



Horden Parish Council Annual Report 2014/15

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.....

As we all know 2014/15 has seen some changes in local government which reflect the austere times we all face at present. The Parish Council have not escaped these changes, however, while budgets have been reprioritised the villages facilities, which are ran by the Parish Council, have been protected from large scale cutbacks. The two main summer events, The Teddy Bears Picnic and Pirates In The Park, will also remain unchanged.

The Parish Council and community have always been proud of their open spaces being that of the Welfare Park (Horden Recreation Ground), Memorial Park and Thorpe Road Cemetery and we have retained the Green Flag Awards for excellent standards in the Welfare and Memorial Parks. Horden Social Welfare Centre has also seen an increased use and we are hoping this will continue in the future with more weddings and parties being booked.

I would like to thank Horden Parish Council for re-electing me as Chairman again this year. I have been working with other local Parish and Town Councils getting involved with their many charity and civic functions and I have received many invitations to attend functions throughout the village.

In November 2014 I organised my Chairman's Charity Night which was held in the Social Welfare Centre. All proceeds raised went to Breast Cancer Care at NHS Tees & Hartlepool Trust and the British Heart Foundation, the total raised was a fantastic £1251.00. Thank you to all that attended and the local businesses for their kind donations, it would not be possible without your support and generosity.

Finally I would like to thank the staff at Horden Parish Council for their continued hard work in serving the village.

**Councillor Jean White
Chairman
Horden Parish Council**

ABOUT US

Horde n Parish Council is made up of 15 Councillors and meets twenty-two times a year not including sub-committee meetings. It starts with an annual meeting in May when the Chairman is appointed and elects Councillors to serve on committees for the year ahead. Your Councillors are made up of:-

Cllr Rodie Bagnall	11 Ash Crescent	Vice-Chairman of Horde n Parish Council and Vice-Chairman of the Parks & Cemetery Committee
Cllr Edna Connor	2 Cedar Street	Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
Cllr Derek Nicol	86 Fifth Street	Vice-Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
Cllr Isabella Roberts	33 Ninth Street	Chairman of the Parks & Cemetery Committee
Cllr June Clark	73 Cotsford Park Estate	
Cllr Mary Clark	89 Cotsford Park Estate	
Cllr William Hill	6 Sunderland Avenue	
Cllr Doug Lanagan	1 Snowdrop Avenue	
Cllr William Smith	22 Alder Road	
Cllr David Tait	6 Warkworth Avenue	
Cllr Leslie Williams	1 Warren Street	
Cllr Elizabeth Wood	12 Roseby Road	

The Parish Council employ the following Staff:-

Paul Davison	Clerk to the Council & Responsible Financial Officer
Jacqui Hunt	Assistant Clerk
Gemma Rowe	Administration and Finance Officer
Jimmy Bush	Parks and Cemetery Manager
Alan Atchinson	SWC Manager
Walter Rudkin	Parks and Playing Fields Supervisor
Colin Muir	Parks and Cemetery Team Leader
Angela Lee	SWC Team Leader
Glynis Atchinson	SWC Cleaner
Kathryn Bailey	SWC Cleaner
Julie Bush	Cemetery Cleaner
Keith Bailey	Gardener / Gravedigger
Tommy Basley	Gardener / Gravedigger
Richard Hepworth	Gardener / Gravedigger
Matthew Scott	Gardener / Gravedigger
Allan Roberts	Gardener / Gravedigger
Joe Hall	Gardener / Gravedigger
Alfie Temple	Gardener / Gravedigger
John Tully	Gardener / Gravedigger
Corey Barron	Apprentice Gardener / Gravedigger

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2014/15 Annual Report. This is a full report of the Parish Council. This report has been produced and made available prior to the Annual Assembly to be held on Tuesday 12th May 2015 at 6pm in the Social Welfare Centre.

The Annual Assembly is a meeting of the electors of the Parish of Horden and provides an opportunity for residents to discuss the information provided and to question the Council on its activities during the past year. Any member of the public is welcome to attend this meeting.

