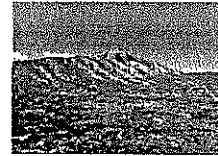


HILL TALK

A Village Partnership and Parish Council joint publication

September 2012
Issue 3



YOUR COMMUNITY CENTRE THE FUTURE

Quarrington Hill community centre was number 23 out of 36 community buildings which Durham County Council (DCC) decided should stay open and be subject to part of the £2.15 million investment they would make in these buildings.

For these buildings DCC wants the management committees to take over full responsibility for all aspects of the building and its running costs by means of an asset transfer. The asset transfer involves the management committee taking out a long term lease on the building rather than taking ownership of the building. We are in the first ten committees with which DCC have opened negotiation. Under the main change proposed by DCC the management committee will be responsible for all structural repairs to the building and to this end the management committee will ensure that all obligations under the current lease will be carried out by DCC before any agreement is made with DCC. Whilst the community centre is a registered charity, under the proposals, we would also be a registered as a "company limited by guarantee" which would limit the personal liability of trustees in the unlikely event of the community centre running into financial problems. The negotiations are still at an early stage and the management committee will ensure that there is, ultimately, a satisfactory deal which is in the best interests of the community centre and village residents. The management committee is very grateful for the support of residents and the successful future of the community will be dependant the continued support and also greater usage and involvement of residents to keep the centre open and financially viable.

The community centre was successful in its application for funding towards the cost of a new kitchen at the Area Action Partnership 'It's Up 2 U' participatory budgeting event held at the Active Life Centre in Coxhoe in July. We are grateful to everyone who went and voted for us on the day and we hope it won't be long before the work commences.

The family Fun Day was again a great success and we were lucky, in this very wet summer, that the rain stayed away until just after the finish. We were fortunate this year in having a fire engine and police panda car in attendance and a demonstration of police dogs training. We are grateful for the support of our county councilors, Dennis Morgan and Maria Plews, and also the police and fire services on the day.

CASSOP SCHOOL'S VISIT TO BEAMISH -IT'S LIKE YOU ARE IN A DIFFERENT ERA!!

We had an amazingly posh bus to take us to Beamish and back, and when we got there we took an old fashioned bus to take us to the drift mine.

We put on hard hats and went down the mine.

Despite being nervous, I went down the mine.

We explored the drift mine and saw some giant spiders.

The worst conditions were 18 inches high and about 2-3 inches were water.

Some of the machinery would make the miners deaf and coal dust could blind them.

Most miners died down the mines because of gas and suffocation.

There is a pit pony called Flash who has never been down a mine; he's only there to show what tack they wear.

We saw how it was like living in a miner's cottage.

We looked at some old artefacts and went behind the scenes.

We designed our own banner.

We learnt a lot.

It's probably the best museum in the world.

The most exciting museum you could ever go to.

All the above words are those of pupils of Cassop School who visited Beamish Open Air Museum in July. The visit was arranged by the Banner Group and funded with some of the money which they have now received from the National Lottery for the restoration of the 1873 Miners Gala banner.

The aim of the visit was to give the pupils the opportunity to become acquainted with the coal mining industry and its history before they start work on their own mining banner.



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



VILLAGE BUS SERVICES

Since the unpublicised changes to the village bus service at the beginning of January, residents who use the bus services have endured a frustrating time. With the new service in effect by-passing the village, residents organised a meeting in the community centre with our MP, and the event was reported in the Northern Echo.

Since then, meetings have taken place involving our MP, our two County Councillors, one of our Parish Councillors and two residents' representatives with Durham County Council and the bus operator. The latest information available is that consideration is being given to changes in the village bus service which could include the buses again going through the village, and not going to Kelloe during the day; the evening service will not be affected. Any changes will take place from 28th October.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Community Centre gardens need help. If you could spare even a small amount of time to help with the general maintenance of the gardens surrounding the community centre then please contact the Community Centre Committee. A small group of volunteers could do the work in just a couple of hours a week and you may meet some new people in the process!

