

Norham Parish Council Chairman's Report 2023

As usual, at this time when considering what to include in the Chairman's Report, I have to think back to what has been achieved during the past year, and as usual I think there might not be much to write about until I look back at the correspondence, minutes of meetings etc. and realise that a lot has been done and progress has been made in many areas.

Queen Elizabeth II

In June we celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II with a beacon lit on Chilly Hill and a party on the village green. Seven silver birch trees were planted in the Jubilee Field to mark the seven decades of her reign.

Sadly, in September we mourned the passing of Queen Elizabeth. An oak tree has been planted in the Jubilee Field in her memory.

These Are Some Of The Issues We As A Parish Council Have Been Dealing With **Play Equipment**

The play equipment on the village green continues to be well used by local and visiting children (and adults). Thanks again to everyone who made this possible.

Jubilee Field

Following on from the tremendous community effort in making good the damage caused by Storm Arwen, many improvements have been carried out in the Jubilee Field, including refurbishment of the benches, erection of a new sign to mark the Silver and Platinum Jubilees of Queen Elizabeth II and the recently installed information board. We still await the long-promised repairs to the perimeter wall.

Village Map

The village map has been completed and fitted to the attractive oak frame and canopy which have been in place for some time. It is proving to be of interest to visitors and locals alike.

Norham School

Norham Parish Council fully supported the campaign to keep a school in Norham during the recent consultation process on the future of education in the Berwick area. We are pleased to learn that under the proposed changes, Norham will retain its school and we will do all we can to enhance the school and its relationship with the community.

Public Toilets

Norham prides itself on having free to use public toilets open 24/7. In partnership with Northumberland County Council, a lot of work goes into keeping the toilets available. It is annoying therefore, to learn of recent vandalism and anti-social behaviour. We will not tolerate this and have informed the local police of these problems.

Lower Tweed Trail

This riverside walk was closed for some time near Norham Castle due to damage caused by Storm Arwen. Having re-opened this footpath after clearance work, it was disappointing to find it had to be closed again because of fallen trees in the same area. Our thanks go to Northumberland County Council for installing a temporary bridge and re-routing the path to enable its use. It has to be said that care needs to be taken on various sections of the Lower Tweed Trail.

Norham Development Trust

Norham Development Trust, in conjunction with the Parish Council, continue to explore the possibility of providing a renewable energy scheme for the community. We have support from the community, the local landowner involved and the Climate Change Team from Northumberland County Council and continue to work towards what could be a remarkable achievement.

Electric Vehicle Chargers

Northumberland County Council has recently installed electric vehicle charging points on Castle Street. After initial problems over location and on-going discussions about parking provision, the charging points are operational, although as a good mobile phone signal is required to operate them, there are still some issues to be resolved.

Illuminated Sheep

I never thought I would be writing about an illuminated sheep but here we are! Several of the above were distributed around the county to promote the return of the Lindisfarne Gospels to Newcastle. Norham joined forces with Horncliffe to provide a home for the sheep before its return to join the flock at Hexham.

Paton & Co.

Norham Parish Council would like to thank Paton & Co. our local estate agents, for generously donating £250 from each property they sell in the village. Their generosity is greatly appreciated.

The Coronation of King Charles III

The beacon on Chilly Hill was re-lit on Saturday 6th May 2023 to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. This was followed on Sunday 7th May with a Church Service to celebrate the Coronation, a performance from St. Cuthbert's Church Choir in the Village Hall and a picnic in the sunshine afterwards.

On-Going Work

*The joint neighbourhood plan for Norham & Islandshire.

*Speeding Traffic:- Although the new 20mph signs for Norham School are a positive step, we are still working with Northumberland County Council to address the speeding problem throughout the village.

*Dog fouling is an on-going problem.

*Sustrans:- Since Sustrans declassified the two national cycle routes through Norham, we have been trying to find out why. We will continue to press them to find out what the problems are and where.

Norham is an attractive village and we have much to be proud of. Thanks go to all who contribute in any way, many without any recognition, to make Norham such a pleasant place to live.

George Straughen

Parish Council Chairman