Horden Parish Council serves the village of Horden, with an electorate of over 6400. We deliver many services in the village, such as the provision of parks, playing fields and recreation areas. We manage the Thorpe Road Cemetery, are responsible for the Station Road Allotments and manage the Social Welfare Centre.

Our aim is to give the residents of Horden information about the Parish Council and the services which we deliver in the village, to outline how we are dealing with current challenges and highlight our plans to meet community needs and deliver quality services in the next year and beyond.

Horden Parish Council is one of around 9,500 Parish and Town Councils within England, Parish and Town Councils are the first tier of Local Government and work very closely with the other tiers to try and achieve the best for their local communities. During 2014/15, we have worked closely with Durham County Council on a number of issues. Horden is represented by two Durham County Councillors, June Clark and Paul Stradling.

Elections to the Parish Council are normally held every four years, the last being in 2013. Due to the changes which the formation of the Unitary Authority has brought. Any registered elector over the age of 21 years, who is not disqualified because of being declared bankrupt or having a recent criminal conviction carrying a custodial sentence, may stand for election to the Parish Council.

Horden Parish Council have two vacancies to fill on the council, due to the resignation of Councillors Georgina Phillips and Margaret Robinson. The council anticipate that these will be filled shortly by holding a by-election or co-opting new members onto the council.

Meetings of the Parish Council are normally held on the first Thursday of every month, except August when Council is in recess. Meetings start at 6pm in the Training Room of the Social Welfare Centre. The Agenda for Council meetings is prepared on the Friday prior to the meeting and displayed on the Parish notice board in the foyer of the Social Welfare Centre and also on our website for the public to view.

All meetings of the Council are open for the public (although certain exempt items may be held in private session). If you wish to attend a meeting, just turn up. The Council are happy for the public to give their views or comments during Public Participation, but ask that you notify the Clerk prior to the meeting of the topic on which you wish to speak. If you would like further information, please contact Paul Davison during office hours.

Minutes of meetings are available for public inspection at both the Social Welfare Centre and at Horden Library in Sunderland road, or available via our website. Any member of the public

is entitled by law to obtain copies of the minutes at reasonable cost. These can only be obtained from the Parish Council Offices at the Social Welfare Centre.

REVIEW OF 2014/15

Welfare Park (Registered Charity Horden Recreation Ground)

The Welfare Park has continued to retain its high standard of design, cleanliness and appearance.

The park was awarded with Green Flag and Green Heritage site status for the ninth consecutive year and Horden is one of only a handful of Parish Councils in the country to achieve the Green Flag! This is an amazing achievement and testament to the dedication of the parks staff.

Green Flag inspection for 2015/16 is scheduled in May and the Parish Council are confident that Green Flag status will be re-accredited for the year to come.

The range of events and activities organised within the Welfare Park continue to be popular with the residents of Horden and the surrounding villages. Details of our Summer Events Programme can be found displayed in the Park noticeboards. You can also pick up a leaflet from the Social Welfare Centre reception. If you have any ideas of events or activities you would like to see or would simply like to get involved as a volunteer, please contact Jimmy Bush via the Parish Council.

Horden Heritage Centre, situated in Ambulance House, has been successful in its bid to operate the Green Leaf Café as a “Vintage Themed Tea Room”, which will provide catering on a “light refreshments basis” for the users of the Welfare Park. The Heritage Centre is open to the public every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:30am – 3pm in the months of March – October.

Parish Council Park staff have consistently delivered a service second to none in their upkeep and maintenance of the park and sporting facilities. The staff’s dedication and commitment to excellence ensure that users of the Welfare Park continue to enjoy the amenities at the quality they expect. A special thank you therefore must go to Jimmy Bush, Walter Rudkin and all of the staff for their efforts.

Memorial Park

2014/15 has been a year of general ongoing maintenance at Memorial Park. Those of you who visit the Park on a regular basis will, we are sure, join the Council in praising the Park staff for the excellent standards achieved at the park.

In accordance with village tradition, the annual Remembrance Sunday ceremony and Tree Lighting Service was held in the Park in 2014. The attendance for both events was once again excellent and an inspiration to see.

