

BRANDON & BYSHOTTLES PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2015/2016

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Electors,

To have served the Council as Chairman for the year 2015/16 has been for me a privilege and indeed a pleasure. I have been supported by my husband George, as we have endeavoured to raise the profile of the Parish Council in our villages and throughout County Durham.

Thanks must go to the Vice Chairman and her husband for their loyalty and support throughout the year and I wish them success during the next year.

The Council continues to be busy, and members and devoted staff work hard for the benefit of our communities, ably assisted by Durham County Council members and Mid Durham Area Action Partnership. It's an honour to be part of the team.

The following overview of the Council's work indicates that the Parish Council has been proactive during 2015/16 and responsive to the needs of its residents.

Cecilia Wharton
Chairman

LIST OF MEMBERS

Cllr Cecilia Wharton	Chairman	Tel: 0191 3730643
Cllr Susan Nelson	Vice Chairman	Tel: 0191 3783147
Cllr John Turnbull		Tel: 0191 3780408
Cllr Brian Nelson		Tel: 0191 3783147
Cllr Mrs Sarah Leckenby		Tel: 07794604669
Cllr John Grantham		Tel: 0191 3782631
Cllr Nick Rippin		Tel: 07718145780
Cllr Sylvia Akins		Tel: 0191 3784369
Cllr Tommy Akins		Tel: 0191 3784369
Cllr Jill Rodgers		Tel: 0191 3784668
Cllr Paul Taylor		Tel: 0191 3780951
Cllr David Bell		Tel: 0191 3406086
Cllr Derek Jones		Tel: 0191 3731631
Cllr Anne Bonner		Tel: 07497199252
Cllr Philip Stoddart		Tel: 0191 3736698
Cllr Mrs Pauline Gates		Tel: 0191 3739290
Cllr David Clegg		Tel: 07966870021
Cllr Jimmy Jamieson		Tel: 0191 3732440
Cllr Jean Chaplow		Tel: 0191 3730028
Cllr Derek Graham		Tel: 0191 3734147
Cllr Barry Sims		Tel: 0191 3734576

Council Offices situated at 6 Goatbeck Terrace, Langley Moor, Durham DH7 8JJ

Office Hours Monday - Friday 9.30 am to 11.30 am

Telephone 0191 3789947

Email: info@brandonandbyshottlesparishcouncil.gov.uk

Fax 0191 3784076

www.brandonandbyshottlesparishcouncil.gov.uk

STAFF

Mrs Susan Carmedy	-	Clerk to the Council
Mrs Susan Howe	-	Administrative Assistant/ Allotment Officer
Mrs Jane Carmedy	-	Cleaner

Brandon and Byshottles Parish Council serves a population of approximately 18,500 and had an electorate of 14,059 in November 2015. The Council encompasses the following 6 villages:

Brandon	- electorate	4451	4 ward members
Langley Moor	- electorate	1213	3 ward members
Meadowfield and Browney	- electorate	1565	3 ward members
New Brancepeth	- electorate	909	3 ward members
Ushaw Moor and Broompark	- electorate	3273	4 ward members
Esh Winning and Waterhouses	- electorate	2648	4 ward members

21 Council seats are elected.

The Parish Council meetings are held 3rd Friday of the month (excluding August) in the Council offices, commencing at 6.30 pm.

Finance and Allotment Committee meetings are held quarterly and working groups meet as and when necessary.

Agendas are posted on the Parish Council website, noticeboards outside the Council Offices and at Esh Winning, Meadowfield, and Ushaw Moor and also in Brandon and Esh Winning Libraries. Minutes of the meetings are available at Brandon and Esh Winning Libraries, Brandon Community Hall and on the Parish Council website.

The Parish Council is responsible for 16 allotment/grazing sites and 3 garage sites at the following locations.

