

# Horden Parish Council Annual Report 2015/16

## Contents

## Page

Message from the Chairman	3
About Us	4
Introduction	5
<u>Review of 2015/16</u>	
Welfare Park	6
Horden Colliery Welfare Association Football Club Litigation	7
Memorial Park	11
Cotsford Park	11
Church Green	11
Maritime Crescent	11
Sunderland Road Playing Fields	12
Thorpe Road Cemetery	12
Social Welfare Centre	13
Station Road Allotments	14
Planning Applications	14
Finance	14
Publicity & Communications	14
Partnership Working	14
Grant Funding	15
Strategic Plan	15

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.....**

As we all know 2015/16 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 re-prioritised the village's 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 2015 I organised my Chairman's Charity Night which was held in the Social Welfare Centre. All proceeds raised went to Great North Air Ambulance & Macmillan Cancer Support, the total raised was a fantastic £1,272.20. 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

Horden 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 Jean White	23 Blackhills Terrace	Chairman of Horden Parish Council
Cllr William Smith	22 Alder Road	Vice-Chairman of Horden Parish Council
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 Parks & Cemetery Committee
Cllr L Williams	1 Warren Street	Vice-Chairman Parks & Cemetery Committee
Cllr Rodie Bagnall	11 Ash Crescent	
Cllr Chris Cain	4 Hudson Avenue	
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 Geoff Robson	Apartment 7, Wesley House, Fourth Street	
Cllr David Tait	6 Warkworth Avenue	
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
Julie Bush	Cemetery Cleaner
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
Sharon Atchinson	SWC 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

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2015/16 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 Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016 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 2015/16, 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.

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 Conference 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 Council 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 the Social Welfare Centre and are 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 2015/16**

### **Welfare Park (Registered Charity Horden Recreation Ground)**

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

In November 2015 the Welfare Park unveiled their new addition, a nine feet tall sculpture of a miner with his heart torn out, at an official ceremony in Horden's Welfare Park on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2015. The parish council purchased the sculpture to honour Britain's proud coal mining heritage linking the past to the present.

Grant contributions from Durham County Councillors June Clark and Paul Stradling towards the parish council's refurbishment of football showers and changing rooms at their pavilion on Sunderland Road, freed up parish council funds to enable the council to purchase the sculpture.

The Parish Council consulted with the village regarding the location and name of the sculpture and the community responded with a lot of feedback. After careful deliberation Councillors decided on "Marra" as a nickname and chose the final location in the Welfare Park, as it was originally paid for by the miners of Horden themselves out of their weekly wages, it was only fitting that Horden's mining heritage should be honoured by placing the sculpture in the park.

The park was once again awarded with Green Flag and Green Heritage site status for the tenth consecutive year. This is an amazing achievement and testament to the dedication of the parks staff.

Green Flag inspection for 2016/17 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.

The Vintage Tea Rooms continue to be a popular attraction in the park, ran by volunteers, the Tea Rooms compliment the Horden Heritage Centre, situated upstairs. The Tea Room and 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 all of the staff for their efforts.

### **Horden Colliery Welfare Association Football Club Litigation**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2003, Horden Parish Council (as Trustee of Horden Recreation Ground) and Horden Colliery Welfare Association Football Club (HCW AFC) entered into a 'Licence' of the Football Ground. Under this agreement HCW AFC were to pay a fee for the use of the facility. The Licence was to last for 10 years.

In 2010 HCW AFC fell into arrears of the Licence fee and a dispute arose. When the Licence came to an end on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2013, Horden Parish Council were not prepared to enter into a new Licence, bearing in mind the arrears HCW AFC had fallen into.

Horden Parish Council subsequently issued proceedings against HCW AFC for possession of the Football Ground and Grandstand, on the basis that the Licence under which HCW AFC occupied the ground had been terminated.

HCW AFC defended the claim and filed a defence and counter claim. The original defence was signed by several members of the Football Club, but as the litigation progressed, the Football Club was represented by Mr Norman Stephens and Mr John Stubbs.