Repairs were carried out to the Memorial Park Clock once again in 2014, due to it being the subject of vandalism. Members of the Council were extremely dismayed at this and would urge any member of the public to report any sightings of vandalism by contacting the Police in confidence on either 101 or in the event of a crime taking place dial 999.

Cotsford Park

The grassed area in the centre of the inner ring of houses on the Cotsford Park Estate is a registered village green for which the Parish Council has management responsibility.

Horden Regeneration Partnership formed a working group to work in partnership with Horden Parish Council, which were successful in securing funding for a project to revitalise Cotsford Park Play Area, which is a much loved community play area. The overall project aims are to create a flexible, inclusive and safe play area which will stimulate imaginative outdoor play, encourage running and fitness activity, help build the health and fitness of young people who suffer high levels of childhood obesity. It will also bring an underused area of land back into use and help to bring the community together.

Church Green

Church Green is the area of grass at the bottom of the Memorial Park opposite St.Mary's Church. It provides walkways from sixth and Seventh Streets to Blackhills Terrace and has a number of seating areas, litter bins and dog bins.

This area was registered by the Parish Council as a village green in 2014, protecting the green from future development.

Maritime Crescent

The grassed play area at Maritime Crescent in Grants Houses is owned by Durham County Council. The play equipment and mini goals are however, the property of Horden Parish Council and we maintain them.

Sunderland Road Playing Fields

Many football teams continue to use the football pitch at Sunderland Road and there are currently 7 teams allocated pitch space. Whippet racing also takes place on the fields on a Saturday morning, in keeping with the tradition of the village.

The playing fields also cater for more informal activities such as five-a-side football, permanent mini goals are provided on the fields alongside a small play area for children. Users are encouraged to use the car parking facilities on the site so as not to cause obstruction to other road users and pedestrians.

The Parish Council formed a working group in 2014 to discuss the much needed improvements to the pavilion changing room facilities and are hoping to secure grant funding to help towards the costs.

Thorpe Road Cemetery

During 2014/15 a total of 83 burials took place as follows

	Total	Horden	%	Others	%
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All Burials	83	63	76%	20	24%
Full Burials	63	47	75%	16	25%
Ashes	20	16	80%	4	20%
New Grave Spaces Sold	37	31	84%	6	16%

In addition to the eighty-three burials which took place, memorial plaques were sold for display on the Memorial Wall. Many relatives have donated seats in memory of their loved ones. The Parish Council will consider donations of seats, trees, rose bushes and other items, space permitting.

The Parish Council have begun the process of extending the existing cemetery after a public consultation carried out in April 2014, where each household in Horden received details of the proposal and a questionnaire for residents to complete and return, resulted in 786 voting yes out of 792 questionnaires that were completed. The Parish Council have engaged the services of Cemetery Development Services Ltd who will be carrying out the planning and design of the new cemetery extension. An open day will be held in the near future for the residents of Horden to come along to and view the design of the new cemetery extension.

Social Welfare Centre

The Social Welfare Centre continues to be used by many residents and community groups. Activities include quit smoking sessions, Girl Guides, Brownies and Ju-Jitsu lessons. The centre has had an extremely busy year in 2014/15 with outside organisations continuing to hire rooms on a regular basis.

The centre has also seen an increase numbers requesting to hire our Lounge and Main Hall on weekends for occasions such as Weddings, Birthday Parties and the occasional Funeral gathering.



Current regular activities held in the Centre are as below:-

<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Monday	9am – 12noon	Stop Smoking Sessions
	5pm – 6:30pm	Brownies
	5pm – 6pm	Rainbow Guides
	6pm – 9pm	Ju-Jitsu
Tuesday	5pm – 8:30pm	Slimming World
Thursday	10:30am – 2:30pm	Innovations
	1pm – 3pm	C.I.S.W.O. Social Club
	6pm – 8pm	Girl Guides
	7pm – 9pm	Patchwork Quilters
Friday	6:00pm – 9:00pm	Ju-Jitsu
	6:30pm – 11pm	Mechanics Social Club

From April 2014 to March 2015 the following works have been carried out on the centre:-
Asbestos Survery
Replacement Cellar Fuse Board
Replacement Heating Pump
Five new windows fitted
New Fan Heater to Gents toilets
Re-pointing and Cladding to the outside of the centre.

