

Chairman - Mr Geoffrey Stewart

- Members and Representatives of this Parish Council.
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

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Good Evening - My report on the various issues and developments that we on this council have been involved with over the past very challenging period from our year 2019/Early 2020 to our current closing period of 2020/2021

I will first give my appreciation & personal thanks to all our members present and those recently retired (Mr George Price) who have for these particularly challenging years been fully committed to their role as Parish Counsellors.

## CURRENTLY THE YEAR OF 2020-2021 MAIN ISSUES:

### PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

The Parish Council Website is now under dual control with NALC 'Hosts I.T., with our Parish Clerk having access when required to change information.

### INTERNAL AUDITOR

Mr David Girdwood, Northumberland Accountants is now engaged in auditing the Parish Council Accounts.

### THE CEMETERY

The Cemetery maintenance contract remains with Mr Eric Tolman, 'Complete Landscapes' as their quality workmanship plus care of the grounds is of an exceptionally high level and continues to be highly praised and recognised with appreciation relayed to the Parish Council from both residents & visitors to the cemetery.

The County Council Cemetery Grant of £10k which Acting Clerk, Councillor Hillan had successfully applied for in regard to funding the necessary repairs to the Access road, gravel paths and edging boards. All are now repaired or replaced as required. Therefore thanks are also due to DT Thompson (Ground Works)

### GUEST SPEAKERS

Understandably these have been absent this past year. However PC Gary Sharpless our Police Representative continues to present an E.mail report each month.

### THE HUB - Development Trust & Resource Centre

As with many other venues, for The Hub, Covid 19 restrictions has negatively impacted on most of their activities - however they have amazingly maintained the production and delivery of 'the Village News' which has always been a most valuable & much appreciated information resource - Grateful thanks to all those involved and we hope that the near future will see all the benefits of this great venue back on track.

## FESTIVE LIGHTS

We continue to be appreciative of all the volunteers who give their time in all weathers, to ensure that the village lighting displays has continued regardless of the difficulties, thereby ensuring the village street decorations continue to be enjoyed.

## VILLAGE VOLUNTEERS

It is particularly heart-warming to see the emergence of a new organisation of enthusiastic village volunteers who are happy to take up the task of proactively helping towards presenting our village in a more scenic way by making bunting and putting together outstanding floral arrangements to enhance the village image for residents and visitors alike. On behalf of the Parish Council, May I say - Well Done and Thankyou

## WHALE BONES

We are delighted to be able to look forward to the Whalebones being securely installed in a conspicuous & prominent southerly position overlooking the Harbour and out to Sea so that they can be fully appreciated by residents and visitors alike for many years into the future.

## MAIN ST - PARKING MANAGEMENT

Changes to Village Centre Parking - Time specific NO PARKING (between 9am - 6pm) due to various hold-ups has yet to be implemented this year between the two Main St roundabouts (no exemption for Blue Badges) Date for completion unknown.

## CORE STRATEGY

Expected changes in local government means the core strategy has not yet been rescinded, which may extend any planned progress for another year. We continue to be in the position of being held to the original 'Berwick Local Plan' for the foreseeable future. However, this should be resolved within the coming year as our Neighbourhood Plan is now consolidated as a major developmental structure for our 'Partnership Parish Councils' of Seahouses, Beadnell & Bamburgh.

Jen Hall from Beadnell continues to be our area representative on the AONB & continues to be fully committed in acting on behalf of our stunning coastal area.

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### SEAHOUSES CAR PARK - PUBLIC AMENITIES

Congratulations to all those Council & contract workers for the hard work put in to ensure them being fully completed with perfect timing for the lifting of Lockdown - the toilets are of good modern standard and now fully operational.

### ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

We appreciated the extensive work completed on the 'overflow' area of the car park which has significantly increased its capacity and hope this will go some way to offset the time limited parking on the Main St.

Completion of street repairs and improvements on James St, Main St, and Southfield Ave have made a significant difference to these extremely busy routes for traffic accessing our School, Health Centre & Residential areas.

However

Our concern on behalf of our residents and tourists continues with still many dangerous areas of deterioration (main surfaces and roadside edges which are being broken by wider & heavier vehicles) to and from our A1 main access routes leading from our coastal villages, particularly our 'local route' via Swinhoe, Chathill, Preston Tower Hill which although recent works have been completed, repairs are still done as 'site specific' - with other identified pothole/very worn areas within very close vicinities being ignored - consequently necessitating many future return visits & disruptions within the same area. This piecemeal approach which has been a long standing & constant aggravation for all concerned continues!