VICAR LICENSED

At last, St. Helen's church in Kelloe has a new vicar, Canon Jon Bell, who was licensed on Sunday 24th June at a service in St. Aidan's church in Chilton. Justin, the Lord Bishop of Durham officiated, and the preacher was Mark, Bishop of Jarrow. In total, 30 members of the clergy were present including the Dean and two Archdeacons. Canon Bell will be the priest in charge of St Helen's Kelloe, St. Mary's Coxhoe and St. Aidan's Chilton.

Hello from Jon Bell,

I am delighted to have been invited to introduce myself to readers of 'Hill Talk'. I have been a priest for 36 years ministering in the Diocese of Durham and have most recently been the Bishop of Durham's Chaplain working in his offices at Auckland Castle. I am now very pleased to return to parish ministry as Priest for Kelloe, Coxhoe and Chilton. I know there are many historic ties between Quarrington Hill, Kelloe and Coxhoe. I very much look forward to meeting folk from the village when our paths cross.

With my best wishes.

Jon Bell

Sunday Service:

11.00am Holy Communion

Coxhoe Parish Council Annual Report 2011/2012

May 2012

Introduction

The last year was my fifth year as Chairman of Coxhoe Parish Council and it has been another year of fresh challenges for us. Like all residents, local businesses and community groups we have had to cope with the ongoing impact of the recession and have had value for money at the forefront of our minds when we have strived to meet the evolving needs of the community by delivering your priorities. I feel that Coxhoe Parish Council has continued to make further progress during the year in delivering the Parish Councils first Parish Plan and during 2012/13 I look forward to the adoption by the Parish Councils of its new Parish Plan which will influence the work of the Parish Council over the next five years.

My last Annual Report underlined the importance of partnership working and that opportunities to access finance for initiatives was becoming more restricted meaning that our partners would have fewer resources to address issues. We continue to develop our working relationship with Durham County Council and continue to work well with all of our other key community partners to improve Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill. We know that we cannot work in isolation and that our community partners resources are stretched but we are an ambitious Parish Council and we are getting things done through partnership working. In the following paragraphs I would like to let you know what the Parish Council has achieved in the last year.

Improving Community Safety

There have been some significant issues of anti-social behaviour, particularly by youths visiting Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill. The Police attend all main Parish Council meetings and provide a report on crime on a monthly basis, these crime statistics allow targeting of police resources. Reporting incidents is crucially important to the police and they have urged residents to let them know wherever and whenever issues arise. By understanding what is happening they can target activity, identify perpetrators, and take action to resolve problems. The Parish Council actively encourages residents to call the Police each and every time.

Improving Health Facilities

The Parish Council, following on from the excellent work of the Coxhoe Community Partnership, has previously carried out extensive lobbying for a new Medical Practice to be developed in Coxhoe. However due to Central Government budget cuts and legislation changes a new Medical Practice is still some time away. While this is disappointing the Parish Council does not intend to give up and has welcomed the recent building works to improve the facilities of the existing Medical Practice.

Improving Highway Safety

We have made significant progress over the years in terms of highway safety. The speed reduction signs installed in Quarrington Hill and in Coxhoe on a rota basis, in partnership with Durham County Council provide data to confirm the speeds traffic are travelling at and will inform the Council's future decisions as to the success or otherwise of the measure introduced. As a result, we continue to feel that highway safety has been improved within the villages. Work is now complete on new lighting columns in the Front Street, Coxhoe as a result of our work with Durham County Council. The heritage design lights will provide better lighting and I hope you agree they have improved the appearance of the Front Street. The new lights have also allowed Christmas lights to be installed in Coxhoe for the second year and the living Christmas tree with lights introduced at Quarrington Hill was again a success this year.

