

Healeyfield Parish Council

Serving Castleside and District



Striving to keep our community thriving

Adam Pearson, Chairman. 'Conway House', 35 Consett Road, Castleside,
Consett, County Durham. DH8 9QL
T: 01207 593961 M: 07808734057 E: aepearson@live.co.uk

2 June 2017

Chairman's Annual Report 2016/2017

I was honoured to accept the Chairmanship of Healeyfield Parish Council for the third consecutive year. It has been a very busy and productive year; continuing with some projects from 2015/2016, but more importantly embarking on new projects, some of which will continue into forthcoming municipal year.

The Parish Council have continued to try and keep Castleside and the surrounding areas looking pristine. Over the past year we have continued to cut the grass throughout Rowley and also opposite Maudville. Bulb planting was undertaken at various sites throughout the village organised by Cllr Judith Robson. Over 20 flower tubs were filled with summer and winter bedding plants which were nurtured throughout the seasons by Cllr Jo Foster. Cllrs Judith Robson and Jo Foster once again led the annual 'Big Clean Up' in conjunction with Durham County Council. As in previous years, the event was well attended and a lot of litter collected.

Fly tipping has quickly become a major problem throughout County Durham particularly in semi-rural area like ours. In an attempted to combat this problem, the Parish Council, along with other Parish Councils in the Mid-Durham AAP area, bought a share in some CCTV cameras. These are placed in areas designated as 'hot spots' and are monitored by DCC Neighbourhood wardens. They have already proved to be a success at the current with 3 separate incidents currently being investigated.

On Sunday 12th June 2016, villagers joined together to celebrate HM the Queens 90th Birthday. A 'bring and share' party tea, complete with Prosecco was enjoyed by all. This was followed by superlative entertainment from Miss Frances Archer. This was a joint event with the Village Hall Committee and I thank them for their support not only with this event, but also for their hospitality for our monthly meetings.

It has been a number of years since the cessation of the Castleside Show. In September the Parish Council began to explore the possibility of reviving, in some way, this once popular event. Titled 'Autumn Festival' the event involved; competitions, refreshments and entertainment on a Sunday afternoon. I hope that it will be grow and become an annual event following its success.

Visit our website at www.healeyfieldparishcouncil.co.uk

The service of remembrance, to pay tribute to the fallen in The Great War, World War 2 and subsequent battles, was organised by the Parish Council as was exceptionally well attended by villagers. Members of Bishop Auckland Pipe Band played for elements of the service and members of the Air Cadets (1409 (Consett) Squadron) formed a guard of honour around the memorial. In addition, clergy from all churches which serve the parish of Healeyfield led the service. Representatives from The Royal British Legion and SSAFA were also welcomed for the first time to Healeyfield along with representatives from across all manner of organisations that serve the parish.

In December, the Parish Council once again held the Christmas Light 'switch on' in conjunction with St Johns, Castleside. Rev Martin Jackson officiated at the event and the choir from Castleside Primary School performed. My thanks to all at St John's and also to the staff and students at Castleside Primary School.

The Parish Council was pleased to appoint, by co-option, Mr Phillip Marshall to the position of councillor in December. Phillip brings with him far reaching knowledge of local government and engaging with volunteer/charitable organisations. He is also the public representative for the Mid-Durham Area Action Partnership.

The Parish Wood continues to be 'a work in progress'. We are currently reviewing the woodland management plan in line with the public consultation in 2015. This is being undertaken by Cllr Adrian Hird, lead for the Parish Wood, with the aid of Mr Peter Downes, Woodland Officer from the Land of Oak and Iron, and also Rachel Sparks. The wood has been host to volunteer training sessions and these will continue to be held regularly throughout the ensuing year. These sessions also mean that work is carried out is unobtrusive and therefore retains the natural beauty of the woodland.

Following the discontinuation of Durham County Councils free website provision for parish councils, the decision was made to use an alternative provider. This was, after a lot of investigation by our clerk, the best value for money for our requirements. Our clerk was also successful in obtaining funding for its construction, maintenance and training in its use. Although it has taken a long while to build, it was live from April 2017. The website is another way that the parish council engages with the community and it is also required by law under the Transparency Code.

Some projects started in 2016/2017 remain to be completed. One of these is the restoration of the War Memorial and surroundings in Castleside Churchyard. The parish council continue to work closely with the Church of England to obtain the relevant permissions to undertake this work. The parish council were successful in obtaining a grant from the Mid-Durham Area Action Partnership to commission a sculpture of a Lead Miner and Tub to celebrate the areas rich industrial past. Lastly, an area of disused land, on the northern edge of Consett Road, is being prepared for planting.

A grand application is currently being prepared by members of the Parish Council to commemorate 100 years since The Great War (WW1). This working party have lots of ideas including: a heritage trail and memorial garden. To recognise the ending of the First World War, the Parish Council, with a donation from Mr A. D. Addison (Freeman of Healeyfield), is in the planning stages of an event to include the lighting of a Beacon on 11th November 2018.

The Parish Council are constantly seeking to engage with residents. One way we currently do this is through our quarterly newsletter. We are about to undertake a major review of this publication to ensure that we are delivering the best possible coverage of our information and that of other organisations within the parish.

In conclusion, all members of the Council have worked hard to represent the residents and do what they feel is in their best interests. This, at times, does feel rather tedious, but never the less, all things have turned out well. I wish to thank all fellow councillors for their hard work and dedication over the past year and for their support in my year as chairman. I must also thank the Parish Clerk and Responsible Officer, Mrs Ruth Wright. Ruth has worked tirelessly for the Parish Council this year and all of her efforts are truly appreciated. Lastly, my thanks to Ossie Johnson and Richard Young our County Councillors for the year.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Adam Pearson". The signature is written in black ink and is enclosed within a thin, hand-drawn oval border.

Adam Pearson
Chairman, Healeyfield Parish Council 2016/2017.