Station Avenue, Brandon	Folds Close, New Brancepeth
Commercial Street, Brandon	Broompark
Alder Park, Brandon	Cockhouse Lane, Ushaw Moor
Low Browney (inc. grazing)	Empire Field (inc. grazing), Ushaw Moor
High Browney	Rear Durham Road, Esh Winning
Low Meadowfield (inc. grazing)	Hamilton Row, Waterhouses (inc. grazing)
High Meadowfield	Waterhouses - grazing
Black Road, Langley Moor	Langley Grove (inc. grazing), Langley Moor

Garage Sites

Commercial Street, Langley Grove and Brandon Road, Esh Winning.

The Council leases land at Waterhouses Play Area and Broompark Play Area from Durham County Council and land to the rear of Coronation Homes, Esh Winning from Durham Aged Miners Homes Association and maintains the grassed areas and play equipment at Waterhouses, the grassed area at Esh Winning and the play equipment at Broompark Play Area.

The Parish Council has responsibility for the village greens at Brandon, Browney and Ushaw Moor, provides public seats, maintains 3 War Memorials at Brandon Village, New Brancepeth and Ushaw Moor and provides floral containers throughout the Parish. We organise an annual Painting Competition for primary schools within the parish and support numerous local community groups and organisations.

The Council continues to work in partnership with Durham County Council to provide services such as the Community Highways Worker in order to improve the streetscene of the Parish.

The Parish Council continues its close working relationship with Mid Durham AAP to progress projects which will benefit the Parish area.

An overview of work carried out during 2015/16 follows:

1. ALLOTMENTS

Approximately £17,000 has been spent on the maintenance of the Parish Council's 16 allotment/grazing sites, including fencing, clearance, water consumption and provision of skips. A new stand pipe has been installed to Northumbrian Waters specifications at the site at Hamilton Row.

2. GRASSCUTTING

The Parish Council has spent almost £5,000 on its grasscutting programme at the following sites:

Village Greens in Brandon & Browney
Brandon Carrside Youth Club
Brandon Community Hall
Waterhouses Play Area
New Brancepeth Village Hall
St.Andrew's Methodist Church, Brandon
Brandon Road, Esh Winning
Rear Aged Miners Homes, Esh Winning
Path at Alder Park allotments
Path at Durham Road allotments, Esh Winning
Land adjacent to Esh Winning Methodist Church

3. FLORAL CONTAINERS

The Parish Council has provided over 160 floral containers throughout the Parish with both winter and summer bedding. In addition flowerbeds beneath the village name-plate signs in Broompark, Ushaw Moor, Esh Winning and Meadowfield have also been planted.

4. COMMUNITY HIGHWAYS WORKER

The Parish Council's partnership with Durham County Council has continued in order to provide a Community Highways Worker with the Parish Council funding over 80% of the cost. The Worker has carried out work on a range of environmental and streetscene improvements including edging off footpaths, strimming verges, cleaning out bus shelters and assisting with grass cutting in the local cemeteries.

5. PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

The Parish Council has continued to work with Durham County Council through its PROW maintenance programme. As Durham County Council's budget for the programme was cut the Parish Council had to reduce the number of cuts on some paths to compensate for this. A grant of £1,347 was received which was used to trim or spray various PROW throughout the Parish.

6. PRIMARY SCHOOLS' ART COMPETITION

The Schools' Art Competition was again organised by the Parish Council. And 10 Schools including Nurseries and Pre-schools within the Parish entered the competition. 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize winners were presented with book tokens for £15, £10 and £5 by the local ward members who had the pleasant but difficult task of judging the paintings. The 1st prize winners' pictures were judged by the Chairman of Durham County Council, Councillor Jan Blakey and her husband Alan. The overall winners received a trophy from the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Cecilia Wharton at the Parish meeting in July.

The winners were as follows:

Nursery	Luke Rowntree	Esh Winning Nursery
Reception	Kara John	Browney Academy
Years 1 & 2	Digby Younger	Our Lady Queen of Martyrs
Years 3 & 4	Lily McMillan	New Brancepeth Primary
Years 5 & 6	Leah Vaudin	Silver Trees Primary



Kara and Luke receive their trophies from the Chairman of the Council at July 2015's Council meeting.