There were numerous interim court hearings throughout the litigated case. In August 2014, summary judgement was obtained against HCW AFC for £7,634.80 and this sum was paid. Some of HCW AFC's counter claims were struck out.

Unsuccessful attempts were made to settle the case by Horden Parish Council. There was a mediation which was ultimately unsuccessful.

A five day trial took place in January 2016. Horden Parish Council won on every point and obtained an order for possession of the ground and an order for the costs, below is a copy of the sealed court order, which is now a public document and matter of public record. The Defendants (Mr Stephens and Mr Stubbs) are currently applying for permission to appeal the judgement to the Court of Appeal.



## General Form of Judgment or Order

In the County Court at  
Newcastle Upon Tyne

Claim Number	3HL00148
Date	4 February 2016



HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL (AS TRUSTEE OF CHARITABLE TRUST)	1 <sup>st</sup> Claimant Ref JAH/HORD 1/7
NORMAN STEPHENS	1 <sup>st</sup> Defendant Ref
(DISCHARGED) BOB WOOD	2 <sup>nd</sup> Defendant Ref
(DISCHARGED) SYLVIA WOOD	3 <sup>rd</sup> Defendant Ref
JOHN STUBBS	4 <sup>th</sup> Defendant Ref

IN THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE COUNTY COURT Claim No. 3HL000148

CHANCERY BUSINESS

HIS HONOUR JUDGE KAYE QC

29 January 2016

BETWEEN:

HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL

(in its capacity as trustee of the Charitable Trust  
known as Horden Recreation Ground)

Claimant

and

(1) NORMAN STEPHENS

(2) JOHN STUBBS

(sued as representatives of HORDEN COLLIERY WELFARE ASSOCIATION

FOOTBALL CLUB)

Defendant

ORDER

AND UPON HEARING Miss Jarron for the Claimant and the Defendants in person

AND UPON it having been ordered on 5 February 2014 that the Horden Colliery Welfare Association Football Club shall be represented by Mr Norman Stephens and Mr John Stubbs

AND UPON the Defendants undertaking to pay to the Claimant on or before 4 pm on 26 February 2016 the sum of £1000 in respect of (1) compensation for use and occupation of the land referred to in paragraph 1 of this order and (2) utility charges, both such amounts representing the sum due from the Defendant up to 29 January 2015

The court office at the County Court at Newcastle Upon Tyne, Law Courts, The Quayside, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 3LA. When corresponding with the court, please address forms or letters to the Court Manager and quote the claim number. Tel: 0191 201 2000 Fax: 0870 3240243. Check if you can issue your claim online. It will save you time and money. Go to [www.moneyclaim.gov.uk](http://www.moneyclaim.gov.uk) to find out more.

Produced by: Mrs A Crawford  
CJR065C



AND UPON the Defendants having agreed that damages for use and occupation of the land referred to in paragraph 1 of this order after 29 January 2016 are payable at the rate of £1500 per annum

