Requests for grants / donations are normally considered by the Parish Council in March.

Lanchester Parish Council

Comprises of 15 elected councillors, a Lead Officer / Clerk and a Handyperson

Ossie Johnson	Stella House, Durham Road,	521937	CHAIR
Colin Burton	c/o Parish Council, Lynwood House, Durham Road		
Ann Cook	46 Manor Grange,	529334	
Bob Glass	2 The Paddock	03000 268711	
Bill Gray	27 Foxhills Crescent,	520656	
Margaret Gray	27 Foxhills Crescent,	520656	
Keith Harrison	Colepike Home Farm,	529522	
Paul Jackson	Stonebeck, Front Street,	521208	
Kevin Leary	60 Deanery View,	521627	
Alasdair Nairn	1 St Bedes Court,	529384	
Julie Richardson	Linden Lodge, Cadger Bank	521741	
Peter Richardson	Linden Lodge, Cadger Bank	521741	
Philip Richardson	Linden Lodge, Cadger Bank	521741	
Stuart Walker	2 St Bedes Court,	520790	
Mike Wardle	8 Ornsby Hill,	521622	

Staff Lead Officer / Clerk Sally Laverick 520146
Handyperson David Maddox

Councillors do not receive any payment or allowance for attending meetings or for carrying out Council business.



Services and Activities

Lanchester Parish Council currently provides and maintains the following services within the Parish:

- Play Areas
- Bike Track
- Allotments
- Village Green
- Xmas Lights
- Hanging Baskets
- Grass Cutting (some)
- Tree Maintenance
- Bus Shelters (some)
- Public Seating (some)
- General upkeep
- Partnership working

