

**NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL** is non-political and is grateful for the support and advice received from County Councillors Peter May and Jim Cordon, and MP Kevan Jones.



# North Lodge Parish Council NEWSLETTER 2010

## EXTERNAL MEETINGS ATTENDED BY COUNCILLORS 2009/10

- Chester-le-Street and District Area Action Partnership (AAP) Local Councils Committee
- AGM County Durham Association of Local Councils
- Parking restrictions Lombard Drive (site meeting)
- County Council/Parish and Town Councils Charter Signing Ceremony at County Hall
- Remembrance Day Service
- Area Action Partnership Town and Village Centres Task Group
- Police Community Consultant Group
- AAP Healthy Life Styles and Well-Being Task Group
- AAP Opportunities for Young People Task Group
- AAP Forum and Board meetings

Parish Council meetings are held in the Civic Centre on the third Wednesday of each month (except August and December) at 6.30 pm.

Parish notices are displayed in the notice boards in Picktree Lodge, Leander Avenue, Picktree Village and North Road (near to the Lambton Worm Hotel).

Residents wishing to raise concerns should contact: David Murrell, Clerk to North Lodge Parish Council Tel: 0191 389 2516 e-mail: northlodgpc@tiscali.co.uk or any Parish Councillor:

Cllr C Noble-Nesbitt (Chair)	6 Merlin Drive
Cllr Mrs M May (Vice-Chair)	Hollydene, Lambton Park
Cllr Mrs S Brown	2 Lintfort, Picktree Village
Cllr Mrs M Caygill	27a Lyndhurst Avenue
Cllr Mrs E Forrester	14 Queensmere
Cllr C Jukes	4 Mitford Close
Cllr Mrs L LeDune	51 Leander Avenue
Cllr Prof. V McEwan	30 Lombard Drive
Cllr Mrs D Prest	17 Caxton Way
Cllr S Tones	44 Lyndhurst Avenue
Cllr Mrs C Walton	50 Longdean Park

## PLAY AREAS

Since the last Newsletter, the Parish Council is pleased to report that there has been further progress with the play areas.

### Low Flatts

Now that the area has had a new climbing/slide module installed, it is proving to be very popular and is well used. The footpath alongside the play area has also finally been surfaced, creating a pleasant enhanced route for pedestrians and cyclists. The rabbit infestation problem continues to be addressed.

### Merlin Drive

This area has been fenced, for the safety of children and to exclude dogs, bikes, and ball games, for example. Weeds and debris have been cleared from the site and shrubs planted with the aid of a grant from Durham County Council Tree Week, with labour supplied by Durham County Youth Offending Service.



Low Flatts Play Area - May 2010

The Parish Council was delighted and very grateful to receive a generous donation towards this site development from North Lodge Residents' Association. It is hoped to install a further set of swings in the future.

A small art project is planned for the area which will complete the refurbishment. This should give much pleasure and enjoyment in the future.

The rabbit and mole infestation problem continues to be addressed.

## NORTH LODGE IN BLOOM

Since last year's Newsletter, the gardener has concentrated mostly on the routine maintenance of the beds. In addition, there has been some major pruning and clearing of overgrown shrubs in some beds, namely at the southerly corner of the entrance to Lombard Drive and at Longdean Park, where the bed has been completely replanted with shrubs and a selection of Spring bulbs.

After the new equipment at Merlin Drive Play Area was installed, a hedge was planted consisting of a variety of species which will provide colour and encourage bird life in the future. The County Council kindly supplied a large skip to assist with the removal of the debris collected from the site.

The flowering trees in Low Flatts Road were pruned last autumn by Abbey Trees, and a dying tree was replaced.

Following requests from some residents for flower beds with summer colour along North Road, two beds have been established near the junction of North Road and Lombard Drive. These beds will be planted up and maintained by the County Council, and costs met by the Parish Council.

Last Autumn, the County Council was asked to tidy the pedestrian path adjacent to 34 Longdean Park and to remove moss and cut back overgrown shrubs and trees bordering the path. However, the ownership of the land on which the path is situated is in question and until the problem is resolved the County Council cannot carry out the work required. It is hoped that this will be resolved by Autumn 2010.



## HISTORIC NORTH LODGE PARK VIEW

This pre first world war postcard shows Park View house on the west side of North Road between the "Wheatsheaf" public house and Pelaw Grange. In the early days they had a lovely view of Lambton Park.



Photo by kind permission of Mr. George Nairn, who seeks pre 1955 postcards and photographs any subject, any place.

Tel: 0191 388 8780

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## BOUNDARY COMMISSION ELECTORAL REVIEW OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR WARDS

For elections from 2013, North Lodge Parish will either become part of a much larger area named Chester-le-Street North and East ward, with three councillors (the Commission's proposal), or have one councillor to represent a new Chester-le-Street North Lodge ward (the Parish Council's proposal).

The Commission may be able to announce its decision later in the year. Full details about this electoral review can be found on the Local Government Boundary Commission England website:

[www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

The North Lodge Parish Council proposal originated from consistent views expressed by a number of electors and was made known more widely through North Lodge Residents' Association.