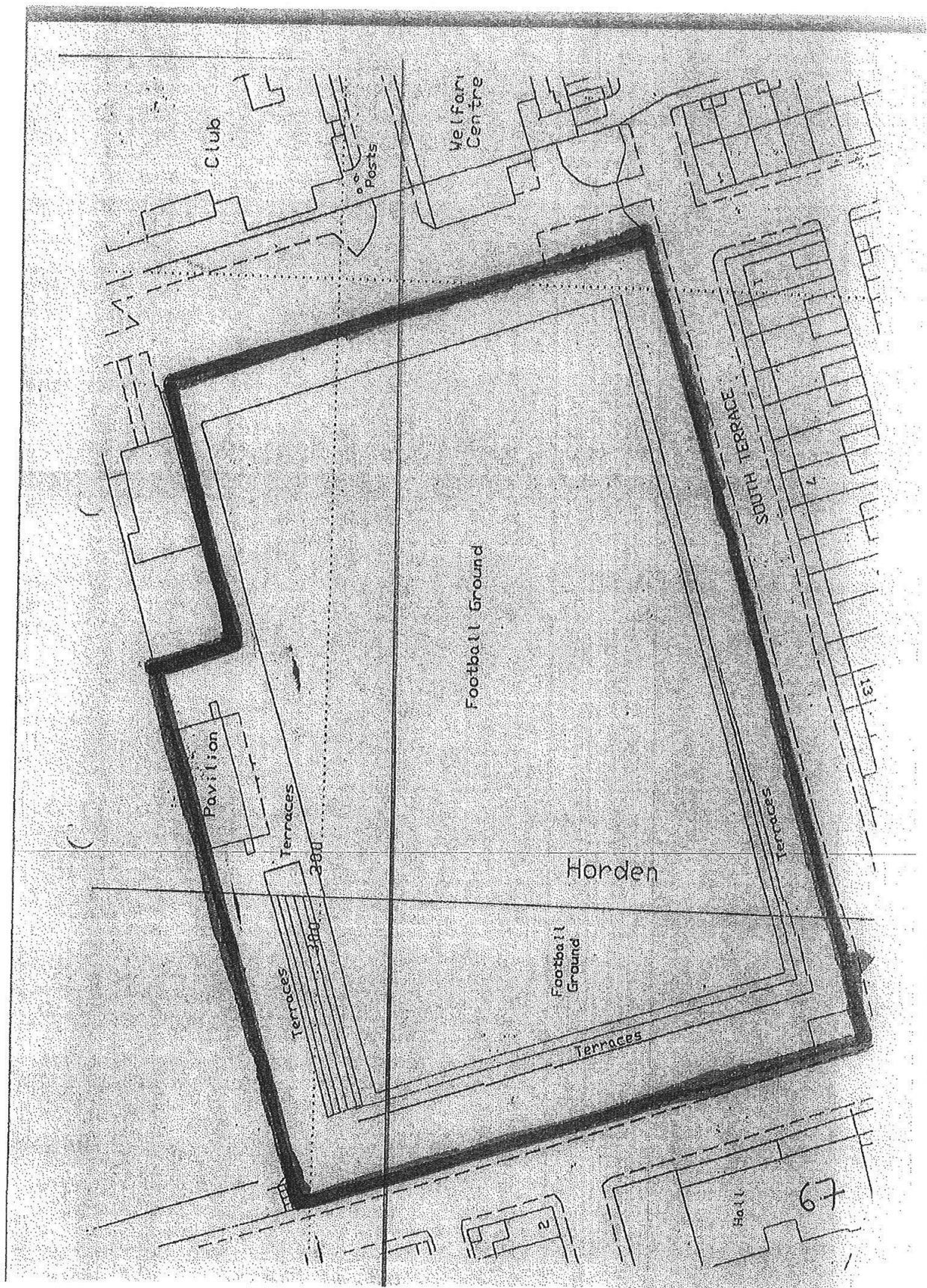
AND UPON hearing the evidence at trial

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. The Claimant do have possession of the football ground and associated premises at the Welfare Park in Horden, Peterlee, County Durham which is shown marked red on the plan attached hereto on or before 4pm on 26 February 2016.
2. Liberty to the Claimant to apply for compensation for use and occupation of the said land.
3. The Defendant's counterclaims are dismissed.
4. The unilateral notice registered for the benefit of the Defendant in the charges register of title no. DU188303 at the Land Registry be vacated.
5. The Chairman and Secretary of the Horden Colliery Welfare Association Football Club shall on or before 4pm on 26 February 2016 provide to the Claimant (1) a list of members of the said Club as at the date of commencement of these proceedings (2 August 2013) and (2) a list of members of the said Club as at the date of this Order (29 January 2016).
6. The Defendants shall pay the Claimant's costs of and incidental to the claim to be subject to a detailed assessment on the indemnity basis if not agreed.
7. The Defendants shall pay the sum of £82,500 on account of costs on or before 4 pm on 12 February 2015 or such further time as the Court may allow. Any such application for further time shall be made on notice to the Claimant and shall provide evidence of the Defendants' means to pay.

Dated 29 January 2016







## Memorial Park

2015/16 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 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 2015. The attendance for both events was once again excellent and an inspiration to see.

