



Esh Leaves



www.eshparishcouncil.gov.uk

April-June 2012

Esh Parish Council newsletter for Esh, Langley Park, Quebec, Ushaw and Wilk's Hill



Chairman's Report to Esh Parish Annual Assembly 2012

I would like to thank the Council for their support during this year of office and present the Annual Report outlining the main activities for the year including:-

1. Councillors: Julie Carr was co-opted onto the Council.
2. County Councillors: I would like to record my thanks for the work carried out by County Councillors Joe Armstrong and Malcolm Campbell.
3. Area Action Partnership/Parish Councils Committee: The Parish Council is well represented on both committees and are working well to support organisations and residents within the Parish.
4. Committee structure: The committees continue to meet on a regular basis and help take the workload from Parish Council meetings.
5. Christmas Decorations: Due to financial cost cutting measures the Parish Council was unable to supply trees and lights to Esh, Langley Park and Quebec. I am pleased to report that the communities in Esh and Langley Park raised funds for this to happen in the two villages. Well done to everyone concerned.
6. Play Areas: The Parish Council continues to maintain the three play areas at Esh, Langley Park and Quebec.
7. Esh Parish Council Newsletter: Six editions were printed during the year plus one edition of the Annual Report. I would like to thank the editor (Councillor Gordon) and the committee for all their hard work to produce these copies.
8. Recreation Ground, Langley Park: The Parish Council is looking into alternative uses for the football pitch at the top of the Recreation Ground.
9. Publications: Two publications are still available from the Parish Council's office, they are "Esh Parish Walk" (free of charge) and "Esh Parish in Words and Verses" (£2.99).
10. Environmental Improvement Works: Local Contractors continue to carry out grass cutting (Durham County Council), the provision and watering of hanging baskets (Paul Snowdon) and inspections of the Council's Play Areas (Jeremy Cassidy). The Parish Council provided two new trees on the Esh Village Green. Parish Councillors meet with other organisations on a regular basis to carry out "walkabouts" in Langley Park to inspect the area for environmental improvements. A litter picking team organised by Councillors Berry and Renneberg carries out weekly litter picking within certain areas of Langley Park. My thanks to all the volunteers.
11. Planning Applications: Throughout the year the Parish Council has responded to 27 Planning Applications. Details of all applications together with a note of the Parish Council's response can be found on our web site www.eshparishcouncil.gov.uk
12. Donations and contributions to local projects: Unfortunately due to financial restrictions the Parish Council was only able to support the following projects:-
 - a) Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal £60
 - b) Craig's Coaching (football for young people) £100
 - c) North Durham Youth Committee (Steps detached youth work) £50
 - d) Langley Park Goodwill Association £100
13. Social Events: During the year the Parish Council organised the Annual Beating the Bounds walk and a Winter walk. In November the Parish Council organised a "Community Forum" in Wood View Community Centre, Langley Park which was poorly attended (23 people).
14. Citizen Advice Bureau: The Parish Council continue to financially support this service which is available at The Harry Guildford Centre (no appointment necessary) on the second Wednesday of each month from 10 to 11 am.
15. Allotments: The Parish Council continue to carry out inspections of all allotments, provide a number of skips to help keep the allotments sites tidy and also keep a waiting list of anyone in the Parish who may be interested in renting an allotment. We are also in discussions with allotment holders for the possible transfer of all allotments to an Allotment Association to manage the sites on behalf of the Parish Council



