



Great Aycliffe Town Council

NEWSLETTER

11th March 2016



Telephone: 01325 300700 • Email: info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk • Website: www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk

“YOUR TOWN COUNCIL IS IN A HEALTHY FINANCIAL POSITION WITH NO CUTS TO SERVICES PLANNED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.”



Councillor
R.S. Fleming
Leader

“Sound Finances and Financial Management”

The Town Council is pleased to report that its finances remain in strong health, with a balanced budget in place, efficiency savings continuing to be achieved in the current year, and sound levels of balances and reserves.

This has been independently confirmed by the Council’s external auditors, who have given the Council a clean bill of financial health for many years now, and confirmed that the Council has sound arrangements in place to deliver value for money to local taxpayers.

“Services Protected”

The Town Council has worked hard to deliver savings each year and to spend the limited resources available to it as efficiently as possible, whilst striving to keep any increase in the Town Council Tax to a minimum. As a result of this careful and prudent financial management, the Town Council has been able to protect and maintain the many important local services that it provides to the local community, including:-

- A pre-school learning centre;
- Oak Leaf Sports Complex providing indoor bowls, multi-use sports hall, squash courts, and bar and catering facilities;
- Oak Leaf Golf Complex comprising an eighteen hole golf course, golf shop, changing rooms, and driving range;
- Eight football pitches including junior football and six a side pitches;
- Eight parks, all with play equipment, four further play areas, four multi-use games areas, a skate park, BMX track, and outdoor fitness equipment;
- Stephenson Way and West Cemeteries and the provision of burial services;
- Five allotments sites including some with pigeon and poultry facilities;
- A community events programme including Aycliffe Festival, Senior Citizens Trips, Fun in the Parks, Santa Tours and the Fireworks Display;
- Grounds maintenance of Council owned land and facilities;
- The environment centre at Moore Lane;
- Environmental management of a number of nature and conservation areas, the Great Aycliffe Way and other green open space across the Parish;
- Civic events and functions and the Town Mayor;
- Park Patrol Service and Town Pride Team; and
- Provision and maintenance of public seating, bins and bus shelters.

This protection of services comes at a time when other local authorities such as Darlington Borough Council and Durham County Council have been forced, by substantial cuts in government funding, to cut back

on services including care homes, adult care and independent living services, support to community and voluntary organisations, leisure centres, museums, libraries, markets, highways lighting, Christmas lighting, grass cutting and flower beds.

“Funding Cuts and Budget Pressures Absorbed”

Whilst the Town Council has not cut back on services, this does not mean that it has been immune from the public sector funding cuts by central government.

The Council has seen its Council Tax Support Grant funding cut by more than £130,000 since 2013, as well as seeing the £38,500 Double Taxation Grant withdrawn by Durham County Council. The Council is also expecting the Council Tax Support Grant to be cut by at least another £100,000 over the next five years.

The Council has also faced upward pressure on its spending budgets as a result of inflation, pay awards, pension automatic enrolment, and the introduction of the National Living Wage, as well as downward pressure on the income receivable from fees and charges for services as a result of the economic situation.

The Council is also seeing increasing requests for financial assistance from community and voluntary organisations facing funding cuts of their own and increasing pressure to take over local services at risk of being cut by Durham County Council.

“Council Tax Increases Minimised”

However, despite the funding cuts and other budget pressures faced, the Town Council, through a combination of good financial management and delivery of year on year savings, has managed to shield the local taxpayers from the worst of this.

As a result the Town Council has only increased the

Town Council Tax by 5.5% in the seven years since 2010, aided by a four year freeze between 2010 and 2013.

“Investment in Services and Community Assets”

The Council has also invested in new services and facilities wherever possible using a combination of savings, use of reserves and securing external grant funding.

Examples of investment in the town in recent years include:-

- The employment of a town pride team and park patrol service;
- Securing the future of the A167 highways lighting;
- Various environmental initiatives including taking over the maintenance of environmental areas and the planting of new woodland;
- Installation of multi-use games areas and new play equipment at Simpature, Horndale, Woodham and Moore Lane Parks;
- Improved play areas at St Oswald’s Park, Moore Lane Park, Town Park, Horndale Park, Byerley Park and School Aycliffe;
- Outdoor fitness equipment in West Park; and
- A BMX track adjacent to Woodham Park.

