

# Lartington Parish Council Annual Report and Newsletter

April  
2015

## Can we make Lartington an even SAFER place in which to live?



The defibrillator is in place and not yet used - a situation that we are content with. The speed limit is in place but not always observed - work in progress.

### What next?

Having worked successfully with the Ambulance Service in regards to the introduction of the defibrillator, we now hope to work with the Police and Fire and Rescue Services to try to make our homes a little safer.

This follows a presentation to the council from PC Dave Williamson about the Safer Homes initiative, a collaborative project that aims to improve safety and wellbeing in the home - and particularly the homes of the more elderly or vulnerable.

Whilst we would hope to identify and support any who might be considered "vulnerable", we are fortunate that we have very few residents who can be described in this way.

We do have many homes, however, which can accurately be described as isolated and which sit off the main road with nooks, crannies and outbuildings which are vulnerable to rural crime. We are also aware that "cold calling", particularly by groups of young people apparently brought to the dale from Teesside, is becoming a greater nuisance.

The council believes that we could make a concerted effort to ensure that property is marked, security lighting is in place and "No Cold Calls" signage in evidence. These are issues that we will consider at our next meeting.

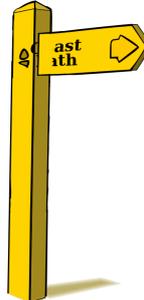
Finally, there is a real role for the "good neighbour" within this project and community based volunteers can play a key role in its success. The accompanying leaflet gives further information and some contact points for anyone who might be interested.

## PACT

PCSO Liz Finn and her colleagues continue to hold monthly PACT meetings, giving Dales residents the opportunity to raise any concerns directly with them. The next meeting takes place on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 7.00pm in Romalldkirk Reading Room.

## Footpath Improvements

We were successful in our application for a grant to improve the condition of the footpath at Cat Castle. This was funded under the Parish Paths Partnership and the work carried out by Craig Gibson.



The success of this project was such that we are currently bidding for funding to improve the stepped area in Deepdale Wood.

## Watch your SPEED - and please park considerately!

Traffic speed through the village has long concerned us - and still does.

We were the first Parish Council to work with Durham Police on a Community Speedwatch project and still enthusiastically support it. Candidly, exercises are not carried out as often as we would wish and we routinely press the local Police in regard to this.

Council representatives will be routinely attending PACT meetings this year to ensure that Speedwatch remains on the agenda and to try to ensure that traffic police are occasionally in the village at a time when repeat offenders may be caught. **You have been warned!**

We also have some concerns regarding the parking of vehicles on the footpath through the village. This forces pedestrians, often with pushchairs, to move on to the road - **so please don't do it!**

## Lartington Annual Parish Meeting

will be held at

**The Methodist Hall**

**Cotherstone**

**Tuesday 5th May 2015**

**at 7.00pm**

**Local Electors are cordially  
invited to attend**

## What rubbish!



You may have read that DCC is trying to reduce fly-tipping in the county.

This is something that is not a great problem in the parish but if you are aware of any, then please report it - either to a councillor or direct to DCC.

More importantly, please remember that traders, the "man with a van", must be licensed and householders using their services are legally responsible for ensuring that the rubbish being disposed of will be done so responsibly.

## Future Parish Council Meetings

July 14<sup>th</sup> 2015

September 8<sup>th</sup> 2015

November 10<sup>th</sup> 2015

January 12<sup>th</sup> 2016

March 15<sup>th</sup> 2016

Meetings usually start at 7.30pm and will usually be held in Cotherstone Methodist Hall. Agendas and minutes are placed on the noticeboard whilst they will be emailed to you if you register with us -

[lartingtonpc@gmail.com](mailto:lartingtonpc@gmail.com).

Papers are also available online at [lartingtonpc.gov.uk](http://lartingtonpc.gov.uk)

## Annual Report for the year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2015

The Council continues to meet bi-monthly, meetings usually being held on the second Tuesday of the month at Cotherstone Methodist Hall. Agendas and minutes are routinely placed in the noticeboard and can also be found on the council's website - [www.lartingtonpc.co.uk](http://www.lartingtonpc.co.uk).

Our efforts this year have focussed on the purchase of the defibrillator and the kiosk in which it was housed - the kiosk was a bargain for a £1 (which BT didn't even bother to collect!), the defibrillator rather more expensive. Its purchase was made possible by the generosity of many local residents and the use of a significant amount of the Council's reserves. The support of the Ambulance Service was vital in securing the most appropriate model at a significantly discounted price whilst the training session that they delivered was both well attended and much appreciated. A vital piece of life saving equipment that we judged sensible to have in the village, we will be quite happy if it never needs to be used!

The council also secured Parish Paths funding to stabilise the footpath at Cat Castle. DCC Footpaths Officer, Elaine Crowe, was extremely helpful to us in preparing our application and we hope to work with her again in the coming year to secure funding to improve paths through Deepdale and in the Pecknall area.

Traffic speed through the village continues to concern us - the introduction of a speed limit being something for which we campaigned over many years. We continue to work with DCC Highways and Durham Police to try to make this as effective as possible. We were grateful to the Highways department for painting a SLOW warning on the entry to the village from Bowes and to PCSO Liz Finn who carries out a Speedwatch operation whenever she can. The council is absolutely determined to apply as much pressure as we can to ensure that the speed limit is obeyed.

Finally, two matters of routine business.

Firstly, there have been significant changes in council roles this year. After many years of service, Richard Campion and Joyce Cross stood down as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively - although both remain active on the council. We are grateful to them for their commitment to the council and the community. Sharon Parsons Munn has become Chair with Mike Whetstone assuming the role of Vice Chair. Sadly, a combination of business and family commitments forced John Wilkes to resign from the Council. We are grateful to Kate Hinchliffe for her willingness to fill the vacancy created by John's resignation and look forward to working with her for many years to come.

Secondly, we are happy to report that there has been NO significant change to the precept (rates) we raise - the cost of the council to a Band D property continuing to be just over £20p.a. This compares favourably with other local councils and is significantly below many areas of the county. We hope that this report provides evidence of value for money!

Although too small to provide any direct services, we hope that this report again demonstrates that the Parish Council continues to work hard to ensure that the interests of local people are well represented and that the agencies charged with providing the services that they need are held to account.