

Lanchester Parish Council

Annual Report 2017 / 18

Councillor Ossie Johnson, Chair of Lanchester Parish Council 2017/18

Welcome to Lanchester Parish Council's Annual Report for 2017 / 18. The Annual Report provides me with an opportunity to inform residents of the work of the Council between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018.

Local elections took place in May 2017. These elections take place every four years to elect the fifteen Councillors to serve on the Parish Council. The elections resulted in seven new Councillors joining the Parish Council. I would wish to congratulate all elected Councillors and welcome the new Councillors to the Parish Council. A full list of Councillors can be viewed overleaf.



The Parish Council continues work to produce 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 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. Following extensive community consultations in 2015 and 2016 the last year has seen work undertaken to produce policies for the plan. The plan is reaching its final stage of development and the draft document is now being written. Further community consultation will take place on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Once the document is finalised a referendum will take place to vote on the plan.

In 2018 it will be 100 years since the end of WW1. The Parish Council have been working on two projects to commemorate this event.

Firstly, the Parish Council and members of the community are working on a project to have the names of fallen soldiers added to the Village Green War Memorial. A company has been appointed to undertake the work and the design of the War Memorial has been agreed. Work continues on the important task of checking the list of names for inclusion to ensure that it is complete and accurate.

Secondly, Lanchester Parish Council are working in partnership with Burnhope Parish Council to light 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, 1000 Beacons of Light will be lit at 7pm on 11 November 2018 throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories - a century after the guns fell silent. The Beacon will be located on high ground at the picnic area between Burnhope and Lanchester Parish. Work continues to progress this project.

The Christmas Light Switch On event always proves to be a well attended occasion. The event on Saturday 25 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 Canon Robert Spence accompanied by local school children.

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 2017 and have also renewed the licence to cut the grass for a five year period from 2018.

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.