The Council also has plans for further investment in the coming year including:-

- A new scoot park at Horndale;
- A replacement play area at West Park;
- Taking over the woodland at Woodham bridleway;
- An event to celebrate the Queen’s 90th Birthday; and
- The investigation of a major new park development in the Cobblers Hall area.

PLAY EQUIPMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Following an extensive public consultation process there is a proposal to re- develop the junior play area within West Park as part of a £40,000 investment by Great Aycliffe Town Council.



Aycliffe Festival

'Elvis' to perform at the Aycliffe Festival

The Festival Working Group is currently considering event applications with 'Elvis' as one of the more famous personalities! As well as Elvis, Kinexus and Betcha By Golly Wow are scheduled to perform at Neville Parade Community Centre this year.



The concept of the Festival is to involve local groups, businesses and voluntary organisations, encouraging them to organise an 'event' within the time-frame of the Festival. Neville Parade (incorporating the Cubby) has taken the idea on board 'big style' with applications for 12 events to take place this year.

So far, the events organised by the local community seem to be providing a wide variety of experiences and activities for children and adults in the Parish.

Additionally, the Festival Working Group has booked a 'Party in the Park' with bands from the Durham Brass Festival in attendance. More information on this is to follow.

Aycliffe Village Hall Association's music night will run again in 2016, buy your tickets early as it was a sell out in 2015!

Another immensely successful event in 2015 was the Music Night at the Working Men's Club and this too will run again this year.

Currently, there are 15 events scheduled to take place over the Festival period, Saturday 16th July until Saturday 30th July.

We are still looking to continue the Festival's success of 2015 and will be taking applications from anyone who would like to organise something for the Festival. It doesn't have to be something the size of Glastonbury, it can be something really simple that would appeal to the people of Aycliffe.

Even if your organisation doesn't need a grant, you can still benefit from our advertising campaign by letting us know when it is on as long as it is in the Festival period.

Any event will be considered, large or small, indoor or outdoor but it must be held in the Festival period in Aycliffe. If you are thinking about organising an event or just want to talk it through with us, contact Marie Robinson on 01325 300700 or festival@great-aycliffe.gov.uk.

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 31st March 2016.

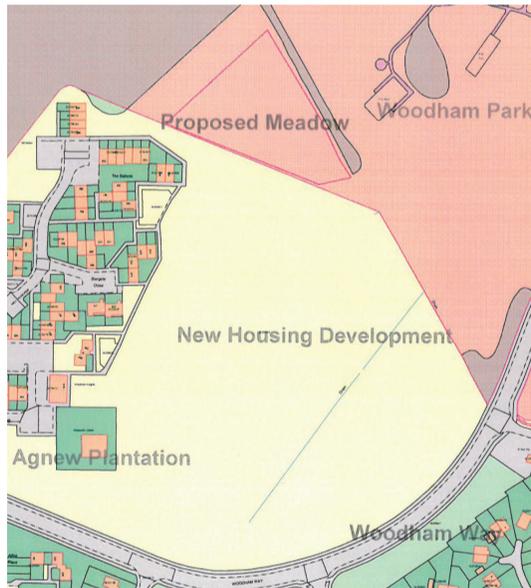
PUBLIC CONSULTATION IN REGARD TO MEADOW AT AGNEW

Plans are progressing to create a meadow on land just north of the new development near the Agnew, off Woodham Way. The land in question is owned by Great Aycliffe Town Council and the council are keen to sow a flower rich meadow to compliment the natural feel of the area.

The creation of a meadow will mean that the area will have substantial investment in the selection of a flower rich wildflower mix which will tolerate the locally damp conditions. Species should include oxeye daisy, field poppy and knapweed to name but a few.