7. POPPY APPEAL

The Parish Council has continued its support for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal with a donation of £500 to this year's appeal. Members of the Council paid their respects at Remembrance Services held in Brandon, New Brancepeth, Ushaw Moor, Esh Winning and Waterhouses. Local Ward Members attended the annual service of remembrance at St. John's Church, Meadowfield, followed by a parade to Brandon Village War Memorial. The Council had arranged the services of Durham University Brass Band who played to their usual high standard at the Memorial. The service was also attended by the British Legion and local residents and wreaths were laid to commemorate the fallen.

8. CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (CAB)

The Council has continued its support for the CAB with a contribution of £1,980 to enable the continuation of the Outreach Service in our villages. This is a vital service for our local communities especially in these times of austerity when residents may need specialist advice. The outreach sessions are held in the following locations:

Brandon Community Hall	- 11 am - 12 noon second Thursday of month
	- 11 am - 12 noon fourth Thursday of month
Esh Winning Library	- 2 pm - 3 pm first Tuesday of month
New Brancepeth Village Hall	- 10 am – 11 am first Thursday of month
The Silver Trees Centre, Ushaw Moor	- 11 am - 12 pm third Thursday of month

9. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Parish Council has been consulted on numerous planning applications during the year and conveyed comments of support or opposition to Durham County Council. These comments can be viewed on the County Council's website. Weekly lists of applications can be viewed on the Parish Council website.

10. NEWSLETTERS

The Council has produced quarterly newsletters which are distributed to various locations within the Parish.

Brandon	-	Communal Hall, Library, 2 Surgeries, Silver Courts Sycamore Park Community Hall, the Orchards, the Newsagent and Brandon Village
Meadowfield	-	British Legion Club, Browney WMC, Dentist, Health Centre, Harry Carr House and Meadowfield WMC
Langley Moor	-	Newsagent, Post Office, the Play Pit, RSPCA and Tysons Butchers
New Brancepeth	-	Post Office, Village Hall, Nursery, Newsagent and Church Hall
Ushaw Moor	-	Post Office, Leisure Centre, Cricket Club, Surgery, Baptist Church, R & B Convenience Stores, St. Luke's and Sure Start
Esh Winning & Waterhouses	-	Post Office, Library, Woodland Road Communal Hall Newsagent, Florists, Residents Group and Waterhouses Village Hall
Council Offices	-	6 Goatbeck Terrace, Langley Moor

The newsletters are also available to view on the Parish Council website www.brandonandbyshottlesparishcouncil.gov.uk and a copy is sent to Durham County Council's Chief Executive.

11. DURHAM MINERS GALA

The Parish Council has continued to support Durham Miners Association by contributing to the publication of the Durham Miners Gala Brochure.

12. TREE WEEK

The Parish Council was again successful in securing a grant of £150 through Durham County Council's tree Week scheme. The grant was used to provide 10 scots pine trees which were planted in the grounds of Silver Tree Primary School in Ushaw Moor.

13. POLICE

The Parish Council liaises with the local Police on issues affecting our local community. Details of PACT meetings can be found on Durham Police website.

14. SILVER TREES SCULPTURE, USHAW MOOR

Due to one of the trees being vandalised, the Silver Trees sculpture at Whitehouse Lane has been reinstated as an alternative design in the grounds of Silver Trees Primary School. The local Parish Councillors worked with Mr. Truman, the Headteacher, and local Sculptor, Graeme Hopper who came up with a suitable design. Proposals for a new sculpture to replace the Silver Trees at Whitehouse Lane are being progressed with school children from the two local primary schools being involved in the design process. Consultation on the design took place in January and consequently a final design, depicting the local history of the area, was agreed. A permanent fixing for a Christmas Tree will be incorporated into the groundworks.