Improving the Environment

The Parish Council has continued to actively work with Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill Community Partnerships supporting environmental improvement in the villages. Following the tireless work of Quarrington Hill Village Partnership to secure play facilities in Quarrington Hill, that will enhance the environment and create a safe area for children to play. A new play scheme is now in place, congratulations to Quarrington Hill Partnership in delivering this key element of the Parish Plan. I am looking forward to a display of initial suggestions for the re development as a community space of Coxhoe lower and upper village greens in July 2012. This is a result of all the work in recent months of a working group established and supported by the Parish Council including representatives from the Parish Council, Coxhoe Banner Group, Coxhoe History Group and Coxhoe Community Partnership. Also proposals for new notice boards and directional signs are well advanced with funding opportunities being advanced.

Improvement of Churchyards, Grass Cutting, Hanging Baskets and Planters

The Parish Council has continued to provide grass cutting services within parts of the Parish, including some footpaths and Coxhoe War Memorial Garden, and provided hanging baskets during the summer months. A new contract for the provision of hanging baskets and planters has been awarded for 2012 with a view to building on previous years floral displays.

Improving the right to be heard – Consultations with Durham County Council

During the year we have contributed to a number of consultations carried out by Durham County Council, to ensure that any impact on the residents the Parish Council represents are taken in to account. One such consultation was about the future of community buildings across County Durham. This has now sadly resulted in the closure of 9 Browns Close in Coxhoe and The Hawthorns in Quarrington Hill. However the future of the community centre in Quarrington Hill is now more secure and the Parish Council will continue to work with the community centre to establish its future. Landsdowne House in Coxhoe will also now close unless the community takes ownership and looking further at this is an ongoing piece of work for the Parish Council. As with Quarrington Hill Community Centre the Parish Council is supporting Coxhoe village hall as it seeks to secure its financial future as previous long term funding becomes less certain. We have made our views known on a significant number of planning applications during the year, as well as hearing the views of residents on certain applications before deciding on our representations. You can find out what applications we have commented on and the County Council's decisions on our website. To assist the planning process and try to get the best out of proposals we have also engaged in pre-application discussions with developers.

Improving Leisure Facilities

As you may know Durham County Council had earmarked Coxhoe Leisure Centre for closure by the end of October 2011, as part of its budget cuts. In response Future Leisure in Coxhoe "FLIC" a brand new community group set up by volunteers to prevent this successfully

convinced Durham County Council that it had the capacity and credibility to continue to run the facility. This was only possible with the financial support of the Parish Council which resulted in an increase in the Parish precept for 2012/13, however without this the centre would have closed. Any increase in the precept being the sum charged through the council tax to local residents is a difficult decision, but I feel in this case a necessary one to save this facility for future generations. FLiC have been successfully running the facility, renamed "Future Leisure @ Coxhoe" now for a number of months supporting and improving the health, fitness and leisure needs of the people of the area.

Improving community engagement - Working with you

The Parish Council has now approved a draft Parish Plan 2 for final consultation which will commence in June 2012 for a six week period, following this period I look forward to the Parish Council considering comments and adopting Parish Plan 2 in the autumn. This new Parish Plan which will influence our work for the next five years. This is a key final stage and reflects all the hard work over the previous year supported by Coxhoe Community Partnership, to ensure we have a plan that reflects the priorities of the residents and influences the work of the Parish Council and community partners in the coming months and years.

