



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

First, I must thank all who have assisted me in the last 11 months, both Councillors, present and past, the Parish Clerk and the various officers at EDC who all have been on great support and a fountain of knowledge. I also had a great resource with the use of the HR company, who many questioned their appointment, but I would have been lost without them. I also need to thank the people of Alston who on the whole have kept me going with their encouragement.

I took over the role of Chair of the PC at a difficult time, following a couple of turbulent years, both inside the PC and of course the troubles with Covid. Covid I may say was easier to deal with.

However, I can't leave the subject of 'troubles' without mentioning, issues which continue to plague us. Social media has undermined the PC for many years and hopefully councillors have learnt the lessons of the past. It would, however, be remiss of me, not to mention that I am very pleased on the whole with my fellow councillors, who now try and avoid social media, in relation to PC issues.

The place for the public to question actions and plans of the PC should be at PC meetings and not on social media, so my councillors are right not to respond to comments on media platforms. If the people who wish to complain, can't be bothered to come to PC meetings, they, in my opinion should not attack the PC, the work it does or the councillors themselves.

The long awaited 'investigation' came in with gusto and went out with a wimp. The outcome in my opinion was a bit of a fudge, however I have said since day one, that whatever the outcome, this PC must abide by the findings and apply where possible the recommendations. The outcome was clear, that no codes of conduct were broken by anyone and that the failings were down to lack of training and understanding of procedures, by all concerned. Eden District Council have recommended that systems be put in place to ensure going forward the AMPC follow certain procedures.

This might not be what people want to hear, but one thing is for sure, this must now be placed in a box and the lid sealed and whilst lessons should be learnt about mutual respect and communication, these events of the past should be left in the past. We can't as a PC move forward for the benefit of our community if we keep opening the box. There are still some members both past and present that need to remember this.

Whilst I know this report should not, deal with issues with the Town Hall, it should be noted that a lot of work has been done by your councillors, in actioning a number of improvements and renovations, which were identified by previous members managing the Town Hall. (note the PC is classed as sole trustee as a group and not individuals)

In closing, due to my imminent move away from Alston, I have decided not to stand as Chair next year, unless there are no alternative volunteers. I feel it would be unfair to a new chair to have to step in with just a few months of the year to go before the 2023 elections, when we as a PC will have to deal with a new regulatory authority.

I will remain a member of this PC for the duration of my term, to allow some continuity and to assist in completing some of the work still outstanding.

I wish this PC and the community it serves all the best for the future.

Norman English DipPFS
Chair of Alston Moor Parish Council

CLERK'S THOUGHTS

My thanks to everyone in the community and especially those people who have been willing to put themselves forward for election or co-option to the council over the past year. As a small parish council, it is not possible to work alone, so working alongside the many community organisations on Alston Moor is key to achieving the actions and success this community deserves.

The spotlight has been on parish councils with the video that went viral of Jackie Weaver and the council she stepped in to help. She stars in a new video to help get more people involved in local councils. Here is the link:

[https://youtu.be/ RrvU5V0GY8](https://youtu.be/RrvU5V0GY8)

