



City of Durham Parish Council

The City of Durham Parish Council. Office 3, Clayport Library. 8 Millennium Place. Durham. DH1 1WA.

Telephone: 07510 074875

Email: parishclerk@cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk

Date of Summons: 21st April 2023

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council: Councillors E Ashby, V Ashfield, L Brown, N Brown, A Doig, D Freeman, R Friederichsen, R Hanson, G Holland, C Lattin, G Nair, R Ormerod, E Scott, S Walker and H Weston.

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Meeting of the Council** to be held in the **Lantern Room, Durham Town Hall. Durham. DH1 3NJ** on **Thursday 27th April 2023 at 7:00pm** for the purpose of transacting the following Agenda business as shown.

Members of the public and press are also cordially invited to attend. Members of the public may address Council, Committee or Sub-Committee meetings for up to three minutes, with the agreement of the Chair of the meeting, provided that the statement is related to an item on the agenda. The speaker should approach the Clerk before the meeting commences to request to speak during the meeting.

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, Civility and Respect and Human Rights plus Social, Economic and Environmental matters.

Yours faithfully,

A. Shanley

Mr Adam Shanley
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council

AGENDA

- 1. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE (OR NOT) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM TODAY'S MEETING**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**
- 3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23RD MARCH 2023**
- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- 5. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- **Planning and Licensing Committee minutes from meetings held on 17th and 31st March 2023**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/planning-committee/>

- Report on objections to planning application and calls to Committee: DCC Central and East Planning Committee

- **Environment Committee minutes from meetings held on 14th March 2023**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/environment-committee/>

- Report on the Service Level Agreement with Durham Police for an enhanced policing of the City centre.

- **Business Committee minutes from meetings held on 31st January 2023**

Copies of all approved minutes from these meetings can be found here:

<http://cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk/agendas-minutes/business-committee/>

- 6. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 23rd March 2023.

- 7. PROPOSAL FOR A NUCLEAR FREE PLEDGE FOR DURHAM CITY**

- 8. UPDATE ON EVENTS PLANNING FOR THE CORONATION IN MAY 2023**

- 9. REPORT FROM VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS ON GRANTS AWARDED IN FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23**

- 10. PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP TO UNDERTAKE AN ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS, COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COUNCIL POLICIES**

- 11. REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

- Report BY Cllr A Doig on the recent AGM meeting of the Parish Council's Community and Residents Association Forum

City of Durham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the City of Durham Parish Council held on Thursday 23rd March 2023 at 19:00 in the Lantern Room, Durham Town Hall. Durham. DH1 3NJ

Present: Councillors A Doig (in the Chair), L Brown, V Ashfield, E Ashby, C Lattin, G Nair, N Brown, G Holland, S Walker and H Weston.

Also present: Parish Clerk Adam Shanley and Mr John Ashby (member of the public).

1. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE (OR NOT) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM TODAY'S MEETING

Apologies were received from Councillors D Freeman, R Friederichsen, R Hanson, R Ormerod and E Scott.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor H Weston declared an interest in item 7 on the Agenda and took no part in the discussion or vote on this item.

Councillors V Ashfield and L Brown declared an interest in item 10 on the Agenda and took no part in the discussion or vote on this item.

3. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2023 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr John Ashby advised that he was attending the meeting with a general interest in all Agenda items.

5. COMMITTEE UPDATES

• Planning and Licensing Committee

Councillor G Holland remarked generally that he was aware of some criticism of the City of Durham Parish Council regarding a high level of call-in requests by the Council. Councillor G Holland advised that he did not recognise the criticism personally and highlighted that the City of Durham parish receives a high volume of the County's planning applications. The Chair **agreed** to draft a note for Full Council in April on this matter.

Councillor G Holland presented the minutes from Planning and Licensing Committee meetings held on 17th February and 3rd March 2023. There being no queries from Members, Councillor G Holland moved on to Committee reports.

- Report on the Conservation Area Management Plan

Councillor G Holland reminded Members that the Parish Council is a funding partner with the County Council to support the production of the Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP). To support this work, the Parish Council has funded the project to a cost of £10,000 to date and has agreed a further £5,000 in financial year 2023/24 for this work.

In December 2022, Rebecca Taylor was appointed as the Senior Conservation Officer to lead on this work at DCC.

The Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan project will include a review of the existing appraisal, conservation area boundary and Article 4 Direction, which was previously undertaken in 2015, prior to the adoption of the current local planning policy framework.

Following a review of the Conservation Area, new provisions, in the form of a CAMP will be produced. The purpose of the CAMP is to provide a management framework for the future conservation of the city and will include a Management and Maintenance Action Plan, which identifies the resources which will be required to maintain the upkeep of the conservation area over the long term.

A comprehensive engagement strategy has been produced which involves cross-departmental collaboration within the County Council and with key external stakeholders. Several stages of public consultation will then be undertaken for the conservation area review and the production of the CAMP.

Councillor G Holland highlighted that the review of the existing Durham City conservation area and the production of a CAMP are necessary steps towards assisting the delivery of regeneration aspirations within Durham, whilst ensuring that change is managed in a way that conserves or enhances the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the Outstanding Universal Values of the Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site.

Councillor G Holland also highlighted that the Parish Council's Planning and Licensing Committee considers this to be a crucial piece of work to undertake and will continue to engage with officers to see the document through to its delivery.

Members unanimously agreed to note the above report and to continue to engage positively throughout the consultation process of producing this Conservation Area Management Plan.

• Environment Committee

Councillor C Lattin presented the minute from the Environment Committee meeting held on 14th February 2023. There being no queries from Members, Councillor C Lattin moved on to Committee reports.