### NCC COMMUNICATION

The NCC 'county wide' communication system is showing some improvement towards local parish councils however still frustrating for us - is the way the County Council continue to apply determined pressure to shift costly responsibility onto small Parish Councils such as ours.

Furthermore; the frustration we continue to have with the County Council in regard to planning enforcement is - the perpetual situation of many years still to be recognised and resolved - of pointing out that planning enforcement is ineffectual in the face of some property owner's blatant refusal to comply & follow through with government enforcement orders. This defiant attitude of property owners refusing to abide by local laws is therefore seen as an option for others to follow thereby contravening and negating both the local and national planning regulations.

### CONCLUDING THIS REPORT.

This coming term of 2021/2022 for this Parish Council will no doubt have challenges to overcome & achievements to celebrate, which, I continue to have confidence that you will ensure positive involvement and development in our local community.

I look forward to observing continued growth particularly for our Parish of North Sunderland and Seahouses and also through the Neighbourhood Plan initiative with our neighbours Bamburgh & Beadnell continuing their developed positive working practices,

We, as representatives for our community, have come to the completion of another year of being a part of our Parish Council and this point has always brought for me a strong sense of belonging & satisfaction which I would always recommend to others who may consider joining the NSPC.

I strongly feel that it is with channelling & giving freely of our enthusiasm, expertise & talents as proactive members within, and for, our community, that promotes those uplifting feelings and sentiments.

In conclusion - I must give my very sincere thanks to

### The Clerk of the Council:

Firstly - I wish to applaud Mrs Sylvia Hillen, who, when following the resignation of our former clerk, courageously stepped in at short notice and worked extremely hard in keeping us, the Parish Council on an 'even keel' until we engaged Mrs Kerren Rogers as the new Clerk to this Parish Council. This said, I am now pleased to officially welcome Kerren to her new position with NSPC and to say how much we have appreciated her calm approach and highly efficient work ethics throughout these challenging times.

County Councillor:

Times of change for many of us and with the County elections just past we must congratulate Mr Guy Renner-Thompson on his re-election, not forgetting to thank him for all his past support which has been greatly appreciated.

Parish Councillors

- Lastly the support of ALL of YOU! Which particularly in this past year, has been tremendous in ensuring that this Parish Council continues to operate effectively and with competency - So, on behalf of Myself, our Village and Community. THANKYOU

This 'ALMOST' concludes my official report for the year 2020-2021

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## HOWEVER

That time has now arrived for me to - PERSONALLY THANK YOU ALL

Those of you here present and all your predecessors who .....

For the past 45yrs as Councillors have accompanied me on this significant 'Life Journey'.

For the 24yrs of support given to me as your Chairman

For the 16yrs as your AONB representative - a most enjoyable experience.

I have always been conscious of my heritage and sense of belonging to this Village and also had the very early example of my Grandfather being Clerk to Belford Rural District Council (as it was then) which has undoubtable set me on this amazing path in life.

I clearly recall that for 2 years prior to joining, I would come to the monthly meetings just to observe and comprehend what a commitment it would be and what being a Parish Councillor would entail and I must say, the examples set by several of those Councillors/Chairs particularly impressed me - such as; Rev Grice Hutchinson, Mr Andrew Brown and Mr George Scott whose capabilities in office were very instructive for my own time as chair.

A few of the memorable events and Council achievements I have been particularly involved with and which stand out for me over those numerous years include

The Cemetery Guardianship - which I am proud to say has secure funds for its future excellent maintenance and any future expansion.

Development Trust Projects in which over many years the Council have had an integral and supportive part to play.

Fisherman 'Rescue' Statue; which I determinately fought for when the plinth stood empty for so long.

Researching WW2 last resting places of Local Men particularly for the Year 2000 when representing the Parish Council at our Memorial Remembrance Services.

The Village Millennium Film Project of the Village History initiated by Mr Jimmy France

National Coastal Path - involvement in local area discussions

## (After NCC Closure) Re-instatement of

1. The Civic 'Recycling' Skips
2. The Tourist Information Centre

So, as this significant period in my life closes, I wish you all well and I look forward to quietly observing the continuing good works that those who continue after me will achieve. Thankyou - One and All

Signed: G. Stewart

Dated 17-5-21