15. MID DURHAM AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP (AAP)

The Parish Council has maintained its close working relationship with the AAP. Representatives from the AAP staff team, the AAP Board and the Parish Council have attended meeting of existing groups and committees across the Mid Durham area during June and July 2015 to highlight and discuss the following areas:

- Update on the progress of the Village Action Plans
- Identify any other village underlying issues
- See whether the group need any further support
- Promote the work of the AAP and its partners
- See how the group can help the AAP to delivery its key priorities, especially concerning support for older and unemployed residents.

The following examples show how the Parish has continued to work in partnership with the AAP:

- **Parish Councils Committee**

The Parish Council Committee is made up of representatives from the 10 Parishes within the Area Action Partnership area. The Committee meets bi-monthly and has continued its close working relationship with the AAP.

- **Mid Durham Intergenerational Project (MDIP)**

This project has been developed by Age UK County Durham with support from the Mid Durham Area Action Partnership to promote positive engagement between young people aged between 5 and 24, and older people aged over 50. A number of events have been held where young and old have come together. Perhaps the most poignant events were the installation of poppy crosses around the Parish to commemorate key battle dates of the 1st World War. The crosses have been created by the young people of Brandon Carrside Youth and Community Project and Brandon Partnership. The children have learnt a lot about the history of the First World War from the older people in the process. In 2015/16 ceremonies have taken place at Woodland Road, Communal Hall, Esh Winning (*pictured above*) and St. Joseph's Primary School at Ushaw Moor.



- **Transformation of Gap Site, Langley Moor**

The area of land at Langley Moor, between the fish shop and the podiatrists in the High Street has been transformed into a meeting place/ community garden with new paving, floral displays and new street furniture. The area was officially opened in July 2015 by 3 year old Bethany Arthurs who attends Langley Moor Nursery. The project has been progressed by the Friends of Langley Moor Group who worked with the Parish Council, local County Councillors, the AAP and Durham County Council.



- **Holliday Park, Langley Moor**

The refurbishment of the play area in Holliday Park has been completed with an official opening taking place on 20th April 2016. Local school children were invited to open the park and local County and Parish Councillors, representatives of the AAP and Durham County Council, Tesco and the SITA Trust were also in attendance. Two years ago a masterplan was drawn up for the park with the support of the Parish Council, Mid Durham AAP, the County Council and input from the Friends of Langley Moor group and the local community. The work was able to go ahead with funding from Section 106 monies, the SITA Trust and with generous contributions from Local County Councillors budgets.



- **Friends of Langley Moor**

The community group has continued to meet monthly at the Parish Council offices and have successfully progressed projects for the village with assistance from the AAP, County Councillors and the Parish Council. The Christmas tree light switch again attracted large numbers from the local community with local butcher Monty Tyson performing the switch on. The Friends Group meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7p.m. in the Parish offices.

- **Parish Directory**

The Council has worked in conjunction with the AAP to produce a directory of useful contacts for the Parish area. The AAP has provided funding for printing and delivery of the directory which was distributed in June 2015.

16. 'FLY A FLAG' FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

The Parish Council was proud to be part of the celebration for Commonwealth Day on 14th March 2015. The Council held an event at Brandon Community Hall to celebrate the friendship, equality and diversity of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth flag was raised by the Chairman of the Council at 10.00am following the reading of the Commonwealth Affirmation. Children from Brandon School and church representatives also attended. More than 850 flags will be raised in locations around the United Kingdom, Channel Isles, Isle of Man, UK Overseas Territories and Commonwealth countries.

17. DOG POOH BAGS

The Council continues to provide 'dog pooh' bags free of charge. The Council would encourage dog owners to be responsible and make use of this service. The bags can be collected from the Council Offices and the following locations:

- Brandon Library
- M & M Chemists, Meadowfield
- Langley Moor Post Office
- R & B Convenience Stores, Ushaw Moor
- Esh Winning Library
- Village Hall, New Brancepeth

18. CHAIRMAN'S CHARITY

This year's Chairman's Charity evening was held in October 2015 at Newhouse Club, Esh Winning and the money raised was donated to Parkinson's UK. Councillor Cecilia Wharton has continued raising funds and a cheque for £3,168.81 was presented to Abby Robinson from Parkinson's UK in April. The Chairman would like to thank all who contributed to her chosen charity and assisted with the organised events, to raise this fantastic total.