The proposed variety of flowers to be sown will provide an attractive visual display over the summer months and also attract important insects and creatures that feed on them. Once established, the meadow will be maintained by allowing the flowers to develop over the summer months and seed in early Autumn, this will be followed by an annual cutting of the vegetation, all cuttings will be baled and removed from site to help promote the ongoing development of the flower meadow.

To discuss the meadow please contact Great Aycliffe Town Council on 01325 300700.



SUCCESSFUL MAYOR'S CHARITY DINNER

The Annual Mayor's Charity Civic Dinner was hosted by the Mayor of Great Aycliffe, Councillor Mary Dalton, on Friday, 19th February 2016 at Woodham Golf Club.

The fund raising at the event was in aid of the Mayor's nominated Charity during her Year in Office and this year the Mayor has chosen the Renal Unit at James Cook Hospital.

Barclays Bank were, once again, kind enough to match fund the event to a sum of £1,000. The total amount raised was £2,273.

Mrs. Denese Cartwright, President of the Rotary Club of Newton Aycliffe gave an excellent response to the Mayor on behalf of the guests.

Councillor Mrs. Dalton would like to take this opportunity to also thank Ebac (Norfrost) Ltd. for their generosity in supplying a Chest Freezer for her fund raising. The Mayor thanked fellow Councillors and friends who have supported her during the year by donating gifts for her various fund raising events.



PUBLIC EVENTS

Great Aycliffe Town Council are again providing a series of free family events over the Easter break to keep the children entertained. Booking is desirable by contacting Great Aycliffe Town Council on 01325 300700.

POND DIPPING

Wednesday 30th March, 10.30am-12.30 pm

Visit the ponds at Byerley Park Local Nature Reserve to welcome spring to the reserve and discover if the many animals such as frogs and toads have returned. Bring along your nets and wellies if you have them and meet at the sign behind Ranulf Court.



ANYTHING EARTHLY

Thursday 31st March, 1.00pm-3.00pm

Come along to Moore Lane Eco Centre and take part in an Earth Walk lead by Durham Wildlife Trust before returning to the centre and taking part in a wildflower planting session; participants will be encouraged to take their newly planted seeds home with them to look after for a few weeks before taking part in a second session where the plants will be planted to help establish a new meadow within the town. Meet at Moore Lane Eco Centre.



SENIOR CITIZENS' EXCURSIONS

Each year, the Council organises a series of free excursions for the senior citizens who live in our Parish. It is one of the most popular events organised by the Council.

Application forms will be available on Tuesday 19th April from the Library in Central Avenue, Recreation Centre in Beveridge Way, Oakleaf Sports Complex or Great Aycliffe Town Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane.

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 4th May 2016.

To be eligible, you do not have to be drawing your pension or have a bus pass, but you do have to be a resident of the electoral parish and 60 years old (applies to both men and women) by 1st April in the year of travel. If you are in any doubt, please telephone 01325 300700 and we will check your eligibility.

This year, residents will be able to choose from Northumberland, Scarborough, Edinburgh, Blackpool, Lake District or South Shields.



Our 'trippers' have the choice of venue for the day with a three course meal and tea or coffee provided in a good quality establishment usually with disabled facilities. Most of the excursions also call in for a comfort stop with refreshments provided on the way to or from the main destination.

The coaches provided are 49-53 seater executive coaches with toilet facilities. There is also a 53 seater executive coach with a wheelchair hoist to each destination. This ensures that even people with severe mobility problems can enjoy a day out. The hoist can be used for loading wheelchairs for those residents who need to travel in their wheelchair, or for use by people who cannot manage the steps on the coach.

Each person who qualifies is entitled to one 'trip'. To qualify you must be aged 60 or over and must have lived in the electoral parish by 1st April in the year of travel.

MAYOR'S CHARITY CABARET NIGHT

The Mayor of Great Aycliffe will be holding a Cabaret Night in the Phoenix Club (formerly the Royal British Legion) on Thursday, 21st April 2016 commencing at 7.30 p.m.

The event will be in aid of her nominated charities:- The Renal Unit at James Cook Hospital, Neville Community Centre and Scouts/Guides of Great Aycliffe.