FINANCIAL REPORT

Council income is derived from the parish tax paid by 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 & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - YEAR ENDING 31st. March 2022					
Alston Moor Parish Council					
INCOME	2022	2021	EXPENDITURE	2022	2021
Annual Precept	£66,186.00	£49,281.00	Administration	£14,815.08	£17,887.74
CTRS	£954.00	£959.00	Precept Donations	£14,970.00	£15,720.00
Tyne Willows	£390.88	£298.00	S137 GPC Payments	£234.50	£50.00
Grants	£4,623.75	£7,006.34	Land & Property Management	£5,026.22	£19,742.28
Alston Town Hall	£6,020.22	£3,887.37	General Purpose/Donations	£1,200.00	£1,000.00
War memorial	£0.00	£113.97	Alston Town Hall	£5,268.26	£4,561.83
Bank interest	£106.38	£6.91	Tyne Willows	£2,080.54	£281.67
VAT	£810.67	£525.69	War Memorials	£260.00	£113.97
			Grants/Misc	£6,573.52	£3,842.81
			VAT	£1,240.09	£506.02
TOTAL INCOME	£79,091.90	£62,078.28	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£51,668.21	£63,706.32
Excess income/expenditure	£27,423.69	-£1,628.04	Bank balances at close of year 31/03		
Opening balance	£78,920.97	£74,499.01	Current account	£87,181.07	£59,180.76
Closing balance	£106,344.66	£72,870.97	Money Manager	£12,734.92	£12,733.63
			PCCU	£7,111.67	£7,006.58
			Total	£107,027.66	£78,920.97
			Unpresented Cheques	-£683.00	-£6,050.00
			True Balance	£106,344.66	£84,970.97

GRANTS TO LOCAL GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

Alston Town Hall	£ 510
Garrigill Village Hall	£510
Nenthead Village Hall	£510
Tyne Willows Pavilion (Alston Fitness Club)	£510
Alston Recreation Grounds	£510
Garrigill Village Hall play area	£510
Nenthead Play area	£ 510
Garrigill Village Hall public toilets	£ 550
Nenthead Community Toilets	£ 550
Alston Town Hall - maintenance	£5,000
Alston Moor Historical Society	£2,000
Nenthead Community Works	£ 750

Alston Moor Newsletter	£ 50
Alston Fitness Club	£1,000
Royal British Legion - wreaths	£ 75
Alston Recreation grounds – bike feasibility study	£750
Alston Bowls Club	£750
Alston Moor Business Assoc. Community Grant	£300
Alston Gala – Community Grant	£300
Alston PTA Fire show 20/21	£600

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

Alston and Nenthall War Memorials – both Memorials have been added 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 caretaker. Other tasks are being managed by the trustees on a voluntary basis.

Fairhill Estates Charity – parish councillors are also trustees to this charity, whose income comes mainly from renting out land. 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 has upgraded and transferred some of the 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 and county council on-line or through Local Links.

Firs and Henderson's Woods – the council owns Firs Wood and leases Henderson's Wood. Regrettably many mature ash trees developed ash die back disease.

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 with full council elections in May 2019. Elections and co-options took place in 2021-22 for ward councillors who resigned part way through their term of office.

COUNCILLORS

Alston Ward

Brian Cooper, Brian Davies, Norman English, Michael Hanley, Steve Hattersley, Chris Harrison, Holly Ho, Ray Miller

Garrigill Ward

Paul Best, Alan Green, Elaine Grew

Nenthead Ward

Ian Lindley, Graeme Ransom, Alastair Robertson, Ron Robinson

Parish Clerk - Chris Johnson (01434) 382076

Parish councillors are also representatives to:

Alston Area Planning Team – Elaine Grew

Alston Alliance – Michael Hanley, Elaine Grew

Alston United Charities – Elaine Grew & council appointee Zerel Robson

Alston Moor Emergency Response Group – Elaine Grew, Chris Harrison, Michael Hanley

Alston Moor Fitness Club – Brian Davies, Ray Miller, Paul Best

Alston Moor Partnership – Chris Harrison

Alston Moor Traffic Management Committee –Elaine Grew (Garrigill representative), Chris Harrison (Agricultural representative)

Alston Moor Community Transport – Michael Hanley

High Mill Waterwheel project – Ray Miller, Alastair Robertson

NWAS Alston Moor working group – Elaine Grew, Graeme Ransom, Michael Hanley (until March 2022)

Tree Wardens – Alan Green, Chris Harrison

Tyne Willows Management Board – Holly Ho, two vacancies

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS are held 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 matter of local public interest during the public participation session.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS the council has one committee, the Development, Governance and Policy Committee which also considers finance and staffing. It has no decision-making powers. Meetings are held as required.

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE www.alstonmoor.org