

ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2015/2016

CHAIR'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the annual report from Alston Moor Parish Council. We welcomed some new faces on the council following the May 2015 elections, and said goodbye to several long-standing members. Sadly, John Glendinning's injury has meant that he has only just been able to start attending council meetings.

Our monthly meetings are but one element in the work of the parish council. We have established working groups on specific issues, and a great deal of other 'behind-the-scenes' work goes on at all times. We aim to ensure that the best interests of the whole of Alston Moor are safeguarded and promoted, whether that be in dialogue with Eden District Council or Cumbria County Council, working with other local groups or individuals, responding to local concerns, or lobbying various bodies that have an impact on our community.

Looking back, I realise it has been another challenging year, but with some real highlights. Who could forget the excitement of watching the Tour of Britain live or in the Town Hall on the big screen? Then the decision by Go North East buses to run a regular service to Haltwhistle has re-connected us to the major public transport systems, which combined with the Community minibus, available for hire and at times for certain routes connecting to other public transport, makes life a little easier for those without, or not wishing to always use, a car.

With the backing of the parish council, I worked hard with local residents Malcolm Forster and Adrian Rush to try to save Barclay's Bank. Although this proved impossible, we did succeed in keeping the ATM, at least for another year. Please use it, so we can demonstrate the ongoing need. There have, unfortunately, been problems with setting up the Alston Ambulance, but we have been working closely with the North West Ambulance Service and I am confident that we will have a good ambulance service before long. The recent Success Regime report on the future of Cumbria's hospitals, including a threat to the in-patient beds at Alston Cottage Hospital, means that there can be no let-up in the fight to retain services on Alston Moor. We managed to get a superb turn-out for the initial consultation on the proposals, and many others have completed the questionnaire online or via the posting to every home on Alston Moor. Now we need to follow-up with attendance at a meeting which will be held at Samuel King's School on Tuesday 10 May at Alston Town Hall. Please come along, hear what the Success Regime have to say, and make sure our views are clearly heard.

Alix Martin

FINANCIAL REPORT

Council income is derived from the parish tax paid by local residents (collected via council tax), fees and charges for use of council facilities, land rents and grants or funding application awards to support activities. The accounts are inspected regularly by an Internal Auditor and submitted annually to the Audit Commission for independent ratification. The accounts below are unaudited (auditing will take place in July)

INCOME 2015/16	
Budgeted	£27,450
Ambulance appeal	£626
Grants	£802
Property	£513
Town Hall	£2,235
Other	£44
VAT	£3,064
Total	£34,734
EXPENDITURE 2015/16	
Establishment	£13,952
Donations	£6,600
Property Management	£4,930
Elections	£485
Community Warden	£2,144
Town Hall	£7,021
Ambulance/Tour of Britain	£486
VAT	£686
Total	£36,304

GRANTS TO LOCAL GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

£350	Alston Town Hall
£350	Garrigill Village Hall
£350	Nenthead Village Hall
£350	Tyne Willows Sports Pavilion
£570	Fairhill Recreation Grounds (includes rental for car park lease)
£250	Garrigill Village Hall recreation grounds
£250	Nenthead Playarea
£250	Citizen's Advice Bureau
£2,000	Townscape Heritage Initiative
£500	Garrigill community toilets
£500	Nenthead community toilets
£300	Garrigill Allotment Garden Association
£300	War Memorial Appeal
£50	Rural Highlights

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

Alston and Nenthall War Memorials – the parish council actively supports the volunteers who are fundraising to renovate the war memorials to commemorate 100 years since the start of WW1.

Alston Town Hall – the parish council is the sole trustee of Alston Town Hall.

Fairhill Estates Charity – parish councillors are also trustees to this charity, whose income comes mainly from land rents. Anyone from the parish experiencing financial difficulty is welcome to apply.

Fairhill Recreation Grounds Car Park – the parish council has taken on the lease for the car park, contributing annually towards maintenance costs carried out by the trustees.

Firs and Henderson's Woods – the council owns Firs Wood and leases Henderson's Wood.

Tyne Willows Car Park – is available for users of the field, who are asked to respect the space; please don't litter or abandon vehicles, and clear up after your dog.

Tyne Willows Pavilion – is owned by the parish council and leased on a peppercorn rent to Alston Fitness Club

Tyne Willows Playing Fields – are leased as a school playing field, but may be hired for community events.

ELECTED MEMBERS and REPRESENTATIVES

Parish councillors are elected every four years and were last elected in May 2015.

Saturday surgeries – are held in the Alston Moor Partnership shop 10.30-12.30 every week. Come along to complain, compliment, have a chat or make a suggestion!

COUNCILLORS

Alston Ward

David Athey, John Glendinning, Pat Godwin, Alix Martin (Chair), Ray Miller, Alastair Robertson, Rachael Thomson, Gary Wright

Garrigill Ward

Alan Green, Elaine Grew, Tim Haldon

Nenthead Ward

Brian Aves, Matthew Herdman, Stan Hill, Dick Phillips

Parish Clerk - Chris Johnson (01434) 382076

Parish councillors are also representatives to:

Alston United Charities – Garrigill representative Elaine Grew

Alston Moor Fitness Club – Tim Haldon, Matthew Herdman

Alston Moor Partnership – Tim Haldon

Alston Moor Traffic Management Committee – David Athey, Elaine Grew, Gary Wright

Alston Transport Group – David Athey, Elaine Grew, Gary Wright

Friends of Alston Town Hall – Alastair Robertson

Highway Representatives in contact with the Highway Steward – David Athey

Tyne Willows Management Board – Matthew Herdman, Alix Martin, Ray Miller

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS take place in venues around Alston Moor on the first Monday of the month unless there is a bank holiday, when the meeting will be held on the second Monday. Meetings are open to the public, who may, by prior arrangement with the chairman or clerk, comment on any subject on the agenda or matter of public interest during a public participation session.