



# Horden Parish Council Annual Report 2024/25

## Contents

## Page

Message from the Chairman	3
About Us	4
Introduction	4
 <u>Review of 2024/25</u>	
Welfare Park	5
Memorial Park	5
Cotsford Park	5
Church Green	6
Maritime Crescent	6
Sunderland Road Playing Fields	6
Thorpe Road Cemetery	6
Station Road Allotments	6
Social Welfare Centre	7
Finance	7
Grant Funding	7
Publicity & Communications	7
Planning Applications	7
Members Attendance at 2024/25 Meetings	8
Members Claims 2024/25	8

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.....

I was proud to be elected by my fellow councillors as Chairman for 2024/2025.

Councillor Denise Gregory left the Council, however we welcomed Councillors Brian Gash and Cheryl Robson.



During National Apprenticeship Week 2025, we celebrated our Outdoor Team staff who are undertaking or have recently completed apprenticeship studies. Callum Lamb who recently completed NVQ 2 in Amenity Horticulture, Kyle Bagnall who is studying NVQ 3 in Horticulture and Molly Banks who is taking NVQ 2 in Amenity Horticulture. Working hard to keep our parks, cemetery and open spaces in great shape. Well done!

As an Ex-Serviceman, November's annual Remembrance Day Parade and Service was a poignant moment in my year as too was the D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event which was held in June. These events were as usual, well attended by the residents of Horden.



In December we held the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Service where we worked again with Creative Youth Opportunities on a lantern parade, the Salvation Army band and Fr Kyle McNeil who led the carol service.

We also held family activities during the school holiday periods

I hold a monthly surgery for any resident to attend on the first Wednesday of the month between 1.30 and 2.30pm in the Social Welfare Centre. You do not need an appointment, just turn up and have a chat!

I was proud to provide financial support to local organisations and have been working within the cemetery installing a 'letters to heaven' post box for residents.

I would like to thank all members and staff of the council for their support during the year. As a team we work with dedication to the council to serve the residents of Horden.

**Cllr Frank Leadbitter**  
**Chairman of The Council 2024/2025**

## ABOUT US

Horden Parish Council is made up of 15 Councillors and usually meets the first Thursday of every month, with the exception of August. In January we move to the second Thursday.

Your 2024/25 councillors are:-

Cllr Rodie Bagnall

Cllr Thomas Baldasera

Cllr Chris Cain

Cllr Brian Gash (Joined June 2024)

Cllr Denise Gregory (Resigned June 2024)

Cllr Eileen Laing

Cllr Frank Leadbitter

Chairman of Horden Parish Council

Cllr Cheryl Robson (Joined September 2024)

Vice-Chairman Horden Parish Council

Cllr William Morrow

Cllr William Smith

Chairman of Horden Recreation Ground

Cllr David Tait

Cllr Alison Turner

Cllr Jackie Ward

Cllr Laurence Williams

Vice-Chairman of Horden Recreation Ground

Cllr Francis Winrow

Cllr Paula Wood

The Parish Council employs the following staff:-

Samantha Shippen Clerk to the Council & RFO

Colin Jackson Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer

Michelle Hannant Administration and Finance Officer

Brooke Howarth Administration Officer

Angela Lee SWC Operations & Events Manager

John Peace Outdoor Team Manager

Richard Hepworth Outdoor Team Leader

Allan Roberts Gardener / Gravedigger

Joe Hall Gardener / Gravedigger

Kyle Bagnall Gardener / Gravedigger

Callum Lamb Gardener / Gravedigger

Arthur Burton Gardener / Gravedigger (Casual)

Branden Pratt Gardener / Gravedigger (Casual)

Sharon Atchinson SWC Cleaner

Vacant SWC Cleaner

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2024/25 Annual Report of the Parish Council. This report has been produced and made available prior to the Annual Assembly to be held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 6pm in the Social Welfare Centre.

The Annual Assembly is a meeting of the electors of the Parish of Horden and gives an opportunity for any registered elector of the parish 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, although only registered electors are able to participate.

Horden Parish Council deliver many services in the village, including the provision of parks, playing fields and recreation areas. The Council also manage Thorpe Road Cemetery and the Social Welfare Centre.

