

Lanchester Parish Council

Annual Report 2018 /19

Councillor Keith Harrison, Chair of Lanchester Parish Council 2018/19

Welcome to Lanchester Parish Council's Annual Report which provides me with an opportunity to inform the community of the work of the Parish Council between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019.

The Lanchester Neighbourhood Plan has progressed. A working group including community representatives have met regularly during the year. A Neighbourhood Plan is a document which will guide development, regeneration and conservation. It will set out the views of our local community in terms of planning issues and contain a number of planning policies for the Parish. The document has been finalised during this last year. The plan now needs to progress through a number of consultation processes. The first consultation is the Pre-Submission consultation which will take place between 24 June - 9 August 2019. Look out for the document at key community locations. Written feedback will be welcomed until 9 August.

Planned maintenance and refurbishment works at Park House Play Area were completed in time for the school summer holidays. The works included the replacement of the safety surfacing in the main play area, replacement of some equipment and painting of play equipment. The work which was organised in conjunction with Durham County Council cost approx. £27,000 with the monies being provided through a fund held by the County Council with a £9,500 contribution from the Parish Council. The improved play facilities can now be enjoyed by families and young people.

During the summer holidays Durham County Council supported financially by Lanchester Parish Council provided free sports and environmental play activity sessions for children at Park House Play Area. We hope those that attended enjoyed the activities.

November 11 2018 commemorated 100 years since the end of WW1. The Parish Council and members of the community completed a project to have the names of fallen soldiers added to the Village Green War Memorial. 130 names were identified and researched and engraved on the new marble panels. A service to rededicate the War Memorial took place on Friday 19 October 2018 at 2pm and was well attended by members of the community, local organisations and schools.

On Sunday 11 November at 7.00pm Lanchester Parish Council and Burnhope Parish Council lit a beacon as part of the WW1 Beacons of Light Event. In commemoration and remembrance of the end of the war and the many millions who were killed or came home dreadfully wounded, Beacons of Light were lit a century after the guns fell silent. The event which took place at Burnhope Picnic Area attracted a large crowd. The beacon was lit at 7pm and burned brightly under a clear sky.

The Christmas Light Switch On event on Saturday 24 November saw hundreds of people gather on the Village Green. Lanchester Brass Band and Lanchester Choral & Operatic Society played a selection of Christmas Carols and volunteers gave away mulled wine, mince pies and cakes for the adults and juice, sweets and a lucky dip prize for the children. The lights were formally switched on by Eric Hepplewhite accompanied by local school children. 2018 saw the magnificent Poppy display in the village as part of the commemoration activities for 100 years since the end of World War One. This project was coordinated and managed by Eric, who worked with members of the community for two years to make and paint over 4000 clay poppies creating a spectacular display. Many thanks again Eric.

The Parish Council are exploring the possibility of providing a new and improved play area at Manor Grange. An example design with costs has been obtained for a relocated play area towards the bottom of the grassed area which would provide a more accessible facility. Work continues to progress a lease and secure funding to deliver the project.

A defibrillator will shortly be installed in the centre of the village for the benefit of the community. The defibrillator has been funded by Lanchester Parish Council with a very generous donation from Mrs Viv Watson and Mr Colin Watson who live in the village.

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.