16. Precept for 2011/12 and 2012/13: The Parish Council precept for 2011/12 was £42453 plus a contribution from Durham County Council of £6846 and a Double Taxation grant of £134. The Parish Precept for 2012/13 will be £72170 no contribution from Durham County Council and a Double Taxation grant of £134.
17. Quality Parish Council Status: The Parish Council has been reaccredited with Quality Parish Council Status on the 30th May 2011 for a further four years.
18. The Institute building Church Street, Langley Park
The Parish Council continue to work with other organisations to refurbish the building and bring it back into community use. The Parish Council paid for the "boarding-up" of the building to make it secure and weather tight. Finance was received from County Councillor Armstrong's Member Initiative Fund to pay for the roof to be repaired.
- 19 Parish Council office at Langley Park: The Harry Guildford Centre is open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 12.30pm (telephone number 0191 3736687). The Gordon Coulson I T Suite is open on a Monday and Wednesday 2.00pm to 4.00pm and a Friday 4.00pm to 6.00pm. Contact David Rider (0191 3736687 or david.rider@langley-park.org.uk).
20. Staff: My thanks to Geoff Smith (Parish Clerk), Lynne Rowland (Deputy Clerk) and David Ryder (I.T. Officer) for their work and support throughout the year.
Unfortunately due to financial cost cutting the Parish Council had to terminate the employment of Paula Graham (Assistant Clerk) who had passed her Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) whilst with us and I wish her every success in the future

A.J. Mollon
Chairman 2011/2012



Parish council Precept increase explanation

Historically Derwentside District Council made a contribution to all Parish councils in it's area. Esh Parish received £13,692 from this source. After the Unitary Authority was created it was decided by Durham County Council to stop paying these contributions to Derwentside's parish councils to make us the same as all other town and parish councils, who receive no support from their District Councils. The

£13,692 was phased out over two years. We now rely on precept only to make up the deficit, and to continue providing services to the Parish area.

The increase of 66.1 % does sound huge but in reality it means a weekly increase of 43p on a Band B and 55p on a Band D house. Parish income for 2012-13 will be £74,990, an increase of about £4,000 on 2011-12. It is expected that the Government will cap Parish Councils in 2013 as they have County and Borough Councils this year so future increases in precept are unlikely.

The decision to increase the precept was not taken lightly. After a review of commitments, we have drastically reduced staffing (including sadly one redundancy) and our seriously depleted reserves need to be built up. A 3 year financial plan is in the process of being completed to ensure Parish finances are placed on a sound footing for the future.

The Parish Council is working with other organisations to refurbish "The Tute" in Church Street, Langley Park. It is planned that the building will include computer room, meeting room, multi-use hall, Parish office and refreshment facility.

The Parish Council is also working with the County Council and Police to help resolve the demolition of the All Saints Youth Centre in Langley Park.

We are responsible for maintaining the three play areas at Esh, Langley Park and Quebec as well as the old Recreation Ground (Nature Reserve) in Langley Park. We also provide and maintain 100 allotments in Langley Park. All of theses require insurance, regular safety checks and ongoing routine maintenance (repairs etc).

Volunteers of
St Cuthbert's Hospice



If you could spare as little as three
hours a week...



...you could make a massive
difference to local lives

We're looking for volunteers to join our retail team at a brand new shop in Houghton-le-Spring. Could you become a retail volunteer and help us to raise vital funds for people with life-limiting illnesses in your area?

Please contact Sarah Lee on 0191 386 1170 or go to www.stcuthbertshospice.com to find out how you can make a real difference to your local hospice.

Our heart & soul

Registered Charity Number: 519767



Esh Residents' Association

A "Chocolate" themed quiz has recently been used as a fund raiser, to enable us to keep the cross on the village green and the flower tubs (more on the way) looking colourful. We are hoping to involve everyone in being creative and making the whole village look attractive for June, with houses decorated and the village full of scarecrows, appearing to be competing in Olympic events. The hall is booked for an all age "Pie and Pea" Disco on 2nd June and we have a picnic version of the Jubilee Big Lunch on 4th, with traditional village games on the green. People are busy organising a History of the Village display for 9th June, then on 16th June, before the Olympic Torch arrives, we intend to have our own "mini games", complete with opening ceremony. Both of the village schools, the community police officers, housing association representatives and other groups and individuals have been working with the Residents' Association to help plan events and improve the village environment. The Cross Keys is participating and there will be an event in the pub on the 23rd June to round off the celebrations. We are keen to have the whole village joining in what should be the biggest and best series of community events since the Queen's Silver Jubilee, thirty five years ago. If only we could order sunshine!



Digital TV is coming to County Durham - get ready for the Switchover!