## 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.

In 2015 a joint working project has seen a tired play area given a new lease of life. A working group of residents was set up and included representatives from the East Durham Area Action Partnership and Horden Regeneration Partnership as well as the parish council, in order to progress proposals and see the project through to fruition.

Impetus Trust provided nearly £49,000 in funding in order to complete the project.

The public were consulted on their preferences for play equipment and work commenced on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015, with the new play equipment installed by mid-July.

The development included new swings, slides and a disabled inclusive roundabout with a new low metal gated fence being placed surrounding the play area. Five a side goalposts were also installed and paid for by a generous donation from Horden Parish Council's Parks and Cemetery Chairman, Mrs Isabel Roberts.

## 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 back 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

Whippet racing takes place on the fields on a Saturday morning, in keeping with the tradition of the village, although this year there has been no football on the playing fields due to the closure of the pavilion for refurbishment.

In a phased programme of works the entire pavilion will be restored to its former glory. Phase One of the project is now complete which included new ceilings, light fittings, new doors, shutters, new concrete flooring, underfloor heating, new toilets, sinks and basins. The remaining phases of work will commence in 2016.

The project was helped get off the ground by grant donations from Horden's two County Councillors, June Clark and Paul Stradling, who donated £39,000 towards the project.

## Thorpe Road Cemetery

During 2015/16 a total of burials took place as follows

	Total	Horden	%	Others	%
All Burials	61	48	78.69%	13	21.31%
Full Burials	46	39	84.78%	7	15.22%
Ashes	15	9	60%	6	40%

In addition to the sixty-one 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 are in the process of extending the existing cemetery after a public consultation was carried out in April 2014. 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.

At present, negotiations are in hand with the Coal Authority for release of a restrictive covenant that affects the land but the cemetery extension remains a high priority for the Parish Council.

## Social Welfare Centre

The Social Welfare Centre continues to be used by many residents and community groups. Activities include Girl Guides, Brownies and Ju-Jitsu lessons. The centre has had an extremely busy year in 2015/16 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	5pm – 6:30pm 6pm – 9pm	Brownies Ju-Jitsu
Tuesday	5pm – 8:30pm 5:30 – 6:30pm	Slimming World Karate
Thursday	10:30am – 2:30pm 1pm – 3pm 6pm – 8pm 7pm – 9pm	Innovations C.I.S.W.O. Social Club Girl Guides Patchwork Quilters
Friday	6:00pm – 9:00pm 6:30pm – 11pm	Ju-Jitsu Mechanics Social Club

From April 2015 to March 2016 the following works have been carried out on the centre:-

New Hot Water Tank

New Ceiling in the Upstairs Foyer

New Double Glazed Windows in the Main Hall and Lounge

New wall ties

The annual pantomime is still a popular event which the Parish Council host each year, free of charge to all Horden school children. This years' performance was Peter Pan.

In October the Social Welfare Centre hosted a Halloween Disco for the local children, in partnership with One Point. The free of charge party included fancy dress competitions, disco, hot dogs and entertainment.

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 2015/16 there were thirteen applications considered by the Parish Council.

## Finance

During 2015/16, the Council set a budget of £610,954. It is estimated that we spent £837,942 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 11th July 2016. 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 30 working days between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2016 for this purpose. If you wish to exercise your right to inspect the accounts, please contact Paul Davison, 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](http://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.

Newsletters are printed throughout the year, these 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 2015, those with whom partnerships have been formed and maintained include, Durham County Council, Horden Regeneration Partnership, the Area Action Partnership, the Allotments Association, 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 2015/16:-

Butterwick House Childrens Hospice  
CISWO Social Club  
East Durham Community Transport  
Great North Air Ambulance Service  
Durham Cathedral  
Horden Brownies  
Horden Guides  
Horden Regeneration Partnership  
Horden Mechanics Club  
Patchwork Quilters  
Rainbow Guides  
Cotsford Junior School  
Innovations

## Strategic Plan

In January 2016, 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 be high priority  
Sunderland Road Pavilion Roof  
Play area safety flooring  
Social Welfare Centre re-decoration and re-flooring