Tickets are £5 each and will be on sale from the Council Offices and the Phoenix Club. Pie and peas will be included in the ticket price and there will be a bingo session. A fund raising raffle will also take place in aid of the charities. Tickets are limited and will be on sale on a first come first served basis.



PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING CENTRES

**'WHERE LEARNING IS FUN FOR
EVERYONE'**

Providing high quality care and education where every child feels safe, is happy and has fun in a safe and secure learning environment.

We provide full and part time places for children from their 3rd birthday and Nursery Educational Funded places are available the term after a child's 3rd birthday. Until funding is available the cost is only £3.50 for a 3 hour session.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of leaning and development. All children have access to the indoor and outdoor facilities throughout the day.

For further information
please contact

Jackie Swainston on

01325 319880

or visit our
web site at



www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk/pre-schools



Although things have been a bit quiet of late work is still continuing on the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan. Planning policies are being researched and written which will help us deliver the priorities for residents. This is proving to be a little tricky as we still have to comply with national and local planning policies so the correct wording is critical.

Pre-Submission documents are being finalised and residents will have the opportunity to comment on these before a final proposed Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan is presented to the external examiner and Durham

County Council to ensure everything is in order and complies with all the required legislation. The final piece to the process, and yes, it has been a very lengthy one, is a referendum. People on the electoral register will be entitled to vote in the referendum. If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'yes', then the local planning authority will bring the plan into force and it will then become a statutory development plan for the parish.

The GreatAycliffeNP Facebook page and Town Council website provides a large amount of information. Please join our Facebook page or check out the website for further information.



The Youth Council continues to go grow. This year there are 22 members whose ages range from 12 to 18.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Youth Council placed a wreath at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday following a request from the Youth Council to be represented at such an important occasion.

The young people took part in the TFM Christmas Toy Appeal with some Youth Councillors donating their allowance and others collecting toys and gifts with fantastic results. They managed to collect nearly 80 individual gifts which filled two sacks and three large bags for children of all ages. A great effort all round.

Work is commencing on the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Event, which will be led this year by GoAhead Training, planned as part of the Aycliffe Festival. The format for the STEM event will be similar to last year and a number of local companies have already indicated they want to take part.

Four grants have been given to local organisations totalling £975. You can find the grant guidelines on the Town Council website @ www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk/info/council-and-democracy/community-engagement/aycliffe-youth-council

BYERLEY PARK, HORNDALE & COBBLERS HALL WARD



John D. Clare
Lab - Tel. 318333



Ian Gray
Lab - Tel. 313770



Brian Hall
Lab - Tel. 314105



Paul Kjenstad
Lab - 07814 777212



Irene Hewitson
Ind - Tel. 318763



Peter J. Bergg
Lab - 07432 070717

WOODHAM WARD



Barbara A. Clare
Lab - Tel. 318333



Neil Collinson
Lab - Tel. 300072



Mary Dalton
Lab - Tel. 320499



Michael Dalton
Lab - Tel. 320499



Sandra Haigh
Ind - Tel. 318303



Keith Henderson
Lab - Tel. 319542

KNOW YOUR COUNCILLOR

AYCLIFFE CENTRAL WARD



Jim Atkinson
Lab - Tel. 310791

AYCLIFFE VILLAGE



Bill Blenkinsopp
Ind - Tel. 788893

SIMPASTURE WARD



Valerie M. Raw
Lab - Tel. 311447



Derek G. Atkinson
Lab - Tel. 301395



William Iveson
Lab - Tel. 312490



John Clark
Lab - 07972 170190

WEST WARD



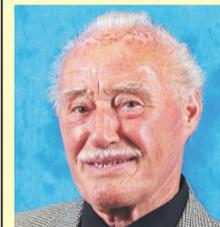
Eddy Adam
Lab - 07900 701966



Raymond Bowman
Lab - 07944 067396



Arun M. Chandran
Lab - Tel. 313224



George C. Gray
Ind - Tel. 314934



Martin Ashcroft
Lab - 07811 403986



Ken Robson
Ind - 07443 046804

SHAFTO / ST. MARY'S WARD



Robert S. Fleming
Lab - Tel. 310025



Wendy Hillary
Lab - Tel. 313273



Malcolm Iveson
Lab - Tel. 319759



Chris Wheeler
Lab - Tel. 318805

NEVILLE WARD



Jed P. Hillary
Lab - Tel. 313273



Sarah Iveson
Lab - Tel. 319759



Oak Leaf
Sports Complex
01325 300600
www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk

What we have to offer at Oakleaf

5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL - SPECIAL OFFER

Every Saturday and Sunday, 12noon - 4pm
ALL 5-A SIDE BOOKINGS ONLY £20
If you are interested in this fantastic offer please contact reception for more details.