The Council's aim is to give the residents of Horden information about the Parish Council and the services it delivers in the village, to outline how it deals with current challenges and highlight plans to meet community needs and deliver quality services in the next year and beyond.

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 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 on its 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 is 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.

Minutes of meetings are available for public inspection at the Social Welfare Centre and via our website. Any member of the public is entitled by law to obtain printed copies of the minutes at reasonable cost. These can be obtained from the Parish Council Offices at the Social Welfare Centre.

## **REVIEW OF 2024/25**

### **Welfare Park (Registered Charity Horden Recreation Ground 520826)**

The Council is sole Trustee of the Charity.

A 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 events can be found displayed in park noticeboards, in the window at the Social Welfare Centre and on our Facebook page (Horden Parish Council). In summer 2024 we continued to provide a number of "Summer Holiday" and other events, supported by our partners at Creative Youth Opportunities.

A number of local partners and organisations have used the Welfare Park to host their events and activities over the course of 2024. HCW Football and Cricket Clubs continue to grow their sports within the park particularly for young people. The Council look forward to continued successful partnership working to provide activities for residents, whilst fully utilising facilities.

Creative Youth Opportunities CIC has now an established presence in the Parish providing youth provision within Park House and at the Social Welfare Centre each week.

The Vintage Tea Room and Heritage Centre, run by volunteers, continues to be a popular attraction in the park. The Tea Room and Heritage Centre are open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:30am – 3pm in the months of March – October. If you haven't sampled the beautiful cakes, savouries and sandwiches, you are missing out!

Parish Council staff have continued to deliver a great service in their upkeep and maintenance of the park and sporting facilities. The 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 the staff for their efforts, we are sure you notice the beautiful shrub and flower beds, but also appreciate the relatively litter-free environment.

### **Memorial Park**

2024/25 has been a year of general ongoing maintenance at Memorial Park. The staff continue to achieve excellent standards at the park.

True to village tradition, the annual Remembrance Sunday ceremony and Tree Lighting Service were held in the Park in 2024. With an additional D-Day celebration event held on 6<sup>th</sup> June. The attendance for all these events was once again excellent.

### **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.

### 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.

### Sunderland Road Playing Fields

A number of football teams continue to use the football pitches at Sunderland Road. If you have a team that would like to use our facilities, you need to book with us, we will then make sure our car parking and changing rooms are available. Any organised use of the facilities requires the Council's permission.

Whippet racing also takes place on the fields on a Saturday morning and Thursday afternoon, in keeping with the tradition of the village.

The playing fields also cater for more informal activities such as an outdoor gym, five-a-side football, permanent mini goals are provided on the fields alongside a small play area for children.

### Thorpe Road Cemetery

During 2024/25 a total of 44 burials took place as follows:

	Total	Horden	%	Others	%
All Burials	44	25	57%	19	43%
Full Burials	31	20	65%	11	35%
Ashes	13	5	38%	8	62%

In addition to the forty four burials, memorial plaques were sold for display on the memorial wall. The Parish Council will consider donations of seats, trees, rose bushes and other items, space permitting.

The cemetery rules of management were revised in 2022 following a public consultation. Families should make themselves familiar with the rules and regulations, details of which are on the Council website.

We make regular inspections of headstones, if any are identified as unstable, they will be laid flat. All rights holders are contacted at the last known address, although the majority of letters get returned as unknown. We remind families that older graves may require the permission to be renewed, at a fee and that we require any change of address to be notified so we can contact you if there are any issues.

A "Letters to Heaven" post-box and a refurbished seat were recently installed at the cemetery. We have successfully secured funding to develop the Teddy Bear SMILES memorial area within the cemetery, with thanks from the Area Action Partnership Neighbourhood Budget.

### Station Road Allotments

The allotments are situated at the end of Acacia Avenue and are on both sides of the railway bridge. The land is part owned by the Parish Council and part owned by Castle Eden Estates and the whole site is rented to Station Road Allotment Association who manage the site on our behalf. We are grateful to the Committee for their work.



## Social Welfare Centre

The Social Welfare Centre continues to be used by many residents and community groups. Activities include Horden Girl Guides, Horden Residents' Association, Horden Regeneration Partnership, Andy's Man Club and Horden Banner Committee to name a few. This year we welcomed Hooked on Crafts as a new regular group to the Centre.