Improving Parish Council Administration and Meetings

In May 2011 the Parish Council appointed a new Parish Clerk, David Vasey, who took up his duties in June following the resignation of our previous Clerk. We have continued to build on the work of past years in what has been an extremely busy year for the Parish Council and for the Clerk. Support from Ian Foster in maintaining the Parish Council web site and in taking forward the closing stages of completing Parish Plan 2 has been invaluable. We have held a Finance Committee to discuss and agree our budget for next year, together with starting the process of developing a medium term financial plan for the Parish Council. In addition we have held an Environment Committee to discuss and advance the scheme to provide new notice boards and directional signs in the villages, together with developing initial proposals for the redevelopment as community space of the upper and lower village greens in Coxhoe. We are committed to promoting the well being of residents and businesses in our village and most of our work is aimed at improvement. Most of our meetings have been attended by the public and we were delighted by the attendance of a number of young people at a recent meeting. Residents have the opportunity to come along and raise issues at the beginning of each Council meeting. The meeting agenda is placed on the Parish Notice Boards in both villages in advance of the meeting and minutes of meetings are also published there once they have been approved. Meetings are generally held on the first Wednesday of the month commencing at 7.00 p.m. All meeting dates are displayed on the Parish Notice Boards. Since June 2009, all Parish Council meetings are held at Lansdowne House, 64 Lansdowne Road, Coxhoe (just down from the Doctor's Surgery) where the Parish Council offices are based. The offices are open to visiting members of the public on a Wednesday between 9.00a.m. and 3.00 p.m. It is nearly a year since the launch of the Parish Councils exciting new website. The site has been developed on a community based one stop shop approach and is full of up to date community information about our communities, the Parish Council, and our partners. We also launched a facebook page with an ever increasing number of friends. We continue to be fully committed to achieving 'Quality Council' Status for the Parish Council. The Parish Clerk has undertaken training which is a key part of achieving the standards required.

Financial performance 2011/12

During the year the Council received positive reports from its external and internal auditors in relation to 2010/11, with the internal auditor also conducted a mid-year audit towards the end of 2011 on the 2011/12 accounts and Parish Council practices and reached similar conclusions. Residents can be assured that we are conducting our business well. The Parish Council's detailed accounts are available on request.

Conclusion

Public spending pressures will continue to mean that opportunities to finance initiatives will become more restricted and our partners will have fewer resources to address issues. We feel that we have prudently managed our budgets this year to leave us in a position to address future projects whilst making clear progress on the priorities in the Parish Plan. We have now commenced on the process of developing a medium term financial plan to ensure we look at ways of achieving the most economic, cost effective and efficient means of doing things. Partnership working will continue to bring about real changes within the community and the work of the two village partnerships is to be commended. These partnerships continue to work tirelessly in a volunteer capacity to drive and achieve improvement. I thank them very much for the work they do and reassure them that the Parish Council fully supports them and what they are trying to do. Dennis Morgan and Maria Plews, our County Councillors, continue to support the Parish Council in our endeavours for which we are truly grateful. I would sincerely like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors, all of whom give up their time freely and energetically, together with welcoming Carole Parkes as a new Quarrington Hill Parish Councillor co-opted to the Parish Council in October 2011. It is always worth remembering that none of the Councillors receive payment for their efforts. In particular, my thanks go to the Vice-Chair of the Parish Council, Stuart Dunn, who has deputised for me on a good number of occasions, due to my ever demanding work commitments. Stuart continues to help so much to move the Parish Council forward.

Paul Dodsworth Chair of Coxhoe Parish Council

Councillor Paul Dodsworth (Chair)
Councillor Stuart Dunn (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ron Mayo
Councillor Barbara Hepplewhite
Councillor Tony Rowe
Councillor Colin Thirlaway
Councillor Jimmy Taylor
Councillor Dennis Smith
Councillor Keith Pounder
Councillor Carole Parkes
David Vasey (Parish Clerk)

MORE FOOD CHOICE

Durham County Council's planning committee has approved outline planning permission for a 4,200 square metres supermarket on scrubland next to Bowburn South Industrial Estate. When the store is open it will enable residents to have a large store and the selection of goods which it will be able to provide in closer proximity to the village than the current choice of large stores.

Community Centre Diary Dates

Don't Miss!!

Fireworks 5th November 7pm

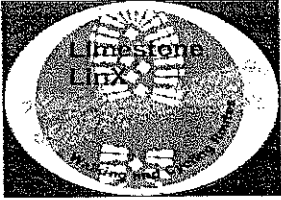
Children's Xmas Party
15th December 3pm – 5pm

YOUTHFUL SUMMER

The summer programme for young people offered them the opportunity to attend 4 days out. On a visit to South Shields, the young people enjoyed all the fun of the fair, fish and chips for lunch, followed by a game of Quazer lazer and time on the beach and in the park. A trip to the ever popular Wet 'n Wild saw the young people have a great time on the water slides and lazy river. A super day out was spent enjoying all the rides at Lightwater Valley, helped by that 2012 rarity, lovely weather. Finally there was a football tournament at Maiden Castle, where teams from across the area competed in a full day of football. Quarrington Hill and Kelloe joined forces to compete as a strong team; the day was rounded off with a BBQ for the young people.

