



# **Coxhoe Parish Council**

## **Chair's Annual Report 2017 - 2018**



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## Chair's Annual Report

### 2017 - 2018

Presented to the  
Annual Meeting of Parishioners 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018

#### Introduction

This is my third annual report as Chair. I have to thank all members of this council, particularly our Vice Chair Kay Simpson for her commitment and support in what has been a very challenging year.

Thanks also to our supporting members from Durham County Council and to all those volunteers, groups and organisations who are a vital part of our community. It is through our collective efforts that this council has made such progress for the benefit of our communities.

Furthermore, I must thank those many individuals who have attended our parish meeting throughout the year, raising issues and concerns that affect their lives. This additional input is also a vital part of making sure our council works for its community. I also thank Eric Thompson, Ron Mayo, Carole Hogarth, Tony Plewes and Anne Murphy for their service as councillors who retired at the elections in May and welcome Adrian Hedley, Ellie Cutter, Sue Downham, Julie Slater and Angela Appleby to the Council who were elected or co-opted to replace them.

It was with sadness the Council received the resignation of Lisa Caine our Community Engagement Office at the beginning of the year and soon after the resignation of our Clerk Craig Rowbotham. Lucy and Rachel left our youth team in the Autumn. We wish them all well for the future. A considerable amount of time was spent reviewing our structures



#### What have we achieved?

This year has been a year of consolidation on our commitments for our communities. Members have rolled up their sleeves and actually delivered on a lot of things we've been talking about for some time. Listed below are some of the actions and progress that have been achieved towards delivery of our Parish Plan 2 Action Plans:

- Having taken on various pieces of **Land** around the parish to protect them from development and keep them as green spaces. We have been and will continue to work with residents to improve these. We are investigating taking over the Coxhoe Cricket Ground to maintain it as an additional community sports field
- In the summer the **Kingswood** volunteers stood down. We are actively trying to re-establish a team of volunteers to help so-ordinate ongoing improvements for the community, we are therefore in the process of sourcing contractors to ensure necessary maintenance is carried out.
- The Parish Council has continued to provide **grant funding** to help cover costs, support and improve facilities and activities available to Quarrington Hill Community centre, Coxhoe Village Hall and the Active Life Centre e.g. upgrading the main corridor floor at the Active Life Centre.
- The Council's **Youth Services** have been a major focus this year. The Parish Council has committed significant resource to employ a team of youth workers to ensure that youth sessions that would have been lost due to enforced budget cuts to DCC are replaced by sessions provided by the Parish Council. We welcomed Claire, Sean, Rachel, Lucy, and Jennifer and in response to views from young people established a new Girls only session on a Tuesday and a new Quarrington Hill Junior Youth Club.



- The Parish Council provides all of **summer floral displays** through planters and hanging baskets along the main routes in Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill, which are well received by our community. We have reviewed these and this year we'll be replacing the double brackets on the green lampposts with single brackets and extending the locations where we'll be putting baskets through Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill.
- We are also exploring extending our **Christmas lighting** provision this year and hope to erect Christmas Trees in both villages.



- **Dog fouling** remains a problem as well as fly-tipping. These issues are reported frequently, please keep the reports coming. The Parish Council has provided additional Dog Bins in the parish to help eradicate this nuisance and will continue to highlight the problem.
- The Parish Council has been supported by two students and a professor from Newcastle university in reviewing the evidence gathered in working towards a neighbourhood plan. We await their final report and recommendations.
- Our **Facebook, Twitter and Website** continue to provide invaluable information to our community. The posts on potentially moving our Parish into the Billingham Constituency in the Parliamentary Boundary Commission Review reached over 6,500 people. A huge Thank You to Ian Forster for the massive amount of work he puts into this.
- Thank you also to Kay Simpson who has produced the last few issues of the **Chronicle** in its improved colour format, which is actually cheaper to produce thanks to advertising revenue advertising local businesses.
- A last ever thank you to **Coxhoe Community Partnership** which closed down after many years of developing and improving community facilities. In the many years the many volunteers involved have helped to bring in over £1.5m of inward investment into the village and leave us lasting legacies such as the facilities at Coxhoe park and the Limestone Linx. As a community we are very grateful for everything you have done and we continue to enjoy

**The above list provides a snapshot of the main areas of work that the council has progressed and continues to work on.**

**Finance** - 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. Our Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 will be posted in the Website for all to see and the opportunity exists for any parishioner to examine our financial records by appointment with the Clerk after conclusion of auditing.

**Conclusion** - Finally, thanks to our new Clerk Claire Lewellyn who has really hit the ground running and Lynda Wardle for great support as our Locum Clerk. It has been a very busy year for the Council and next year promises to be every bit as challenging as we look to welcome new staff and services to our Council.

*Stuart Dunn*  
Coxhoe Parish Council Chair

**Parish Councillors:**

**Councillor Stuart Dunn (Chair)**  
Councillor Adrian Hedley  
Councillor Ellie Cutter  
Councillor Sue Downham  
Councillor Wendy Lavelle  
Councillor Julie Slater

**Councillor Kay Simpson (Vice-Chair),**  
Councillor Barbara Hepplewhite  
Councillor Colin Thirlaway  
Councillor Keith Pounder  
Councillor Angela Appleby