

ANNAUL PLAN 2024/25

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Parish Council Objectives

1. Maintain the parish's rural character and existing amenities, whilst encouraging sustainable development				
	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Status
1.1	Consider the impact of local planning applications to – Ensure new developments are sustainable Protect Open Spaces Protect and Improve Public Rights of Way	On-Going	All - Cllr Diggory lead	
1.2	Continue to monitor progress on approved housing developments	On-going	All	
1.3	Seek to protect unregistered public footpath between PWOR footpath no footpath 2 and 21.	On-going	Cllr Wallage	Application submitted and awaiting outcome
2. Improve Road Safety				
2.1	Consider the potential for further traffic calming measures in consultation with the Police/DCC Traffic Engineer	On going	Cllr Kellett	Carry over from 23.24. Site visit held with Maxine Stobbs and Michelle Mckintosh and Cllrs Kellet and Lowrie – in March 22 – awaiting feedback on potential options
2.2	Pursue the potential of widening the footpath opposite double yellow lines next to the footpath from the doctors surgery, as suggested by DCC during the parking survey undertaken in 2021.	June 23	Cllr Wallage/Lee Mowbray - DCC	Awaiting response from DCC
2..3	Continue to support the Community Emergency Group with the development of a Community Emergency Plan	On going	Cllr Wallage	CEG set up and operating under the umbrella of the VP. £1,000 grant funding secured from DCC for equipment.

				Draft plan and supporting policies and procedures still in operation.
3. Continue to Improve the appearance and management of the Cemetery				
3.1.	Review contractual arrangements for grounds maintenance and waste management contracts 2025/26	January 2025	Parish Clerk	
3.2	Monthly walkabouts to monitor progress and identify new issues	On going	Parish Clerk	Consideration to be given to more member involvement
3.3	Ad hoc grave tops as and when necessary	On going	Parish Clerk /Gardener	
3.4	Reduce size of corner flower bed to allow easier access for grass cutting and add additional flower bed in between bench and memorial tree	October 24	Parish Clerk/Gardener	Carry over from 23/24 May not be necessary as access does not seem to be an issue. Propose delete 3 beds now In cemetery
3.5	Under take Stress Testing of Headstones	October 24	Parish Clerk/Appropriate contractor.	Carry over from 23/24 One loose headstone laid flat during site walkabout
3.6	Review all cemetery policies	Sept 24	Parish Clerk /Cllr Wallage	In progress
3.7	Consider how we can Improve how we communicate with cemetery users on council policy and cemetery rules	Sept 24	Parish Clerk//Cllr Wallage	
4 Improve our public parks and open green spaces				
4.3	Develop a project to improve the “Rec” - Provision of Adult Gym - Provision of 3 Marmax Picnic Benches - Provision of 3 Marmax Picnic Benches - Provision of Marmax Tree bench around central Tree	June 244	Cllr Wallage in consultation with DCC officers and local ward members	Carry over from 23/24 In progress – Proposed scheme agreed with DCC. Grant funding secured for GYM and Street Furniture. Awaiting update for expected start date from Outdoor

	- Provision of 2 more waste bins - Repaint of Youth Shelter			Facilities Manager. Update requested
4.4	Improve the maintenance of public green spaces with regular strimming by our grounds maintenance contractor to supplement grass cutting undertaken by DCC and reduce herbicide spraying Regular maintenance of the village green areas around war memorial	May - Oct	Parish Clerk /Grounds Maintenance Contractor Cllr Wallage/Gardener	Parish Council agreed to add village green outside Jubilee Hall to regular maintenance areas
4.5	Seek replacement of dead rowan tree outside of the cemetery	Nov 24	Cllr Wallage in consultation with DCC Find and Fix it officer.	Carry over from 23/24 Find and Fix it time agreed to replace as part of the ad hoc maintenance project agreed in 2021.Despite numerous follow ups Still awaiting response from DCC. Parish Council may need to to consider replacing direct.
4.6	Consider other potential; environmental improvements – Request received to tidy up the approach road from Lambton View to Station Road (ad hoc clearance) and to strimm Hall Lane as part of regular village strimming – but may require ad-hoc initial clearance	March 25	Parish Clerk /Grounds maintenance contractor/DCC	Carry over from 23/24- Potential to ask Bank groups to clear the approach from Lambton View as part of the Station Road development/landscaping improvements. Site visit held with Green Group Chair and Cllr Wallage to clarify request re strimming

				on Hall Lane. Agreed that DCC be initially asked to tidy up the grass encroach on the public footpath at the top of Hall Lane. Footpath severely narrowed and none on other side. A strip of grass to be left for regular cutting by DCC to prevent future encroachment. The need for any supplementary maintenance to be considered after response from DCC received. Concerns also raised by another resident about overgrown vegetation on the footpath over the railway bridge also a concern as the path severely restricted on none on the other side. Both areas referred to DCC by Cllr Wallage
4.7	Regular Councillor Village Walkabouts to identify footpaths overgrown, signage overgrown, fly tipping/litter /dog fouling hotspots etc and report to DCC to address or refer requests for Green Group Litter picks	On going	All	
4.8	Discuss ways to help improve the safety and usage of Adventure Park (Parish Plan Outstanding Action)	March 25	Cllr Wallage in consultation with Local Ward Members	C/O from 23/24 Potential further investment from S106 monies.

