

# Lartington Parish Council

## Autumn Newsletter



This is an issue which continues to dominate the work of the Council. We make no apologies for re-stating our concerns that traffic still often travels too quickly through the village - and that we are especially concerned that this often coincides with school pick-up and drop-off times. We are working closely with DCC Highways and Durham Police to address this.

Council members have trained to act as volunteers capable of operating Speedwatch exercises whilst Durham Police have committed to conducting these at least once a month. DCC Highways have also agreed to conduct a speed monitoring exercises in the near future.

We are grateful to CC Mike Barton for his wholehearted support, to PCSO Finn her evident commitment and to Keith Jameson of DCC for his help. We are also grateful to all those local people who do respect the limit - and hope that those who don't **get the message!**



### Flooding on Green Lane

Fortunately flooding isn't an issue for most residents - but it is for a few in this area.

We believe that there are problems with the camber and

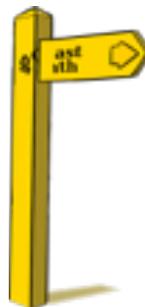
drainage of the road and have worked hard to persuade DCC to address these and have suggested solutions to them. Some minor works have been undertaken but we are concerned that this will prove inadequate as drains in the area of the Rigg are already being encroached upon by vegetation. Discussions with DCC, therefore, are still ongoing to find an effective long term solution



### Overgrown trees - and damaged railings

The Council has, in common with many residents, long held concerns regarding the condition of the trees on the South side of the village whilst the dangerous condition of railings in the area of the old railway bridge was drawn to our attention by CC Barton on his recent visit to the village.

We have raised these matters with Lartington Estate, who have informed us that the trees have been inspected by a tree specialist and that his advice will be acted upon. We welcome this, of course, and hope that some progress can be made in regard to the repair and/or replacement of the railings.



### Footpath Issues

We have previously reported our success in successful in obtaining grants for minor improvements to footpaths in the Cat Castle area.

Unfortunately austerity measures mean that such funding is no longer available.

We very much value our footpath network, however, and continue to work with DCC to ensure that its condition remains good and that damage and obstructions are reported and dealt with.

We are pleased to report that the large tree which has blocked the two footpaths in Deepdale has now been cleared and these are now usable from both directions whilst signage issues on the footpath to Cotherstone should also be attended to.

Problems on can only be attended to if those who use them report them and we would urge residents who walk to raise any problems they discover with a member of the council or directly to PROW at DCC - [prow@durham.gov.uk](mailto:prow@durham.gov.uk)



## DCC Consultation - Public Space Protection Order

Although not usually a problem in the village itself, concern has been expressed over dog mess on public footpaths and the increasingly common sight of a full "poop bag" dangling from bushes and tree branches - a form of rural art that it is difficult to appreciate. We welcome, therefore, DCC proposals to introduce a Public Space Protection Order which effectively covers all open spaces in the county and makes dog fouling an offence for which a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100 can be issued. This is currently out for consultation until December 5th - [www.durham.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.durham.gov.uk/consultations).

Enforcement is, of course, an issue but incidents can be reported to DCC on **03000 261 000** or at [www.durham.gov.uk/dogfouling](http://www.durham.gov.uk/dogfouling).

It is also worth remembering that the law now requires all dogs to be microchipped.



## Care and Support in Co. Durham

The Council remains committed to supporting any initiative designed to help residents to live safely and independently. The purchase of the defibrillator remains an important achievement whilst last year we were involved in the "Safer Homes" project. This year we are distributing a postcard with this newsletter to raise awareness of Care and Support Services in Co. Durham.

Unfortunately, all the information is web based and does not appear to recognise that many of those likely to need care and support don't use a computer! The telephone number for DCC Social Care Direct is **03000 367 979**.



## Trump for Lartington?

Highly unlikely - but Parish and County Council Elections are scheduled to take place on May 4th next year. Lartington is fortunate in that we have never found it difficult to recruit new councillors, whether through election or co-option but we do welcome all who take an interest in our activities. Full details regarding the election will be advertised nearer the time but the dates of forthcoming meetings are detailed below and if anyone is interesting in standing for election then they are very welcome to attend.

### Financial Notes



We remain grateful to Anne Botterill for acting as Internal Auditor for our accounts for the financial year ending March 2016. These have now been approved by BDO for the National Audit Office. Our finances continue to remain healthy with a reasonable balance between our annual precept and our expenditure whilst our reserves, roughly equal our annual income, are judged appropriate. Democracy is expensive, however, and an election will have to be paid for whilst it is difficult for small councils like ourselves to absorb seemingly small increases in charges without levying a significant percentage rise in the precept - but we do our best!

### Future Parish Council Meetings

November 8th 2016

January 10<sup>th</sup> 2017

March 14<sup>th</sup> 2017

May 9th 2017 - Annual Parish Meeting Meetings, which are open to the public, 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)