



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019

CHAIR'S REPORT

This has been a challenging year, as the effects of austerity are having an impact on what is expected of the parish council. As the government has been withdrawing funding from district and county councils and with them having reached the limit of the savings that could be made and the activities cut, we have been asked to take on more responsibilities. One of the key issues is street lighting. We have all had to become aware of the difference between highway lighting – the responsibility of the County Council – and footway lighting – which comes under Eden District Council. Together with Claire Driver, our County Councillor, we have managed to negotiate new lights on Front Street which have been installed by the County Council but we will have to take over responsibility for some lights if we wish them to continue, as the District/County will no longer maintain them. This inevitably comes with a cost and there may be no way round raising the parish precept, the part of council tax which comes to us, in future years.

Another big issue arising from the changes in local authority finance is the maintenance of our public toilets in Alston. We will need to decide whether to take them on, given that in the long run they may close unless we do so.

Many of us will have contributed some thoughts to the Community Plan, and now that it is completed, I hope that many individuals, groups and organisations will want to be part of the actions suggested. The Parish Council intends to work with the Alston Moor Partnership and others to look at ways we can help the ideas move forward, both in terms of large and small projects applying for grant-funding, and by supporting groups to do things that are relevant to them and contribute to the overall aim of ensuring that Alston Moor is a good place to live and work for many years to come.

We do, of course, look at planning applications every month and in relation to those and anything else on our agenda, we allow a set time within each meeting for members of the public to make their points, and we are pleased that more people are choosing to do so.

I may now be Chair, but that only means that I have taken on a particular rôle. The work of the parish council depends on all the councillors, and I thank them all for their thought, consideration and hard work over the last year, particularly to Tim Haldon who was Chair for much of the year. Thanks are also due to our District Councillors, Lissie Sharp and Pat Godwin, and our County Councillor Claire Driver, who have attended most parish council meetings and provided an invaluable link, in both directions, between the parish council and those larger councils. No report would be complete without thanking Chris Johnson, our parish clerk, whose knowledge, understanding and tireless work make our activities and decisions possible.

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 2018/19	
Budgeted	£50,945
Tyne Willows	£400
Town Hall	£3,258
Rents	£12
Donations	£630
EDC footway lights grant	£6653
EDC refund & bank error	£4,202
Bank int	£17
VAT	£912
Total	£67,029
EXPENDITURE 2018/19	
Establishment	£14,496
Budgeted donations	£16,250
Property Management	£5,414
Community Warden	£2,743
Community grants/S137	£578
Town Hall	£3,650
Tyne Willows	£425
EDC charging error	£4,142
VAT	£1,260
Total	£48,958

GRANTS TO LOCAL GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

£5,500	Alston Town Hall
£2,000	Townscape Heritage Initiative
£2,000	Alston Moor Historical Society
£600	Alston Schools Federation PTA Fireshow
£550	Garrigill community toilets
£550	Nenthead community toilets
£500	Garrigill Village Hall
£500	Nenthead Village Hall
£500	Tyne Willows Sports Pavilion
£500	Fairhill Recreation Grounds
£500	Garrigill Village Hall Recreation Grounds
£500	Nenthead Playarea
£500	Nenthead Community Works
£500	Alston Gala
£500	Nenthead Gala
£500	Eden Ventures Youth Group
£50	Alston Moor Newsletter
£50	Royal British Legion
£175	Alston Moor Historical Society (Community Grant)
£300	Alston Moor Community Energy (Community Grant)

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

Alston and Nenthall War Memorials– Historic England is considering adding Alston War Memorial to the List of Buildings of Special Historic Interest.

Alston Town Hall – the parish council is the sole trustee of Alston Town Hall, and employs a part time Town Hall manager, who is developing a programme of events. Look out for details on posters and social media.

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 leases the car park, contributing annually towards maintenance costs carried out by the trustees.

Footway lighting – Eden District Council are in the process of upgrading and transferring some (but by no means all) footway lights to the parish council. The parish has a maintenance agreement with the district council's contractors, so faults can continue to be reported to the district council.

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.

COUNCILLORS

Alston Ward

David Athey, John Glendinning, Pat Godwin, Chris Harrison, Holly Ho, Alix Martin, Ray Miller, Gary Wright.

Garrigill Ward

Alan Green, Elaine Grew, Tim Haldon.

Nenthead Ward

Brian Aves, Maxine Denoual, Lewis Moncrieff, Maxine Shepherd.

Parish Clerk - Chris Johnson (01434) 382076

Parish councillors are also representatives to:

Alston Alliance – Elaine Grew, Alix Martin

Alston United Charities – Elaine Grew, Alix Martin, Gary Wright

Alston Moor Fitness Club–Holly Ho

Alston Moor Partnership – Pat Godwin

Alston Moor Traffic Management Committee – David Athey, Elaine Grew (Garrigill representative), Gary Wright

Alston Moor Community Transport – David Athey, Maxine Shepherd

Dementia Action Alliance – Elaine Grew, Holly Ho

Highway Representative– David Athey

Tyne Willows Management Board – Ray Miller, Elaine Grew, John Glendinning

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS take place in venues around Alston Moor usually 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 the public participation session.

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITEwww.alstonmoor.org