19. BEAUTIFUL DURHAM AWARDS 2015

The Parish Council were delighted that the following areas were recognised in Durham County Council's Beautiful Durham Awards:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| The Orchards, Brandon | - | Winner - Best sheltered accommodation complex/ warden controlled housing area |
| | - | Winner Best floral containers |
| Diane McQuillan, Esh Winning | - | Winner - Best back yard or patio garden |

Burnigill, Meadowfield	-	Best sheltered accommodation complex/ warden controlled housing area
Black Road, Langley Moor	-	Durham's best kept residential area
High Street, Langley Moor	-	Best floral containers
Diana Snowdon, Waterhouses	-	Best allotment or kitchen garden
Brandon Village Community Garden	-	Best group horticultural project

20. SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The Parish Council is aware that in such times of austerity local community groups and organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to survive. The Council believes these groups and organisations work hard for our local communities and provide a vital and beneficial service to all sectors of the community. The Council tries to assist these groups financially with their special events and community projects. The Council has received numerous requests for donations and below is a selection of groups or projects which have benefitted:

Brandon Fun Day
 Brandon Cricket Club
 Carrside Youth & Community Project – Summer Activities Programme
 County Durham School Benevolent Fund
 Esh Winning Cricket Club FC
 Esh Winning Library Easter Egg Competition
 Great North Air Ambulance Service
 Lourdes Pilgrimage
 Meadowfield & Langley Moor Over 60's
 New Brancepeth WMC FC
 New Brancepeth Revellers Jazz Band
 Silver Courts, Brandon
 St. Luke's Church, Ushaw Moor
 St. Patrick's Social Committee, Langley Moor
 Ushaw Moor C.C. F.C
 Ushaw Moor Cricket Club – Fireworks Display

21. CONSULTATIONS

The Parish Council has responded to numerous consultations throughout the year. These include the following:-

Lidl Public Consultation
 Durham County Council Pension Fund – Funding Strategy Statement and Statement of Investment Principles
 Durham County Council – Taxi Licensing
 Durham County Council – Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy
 Durham County Council – Rights of Way Improvement Plan for County Durham
 Durham County Council – Durham City Air Quality Action Plan
 Durham County Council – Home to School Transport Policy
 Durham County Council – Houses in Multiple Occupation and Student Accommodation

22. **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS 2015/16**

Income

Precept	149,760	
DCC – LCTS Grant	17,370	
Interest	257	
Allotment Rents	19,556	
Allotments – NWA Customer care payment	20.00	
Parish Paths Grant	1,347	
Chair’s Charity – Councillor Akins	40	
Chair’s Charity – Councillor Wharton	2,895	
Northern Powergrid-wayleave	51	
NAC - Stationery - reimbursement	179	
Tree Week grant	150	
Silver Trees Primary-contribution to Sculpture in school	1,000	
VAT refund	15,505	
		208,130

Expenditure

Office running costs & administration	73,456	
Allotments	13,103	
Contracted services(grasscutting, planters)	11,474	
Assistance to Community Groups	38,364	
Civic Functions	3,953	
Members & Staff Training	10,400	
Play areas	18,153	
Community Highways Worker	19,549	
Environmental improvements	3,398	
Chair's Charity Evening -T.Akins	1,300	
C. Wharton	945	
Schools painting competition	1427	
Parish Paths/ Footpaths	1,824	
Newsletters	1,370	
Miscellaneous	398	
VAT on payments:-	13,297	212,411

Balance at 1.4.15	188,248
Income 15/16	<u>208,130</u>
	<u>396,378</u>
Expenditure 15/16	<u>212,411</u>
Balance at 31.3.16	<u>183,967</u>