The Social Welfare Centre continues to provide office space for Durham Deafened Support and Durham County Council - Horden Together who occupy the first floor of the Social Welfare Centre. Horden Together has a team of staff who are supporting vulnerable residents and helping to improve the environment in Horden in both practical ways and using their powers of enforcement where necessary. For further information about the work of Horden Together they can be contacted on 03000 263 387.

## Finance

During 2024/25, the Council set a budget of £1,030,567. It is estimated that the Council spent £629,643 during the year. The reason for the difference is that planned capital projects did not go ahead due to staffing changes. Details of the Council Budget can be found on the Council's website.

## 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 Council, a total of £10,606.77 was granted.

Listed below are the groups and organisations who received financial assistance in 2024/25:

Group/Organisation	Amount
Horden Girl Guides	£1,066.08
Patchwork	£939.32
Horden Together Office Rental	£600.00
Horden Residents Association	£245.88
Banner Committee	£22.16
Creative Youth Opportunities	£908.51

Group/Organisation	Amount
CISWO	£1,621.50
Andy's Man Club	£2,664.00
Warm Space	£2,450.49
East Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils	£22.16
County Durham Association of Local Councils	£66.67

## Publicity & Communications

The Parish Council continued updating our website: <https://horden-pc.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 Facebook and noticeboards as a means of communicating with the local community.

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.

## Planning Applications

The Parish Council is a consultee on all planning applications submitted to Durham County Council for Horden. This means that the Parish Council has the opportunity to support or object to any application submitted from within the village. During 2024/25 there were no applications considered to require a response by the Parish Council.

## Members Attendance at Meetings 2024/25

Meeting date	Councillor															
	Rodie Bagnall	Thomas Baldasera	Chris Cain	Brian Gash	Denise Gregory	Eileen Laing	Frank Leadbitter	William Morrow	Cheryl Robson	William Smith	David Tait	Alison Turner	Jackie Ward	Laurence Williams	Francis Winrow	Paula Wood
09/05/24	Aa	✓	✓		0	✓	✓	✓		Aa	Aa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
06/06/24	✓	✓	Ar	✓		✓	✓	✓		Aa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11/07/24	✓	✓	✓	Aa		✓	✓	✓		Aa	Aa	✓	✓	Aa	✓	Aa
05/09/24	Aa	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Aa	Aa	✓	✓	0	✓	Aa
03/10/24	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Aa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	Aa	✓
07/11/24	✓	✓	✓	✓		Ar	✓	✓	✓	Aa	✓	✓	✓	0	Aa	✓
05/12/24	✓	✓	Aa	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Aa	✓	✓	0	✓	Aa
16/01/25	✓	✓	✓	0		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Aa	✓	✓
06/02/25	✓	✓	✓	0		✓	✓	✓	✓	Aa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Ar
06/03/25	Aa	Aa	✓	0		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Aa	✓	✓	✓	Aa	✓
03/04/25	✓	✓	✓	0		✓	✓	✓	✓	Aa	Aa	✓	✓	✓	Aa	✓

Key:	✓	Attended Meeting	0	No Apologies Received
	Aa	Apologies Accepted	Ar	Apologies Received

## Members Allowances and Expenses Claims 2024/25

Listed below for public disclosure is the allowances and other expenses claimed by the Parish Council's elected Members during the financial year 2024/25.

Surname	Forename	Allowance £	Total Payment £
Bagnall	Rodie	571.93	571.93
Baldasera	Thomas	Not eligible (Co-opted)	0.00
Cain	Chris	571.93	571.93
Gash	Brian	Not eligible (Co-opted)	0.00
Gregory	Denise	No claim	0.00
Laing	Eileen	571.93	571.93
Leadbitter	Francis	571.93	571.93
Morrow	William	571.93	571.93
Robson	Cheryl	Not eligible (Co-opted)	0.00
Smith	William	571.93	571.93
Tait	David	571.93	571.93
Turner	Alison	No claim	0.00
Ward	Jackie	Not eligible (Co-opted)	0.00
Williams	Laurence	571.93	571.93
Winrow	Francis	571.93	571.93
Wood	Paula	Not eligible (Co-opted)	0.00