Please Note – Due to unforeseen circumstances the Youth Club has changed to

Mondays 4pm – 5.30pm



**The Limestone LinX opening event has now
been re-arranged for Saturday 6th October**

Meet at 9.45 am — Official Opening by Councillor Dennis Morgan at 10.15am

then a choice of either guided walk or a guided cycle ride around the Joint Stock Route (4 miles approx) - whichever you prefer!

Start and finish at the Active Life Centre @ Coxhoe

Refreshments for all who complete the route and commemorative medals for children and young people

A FREE family event—don't miss it!

COMMUNITY CENTRE PROGRAMME

Youth Club	Monday 4pm – 5.30pm
Coffee morning	Tuesday 10.30 am-11.30am
Bingo	Wednesday 7.30pm -9.00pm
Citizens Advice Bureau	4th Thursday in the month 10.00am-11.00am
Toddlers group	Friday 9.30am -11.00am
Disco (8-12 year olds)	1st Friday in the month 6.00pm-8.00pm

If you are interested in joining any of the activities and need an introduction or assistance to attend – or if you would be interested in setting up a new activity please contact Keith Pounder on 0191 3773611

Coxhoe Medical Practice

Appointments: 0191 377 0340



FLU VACCINATION PROGRAMME 2012/13

The flu season is just around the corner again and the surgery will be holding its flu clinics from week commencing 24th September 2012.

It is recommended for patients to have a flu vaccination if you are either pregnant, aged 65 or over, or you have a diagnosis of either Heart Disease, Respiratory Disease, Liver Disease, Diabetes, History of Stroke or receiving Radiotherapy/Chemotherapy treatment. Please look out for our flu posters nearer the time and book your appointment.

If you are housebound and wish to have a vaccination, please contact the surgery to put your name on the list for a home visit.

RETIREMENTS

Dr Turner, after 20 years service at the practice, is retiring in November 2012. We all wish him well in his retirement; he will be missed, especially by the secretaries for his excellent dictation tapes! We wish him a long and happy retirement and hope that he will have more time to pursue his passion for The Friends of HMS Trincomalee, Hartlepool.

Nurse Maureen Chapman is also retiring in November 2012. We will miss Maureen's experience and her dry sense of humour. We wish her well in a long and happy retirement and a big thank you for her hard work over the last 36 years service at the practice. Maureen enjoys looking after her young granddaughter, so she will still be kept busy and on her toes when she retires.

BEST WISHES DR TURNER AND MAUREEN ON YOUR FORTHCOMING RETIREMENTS AND THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK.

PROTECTED LEARNING TIME

Clinicians and staff are required to have training sessions regularly and the practice therefore closes 1pm to 6pm on a quarterly basis. The surgery will be closed on the following dates:

Thursday 6th September 2012 : Thursday 6th December 2012 : Thursday 7th March 2013

If you require urgent medical assistance during this time please contact the free telephone number 111.

NEW EXTENSION

We are pleased to announce that the two room extension is now complete and it is hoped that the rooms will be in use over the next couple of weeks. We are just waiting for the telephone lines to be completed and the outside hand rail to be painted. Dr Bhati will be moving into one of the consultation rooms and Nurse Clare Botone will be moving into the new treatment room. Those patients who have difficulty using the main entrance because of the slope, will be able to use the ramp and side door entrance. However, we would ask you to ensure that the door is closed after you have entered the building.

We thank you for your patience during the building work and hope you like the new extension as much as we do.

Website : www.coxhoemedicalpractice.co.uk

Disclaimer: - The information in this newsletter is correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of going to print. Quarrington Hill Village partnership accepts no responsibility for any error, omission, subsequent changes and complaints arising from items printed in this newsletter. The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the Village partnership or the Parish Council