SPECIAL OFFER

Junior Squash - Badminton
Table Tennis

DURING ALL SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Available Monday - Friday

9am - 4pm for ages 8-15 years
You can play for only £1.00 per person,
equipment included.

BAR

OPENING HOURS - BAR

Monday to Saturday
11.30am to 11.00pm
Sunday 12noon to 10.30pm

Bar Meals Served

Monday to Friday 12noon to 2.30pm
& 5.00pm to 9.00pm

Saturday 12noon to 9.00pm

Sunday 12noon to 6.30pm

Quiz Night every Tuesday,
starting at 9.00 pm

Cash Prizes, Spot Prizes & Drinks
Tokens to be won
Only 50p per person!

Large screen TV's
with Sky Sports & ESPN

Private Function Room with
panoramic views, can cater
for up to 60 people,
ideal for Parties, Weddings
or Conferences

TWO MEALS FOR £10

from the Specials Board
Anytime of the day or night

CURRY NIGHT

Every Saturday from 5pm to 9pm
House curry, rice and naan only £3

FAMILY BADMINTON SESSIONS

Every Saturday 11am - 5pm
Only £4.50 per family, per hour.
Equipment included, maximum of 6 per court.
SPECIAL OFFER Book a court and receive a child's meal free!
Bookings only taken on the day, subject to availability.



OAKLIFE OVER 50's CLUB

Thursday from 10am - 12noon
£3.00 members or £3.50 non members
including tea/coffee
Please ask at reception for the latest activity schedule.



JUNIOR WEEKLY DROP IN SESSIONS

Term time only

SQUASH COACHING

Tuesdays 4.15pm - 5pm, ages 5-7 years
Tuesdays 5pm - 6.10pm, ages 8-15 years
£2.00 members or £2.50 non members

PASS - SATURDAY CLUB

9.30am - 11am, ages 8-15 years
£2.00 members or £2.50 non members
Try golf, table tennis, basketball, badminton, archery, squash, football etc



BOWLS DROP IN

Starting Wednesday 18th May

6.30pm - 8.30pm

10 weeks

Beginners only £1 per week

Even if you've never played before
come along and give it a go.

A great way to keep fit.

Bring your bowling shoes or carpet
slippers, if you have any, but we have all
the equipment required.

(under 18's must be
accompanied
by an adult)



BOWLS OPEN DAY

Saturday 14th May

12.30 - 4.30pm

TRY IT FOR FREE

(under 18's must be
accompanied by an adult)



Oak Leaf Golf Complex, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe DL5 6QZ

2016/17 Season Tickets

Unlimited Golf until 31 March 2017

18 hole course with floodlit driving range, buggy hire, shop and changing facilities.

Bar and catering available at the Oak Leaf Sports Complex.

Coaching from our PGA Professional and Golf Manager, Julie Welch

SEASON TICKETS

Adult 7 day	£350
Adult 5 day	£305
Seniors (over 60) 7 day	£305
Seniors (over 60) 5 day	£255

VISITING PARTY PACKAGES AVAILABLE

Driving Range £2 Small - £4 Large

Green Fees

Mon - Fri £13 • Weekends £16

JUNIOR SEASON TICKETS

18 - 21	£200
14 - 18	£75
Under 14	Free

SPECIAL OFFER - DRIVING RANGE & GREEN FEES FROZEN

Play between 1pm and 5pm, Monday to Friday

Special Price of £10 per round (Adult) or £7.50 (Concessions)

Tel: 01325 310 820 or see www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk for further details