The annual pantomime is still a popular event which the Parish Council host each year, free of charge to all Horden school children. This year's performance was Dick Whittington. We have received many compliments from the local school children, Yohden Primary School even put together a brochure of their visit with a selection of photographs and comments of their favourite parts of the performance. Thank you to the children at Yohden for all their hard work and kind feedback!

For more information on the centre's facilities or if you wish to book a room or function, please contact Alan Atchinson, Social Welfare Centre Manager on 0191 5180823 (Office).

Station Road Allotments

The allotments are situated at the end of Acacia Avenue and are on both sides of the railway bridge. The site is part owned by the Parish Council and part owned by Castle Eden Estates. The Parish Council rent part of the site from Castle Eden Estates and then rent the whole site to the "Station Road Allotments Association" who manage the site. This includes collection of rents and the running of the "Garden Hut".

Planning Applications

The Parish Council are statutory consultees on all planning applications submitted to Durham County Council. This means that the Parish Council have the opportunity to support or object against any application submitted from within the village. During 2014/15 there were 10 applications considered by the Parish Council.

Finance

During 2014/15, the Council set a budget of £610,954. It is estimated that we spent £614,622 during the year which includes some expenditure from earmarked reserves on capital projects.

The Audit Commission appointed external auditors BDO Stoy Hayward, who have set the date for the audit of the Parish Councils accounts as 6th July 2015. By law, any interested person has the right to inspect the Council's accounts. Any registered elector also has the right to ask questions about the accounts or challenge an item of account with them. The accounts will be available for public inspection for 20 working days between 8th June and 3rd July 2015 for this purpose. If you wish to exercise your right to inspect the accounts, please contact Jacqui Hunt, Acting Clerk to the Council between the hours of 10am and 2pm on any of those dates stated.

Publicity & Communications

The Parish Council have their own website www.hordenparishcouncil.gov.uk which provides details of meeting dates and times, details of upcoming events and recent publications, there is also a section for agendas and minutes of meetings. The Parish Council also continue to use social media as a means of reaching the local community.

Four newsletters are published per year which are distributed via the Post Office, Library, Local Shops, the Youth Centre, Social Welfare Centre and Doctors Surgeries.

Events and activities organised by the Council are advertised in the noticeboards at the Welfare Park and Social Welfare Centre, on the website and also social media sites.

Partnership Working

In order to achieve more within the village, the Parish Council works in partnership with others. In 2014, those with whom partnerships have been formed and maintained include, Durham County Council, Horden Regeneration Partnership, Heritage Coast, the Allotments Association, Horden Heritage Society, Peterlee Constabulary, Residents Associations and local sporting groups amongst many more. If you think that your group would achieve more by working with Horden Parish Council, then please contact the Clerk.

Grant Funding

The Parish Council give many grants and donations to local groups and charitable organisations during the year. Some of the grants are in the form of free or reduced rental for the use of Parish Council facilities, particularly the Social Welfare Centre. Other grants are in the form of monetary donations. All requests for grants are considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Listed below are the groups and organisations who received financial assistance in 2014/15:-

Butterwick House Childrens Hospice
County Durham School Benevolent Fund
CISWO Social Club
Dr Joseph Chandy Charitable Trust
East Durham Community Transport
Great North Air Ambulance Service
Hartlepool District Hospice
Haswell & District Mencap
Horden Brownies & Guides
Horden Heritage Society
Horden in Bloom
Horden Regeneration Partnership
Horden Mechanics Club
Paige Robertson Dance School
Patchwork Quilters
Rainbow Guides
Station Road Allotments Association

Strategic Plan

In January 2015, Horden Parish Council continued its formal planning process for the next three years and beyond. Much has been achieved in the past few years and the Council wish to continue to improve services whilst concentrating on keeping the council tax levels at a minimum.

Projects considered for future development:-

Thorpe Road Cemetery extension
Rugby Pitch No.2 Drainage Improvements
Sunderland Road Pavilion Changing Rooms
Social Welfare Centre replacement windows
Social Welfare Centre pointing and wall ties
Social Welfare Centre re-decoration