## NORTHLANDS ROUNDABOUT / A167 NORTH ROAD

Durham County Council's original proposal for a southbound bus lane along North Road (A167) towards the Northlands Roundabout has been replaced by a major scheme, part of "TRANSIT 15". Because of the magnitude of this scheme and its numerous implications, the Parish Council, in conjunction with County Councillor Peter May, informed all residents in the parish (and some beyond) of a preliminary meeting on 18th May to help clarify the proposal. This meeting, at the beginning of the County Council's consultation period, was very well attended by residents.

## WWW. PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE @

North Lodge Parish Council is taking steps to make use of the free (or nearly so) provision of parish council websites by Durham County Council. At the click of a mouse, the new website should enable residents with access to the internet to find out about important issues affecting North Lodge Parish and perhaps beyond. There will be, at least, information about who the Parish Councillors are, what the Parish Council does and access to agendas and minutes of Parish Council meetings. The launch of the website will be announced on the Parish Council notice boards.

## PAVEMENT IMPERFECTIONS

Holes or ridges of at least 2 centimetres drop or rise can continue to be reported to the Highways Action Line (HAL) on 0191 370 6000 or [hal@durham.gov.uk](mailto:hal@durham.gov.uk) for email. Use the nearest numbered lamppost as a position marker and ask for a HAL reference number. The use of the website "FixMyStreet" is particularly helpful if you wish to pinpoint the position of a problem by using the maps provided.

Concerns about roads can be similarly reported.

## OVERHANGING BRANCHES

Please continue to ensure that your hedges, shrubs and trees do not extend at all beyond your property's boundary with public footpaths (Highways Act 1980). Giving clear headroom of about 7 feet 6 inches is also important. This action reduces the risk of facial injury or damage to clothing and umbrellas, from thorns and branches, for any pedestrians, including the young and those who are disabled or visually impaired.

## PAVEMENTS AND CAR PARKING

If you decide to park on a pavement (strictly speaking outside the law) please ensure that this does not prevent safe passage along the pavement by pedestrians, including those with wheelchairs and twin prams. A maximum obstruction of one third of the pavement is suggested. Where there are houses on only one side of a road, there is usually no need or justification for parking on the pavement.

...and as usual

## NEWS FROM NORTH LODGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION SECRETARY

Since I have become Secretary of the NLRA, I have tried to change how the meetings are presented. By this I mean that the format has changed and instead of going through the normal business there is now a guest speaker at each meeting giving a talk on something which is topical. At the last meeting Jen Younger from Sunderland YMCA discussed the proposed YMCA facility at the Market Place in Chester-le-Street. This created a lot of interest and it was a very good meeting.

We do not however neglect the local issue and have also been discussing the boundary changes and the Transit 15 bus lane scheme which have

been of great interest to residents.

The latest venture is to support our County Councillor Peter May with the proposed Community Garden at Camperdown Avenue. It is still at the early stages and no firm decisions have been made as yet.

Meetings take place on the first Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September and November and are held at Park View Lower School, Lombard Drive, North Lodge starting at 7pm. It is always nice to see new faces.

**Derek Newton**

Secretary to the North Lodge Residents Association

## A YEAR OF CHANGE

Mainly because of the creation of the Unitary County Council in Durham and the launch of the Area Action Partnership, it has been a year of change for the Parish Council in making new connections and finding out how it fits into the new structure.

There have been difficulties in communication with some officers and departments of the new County Council and with consultation procedures. The Parish Council will continue to work with the County Council to iron out what we believe are temporary difficulties caused by the enormous amount of re-structuring that has taken place.

On the dissolution of Chester-le-Street District Council it was pleasing to see former District Councillor Jackie Proud being created an Honorary Alderman and County Councillor Peter May receiving the same award, although it is held in abeyance while he remains a serving member.

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Among matters coming to the attention of the Parish Council during the year were:

- Intrusive lighting from the Drum Industrial Estate. This was investigated by the County Council when it was found that there was no contravention of the planning conditions.
- The official opening of the Co-op warehouse on Drum Industrial Estate.
- The application by Sunderland YMCA to open a home for homeless young people in South Burns. This proposal is being closely monitored as concerns have been raised in several quarters.
- The completion of the new residential housing development at Ambleside Court, Vigo Lane ['The Orchards']. The Parish Council welcomes the new residents, many of whom will not have lived in the Parish before.

## POLICE MATTERS

During the year, the Parish Council welcomed PCSO Lesley Hunter as a replacement for PCSO Steve Larter who was moving on to pastures new. The Council recorded their thanks to Steve for his good work within the Parish. An excellent working relationship has also been quickly established with Lesley. The Parish Council is thankful to the Police for their significant contribution to a relatively trouble-free area, although in addition to some more serious levels of crime, the Parish does suffer anti-social behaviour such as off-road bikes, graffiti and youth nuisance.



We asked what matters to you...

We will...

- Tackle anti-social behaviour
- Reduce harm from alcohol and drugs
- Protect vulnerable people from harm

Durham Police Authority & Durham Constabulary

## Your Views Count



## TRADERS IN COUNTY DURHAM

For details of vetted, reputable tradespeople to carry out maintenance on your home please check out the County Durham Registered Traders Scheme. All businesses in the scheme are committed to honest and fair trading.

Tel: 0191 383 3589

[www.countydurhamrts.org.uk](http://www.countydurhamrts.org.uk)



## HELLO & GOODBYE

This year we said goodbye to Councillor Brian Wilson and thank him for his work with the Parish Council.

The Parish Council has now reached its full complement in welcoming Sue Brown, Vera McEwan and Stephen Tones.