The existing analogue TV signal is being switched off and replaced with a new, stronger digital TV signal. If you are currently watching analogue TV through an aerial, and can only watch BBC 1, BBC 2, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 you will need to convert your TV before the switchover dates.

Stage 1 is happening on the 12th September 2012 and BBC 2 will stop broadcasting in analogue.

Stage 2 is happening on the 26th September 2012 (two weeks after stage 1), where the remaining analogue channels will be permanently switched off.

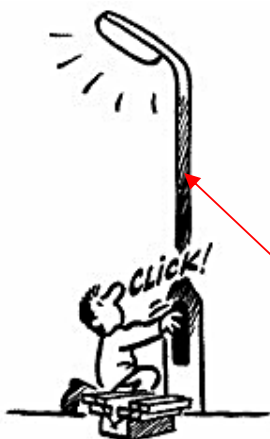
You can convert almost any TV to digital, even old black and white TVs & portables. You will need equipment to convert the signal from your aerial to digital. This could be as simple as getting a Freeview Box which you will need to plug into your TV.

If you are already watching TV through your aerial with a digital receiver like a Freeview box or Built-In Freeview within your TV, you do not need to convert your TV but you will need to re-tune at each of the 2 stages of the switchover and re-scan your digital receiver for channels (the same applies for Freeview, Top UP TV or BT Vision services).

If you watch TV using a cable or satellite service, such as Virgin or Sky, then switchover will not affect you (unless you have additional TV sets that use an aerial which you will need to convert).

There is a Help Scheme for eligible people and you can obtain more information on about the digital switchover in the County Durham area anyone can contact Digital UK on 0845 650 50 50 or visit www.digitaluk.co.uk .





Highways or Street Lighting Fault?

If you need to report a lighting fault please call the Highways Action Line (HAL) on 01913706000 or e-mail hal@durham.gov.uk.

Make sure you know the following:

- ◆ Fault description
- ◆ Location e.g. road number/street (include town or village)
- ◆ Lighting column number/outside house number/other landmark
- ◆ Your name, address and telephone number.

Further information at www.durham.gov.uk/HAL



Carrying the Flame 16th June 2012

On Saturday 16th June the Olympic Flame will be carried through Esh Parish.

The honour of carrying the Flame through Esh goes to Rachel Burgess, 18, from Durham and Lydia Janzen, 63, from Wolsingham, starting from Esh Bank at 5.37 p.m. and ending at the village boundary. Carrying the Flame through Langley Park are Chris Clarke, 21, from Chester-le-Street, Jordan Parker, 17, from Durham and Yvonne Terpstra, 22, from Easterein, starting from Rose Terrace and ending at Wallnook Lane.

<http://www.london2012.com/games/olympic-torch-relay/torchbearers/>



Schools Zambia Exchange



In January, both Esh CE and St Michael's welcomed some visiting teachers from Zambia as part of an exchange, with some of our staff making the return journey in February.

Our Zambian visitors thoroughly enjoyed their time with us and the school communities got so much out of it. The staff who then went over to visit Zambia benefited greatly from a wide range of experiences and have been able to share those on their return.

We hope to continue our partnership in the future. Roger Ward (Headteacher), on behalf of the School Council.

Esh CE Football Success

Esh CE Year 4s are delighted to have won the recent Durham Year 4 football tournament at Durham Community Business College. They won 6 games and drew the other to progress to the next stage of the county competition. Very well done!



PLEASE CLEAR UP AFTER YOUR DOG!

Dog owners are responsible for picking up dog faeces, from the streets, parks and open spaces. Dog Fouling spoils the environment, upsets local residents and can cause serious health risks particularly to children. It is an offence if you do not clean up your dog's mess and you could be issued with a fixed penalty notice of £80. If taken to court you could face a maximum fine of £1,000.

Esh Parish Council is now able to provide free plastic bags and they can be picked up from the Parish Council Office at the Harry Guildford Centre.



You can send comments, letters, photographs etc. to eshleavesnews@langley-park.org.uk
Or drop them off at the Harry Guildford Centre, Thomas Street, Langley Park.