				Football changing rooms project under development with support of the AAP and DCC Member funding
4.9	Discuss ways to improve the area around the doctor's surgery	March 25	Cllr Wallage/Cllr Kellett in consultation with Doctor's surgery, DCC officers and Cllr Hall	Carry over from 23/24. Some maintenance clearance and fencing installed at the side of the surgery by the find and fix it team. Boulders also positioned to prevent vehicle access to adjacent large green area but not totally effective. New bench installed. . But issues re car park and side path still unresolved. Both ward members are trying to progress with DCC officers but still no progress..
4.10	Work with the Green Group to deliver an outstanding action in the community led parish plan regarding improving the Middle Rainton Picnic Area as part of a community orchard project (Provision of picnic tables and benches (Potential Benridge Bank S106 funding opportunity)	March 24	Cllr Wallage/Green Group in consultation DCC officers and local ward members	Carry over from 23.24. Orchard Trees installed in 22 Funding being sort for signage. Option to expand the Green Groups Orchard Project to include provision of benches

				yet to be considered by the GG.
4.11	Continue to maintain the Heritage Garden	On going	Parish Clerk/Gardener/Cllr Wallage	
4.12	Bi Annual Planting of Village Planters	On-going	Parish Clerk/Gardener/Cllr Wallage	
4.13	Obtain quotes for repairs needed on parish land on South Street and entrance to church – pot holes and ramp tarmac entrance breaking up/ can be slippery from moss and ice. (Risks identified in latest Risk assessment).	September 24	Parish Clerk	
4.14	Pursue measures with partner organisation to prevent damage to our public green spaces from ASB i.e cars, quads and motorcycles	On Going	Cllr Wallage, Local Ward Members, Neighbourhood Wardens Police and Green & Green Team/Outdoor Facilities Manager	Police and Neighbourhood warden to increase patrols following reported incidents in Feb 23 on the green opposite the garage. Request made to DCC to consider action needed to reduce the gaps in the boulders to at least prevent car access made to Clean and Green Team Sept 22.. The need for fencing around proposed improvements to School Avenue Park was referred to the Outdoor facility manager developing the scheme in Dec 22. .
5. Improve Community Engagement and Cohesion				

5.1	Continue to maintain and improve the New .Gov.uk Parish Council website and with regular articles and Parish Council Information Members to activate new related .GOV.uk emails	On going April 24	Parish Clerk – with nominated Parish Councillor support All Members	Some teething issues with new website. Only 3 years history transferred.
5.2.	Continue to liaise with community groups via the village partnership	On going	Cllr Diggory	
5.3	Continue to engage with the community via Village News	On going	Parish Clerk/Chair	
5.4	Continue to help improve community engagement via the Parish Council's Facebook page	On Going	Parish Clerk	
5.5	Enter the Parish for the Durham in Bloom Competition	June 24	Cllr Wallage	N/A DCC not running the competition due to financial restraints
5.6	Continue to support community groups with grant funding	On Going	Full Council	
5.7	Promote the filling of councillor vacancies	On Going	Full Council/PC	
5.8	Organise "Carols around the Christmas Tree" Event and the Christmas Tree Switch On Event	December 24	Cllr Wallage/Parish Clerk	
5.9	Continue to work in Partnership with Neighbourhood Police Team -	On Going	Parish Clerk/DCC Ward members/parish councillors /	
6 Improve our governance arrangements				
6.1	Achieve Foundation Level of Local Council Award Scheme	March 25	Parish Clerk/Cllr Wallage	In progress – majority of actions complete
6.2	Continue to develop relevant skills and knowledge of Members and Officers through training & development opportunities	On Going	All	
6.3	Keep abreast of relevant updates and	On Going	Cllr Boettcher	

	new developments via Smaller Local Council Forum			
6.4	Prepare draft annual plan for 2024/25	March 25	All	
7 Effectively manage the Council's resources and assets				
7.1	Bi Annual Risk Assessment	Sept & March	Full Council/Clerk	
7.2	Annual Review of Fixed Asset Register	March 25	Clerk	
7.3	Set a balanced budget for 2024/25 maintaining adequate reserves and set precept	Jan 24	Full Council/Clerk	Complete
7.4.	Annual review of cemetery fees & charges	March 25	Full Council/Clerk	
7.5	Keep abreast of external funding opportunities - work in consultation with VP and Local Ward Members to develop further improvements as need is identified and funding allows	On going	All	On going
7.6	Improve the effectiveness of on-line banking – All signatories to set up security access to authorise payments	April 24	All authorised signatories	Complete
7.7	Annual Review of All Policies	March 25		