- Report from the North End Allotment Association AGM

The Clerk presented the minutes of the most recent North End Allotment Association AGM held on Sunday 12th March 2023.

The Clerk advised that this report served as a reminder of the enormous amount of work the Allotment Association does to manage this excellent site and, in so doing, reduce the work of the Parish Council significantly.

The Clerk reminded Members that, in 2019, the County Council in line with the government policy, handed the North End Allotments over to the City of Durham Parish Council. However, the solicitors have informed the Clerk that the legal work relating to the handover is not likely to take place by the land registry until October 2023. Once this is finalised new tenancy agreements will be issued from the Parish Council. The allotment management team will work closely with the Parish Council on this matter and will update the allotment's constitution, letterheads, etc accordingly. The Clerk also advised that he had communicated the decision of the Council to maintain DCC's current Allotment Policy for this site.

The Clerk and Councillor V Ashfield advised that they have visited the site several times and helped with the site inspections and follow up paperwork. The Parish Council and Cllr Victoria Ashfield and Cllr Liz Brown were very happy to provide support and funding in 2021, and were impressed with the completed work on the shelter, hedge planting and water butts.

The Clerk also highlighted that the Association is seeking to increase its plot rental charges for the forthcoming financial year. The new charges for the annual subscription to the Association will rise to £23.00 in 2024 and the rent for a half plot has risen to £7.00 and £14.00 for a full plot (£30.00 and £37 respectively). Members unanimously endorsed this increase.

- **Report on the Service Level Agreement with Durham Police for an enhanced policing of the City centre.**

The Clerk highlighted that the SLA with Durham Police had now been agreed by both parties and the new police officers were due to commence at the beginning of April as per the agreement.

The Clerk advised that the remaining aspect of the SLA to be finalised is the new Coordinator role for this Operation. The Clerk advised that a Coordinator had previously been recruited for this post but had now left this post for a new role. The Clerk advised that he and the Chair of the Parish Council had met with the Police and Crime Commissioner earlier this month in order to arrange the recruitment of a suitable officer for this post and this is being done.

The Clerk advised that he would keep Members updated on this new role as part of the SLA.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update on matters arising since the Full Parish Council meeting on 23rd February 2023 as follows:

- The Chair expressed his delight at the news that Durham Fire and Rescue service have been named the best in the UK for the second year in a row at this year's Public Sector Transformation Awards. The Chair remarked that

this accolade is all the more amazing against a backdrop of £10million in budget cuts to the service over the last 12 years. The Chair proposed that the Parish Council writes to the Chief Fire Officer and formally record our thanks and congratulations to the Service as a Council.

- The Chair also put on record his congratulations to two Members of the Parish Council:

Firstly, a very big congratulations to Councillor Carole Lattin on being named Volunteer of the Year at this year's Environment Awards. Carole works hard on projects such as Pelaw Woods, Dragoville Park and the Chair expressed his delight to see Carole receive this recognition.

Secondly, the Chair offered his congratulations to Councillor Victoria Ashfield for all of her work in acquiring nearly £50,000 in funding towards improving the St. Nic's Churchyard project. The Chair remarked that getting funding – especially these days – for these types of projects is no easy task. Well done Victoria and we look forward to seeing this area improved soon.

- The Chair also expressed his delight to read the news that Durham County Council has been awarded funding for 150 new Electric Vehicle Charging Points across the County. With diesel and petrol cars very much on the way out, the Chair remarked that it is imperative that we are as proactive as we can be on this issue. The Chair advised that he was aware that the Parish Council has already agreed to fund a number of these charging points across the parish. The Chair also remarked that he understands that the Parish Council's Environment Committee is writing to Councillor Mark Wilkes to ask about the allocation of EV charging points for the City on this project.
- The Chair reminded Members that there are a number of important Supplementary Planning Documents out for consultation at the moment. The Chair advised that he is aware of the extraordinary amount of work being done by the Planning and Licensing Committee on these documents and thanked the Clerk for hosting a coffee afternoon with partners to coordinate our responses to these consultations. The Chair reminded Members that this will be taking place in Adam's office on Wednesday next week.
- The Chair expressed his sadness to hear of the deaths of Councillor Beaty Bainbridge, Chair of the County Council. The Chair remarked that Beaty was a great character and a familiar face around County Hall. We send our condolences to her family at this sad time.
- The Chair also expressed his sadness to hear of the passing of Mary Hawgood just before Christmas last year. The Chair reminded Members that Mary was Mayor of Durham City between 2004 and 2005, was a leading light in the establishment of St Cuthbert's Hospice, was awarded the MBE in 2011 for services to the community, she lived in Crook Hall until 2000 with her husband John and successfully campaigned for the establishment of this Parish Council. As such, the Chair recommended that the Parish

Council marks Mary's passing in some way and asked Members to contact the Clerk with any ideas they may have.

- The Chair thanked all those who took part in the recent planning and licensing training events. The Chair remarked that both events were well attended and thanked Jo-Anne and David for their support in putting these events on for Councillors and residents.
- The Chair expressed his disappointment that, after dozens of emails to the County Council, the multi-storey car park at the Sands is continuing to cause issues with the lights being left on throughout the night. This is particularly disappointing given the cost of energy, the impact on light pollution, the adverse impact on the environment and more. The Chair suggested that the Parish Council highlights this through a press release.
- The Chair also expressed his disappointment to hear that the recent application for 9 executive homes at Mount Oswald had been approved, in place of what was originally conceived as being an exemplar of environmental development with 5 passiv houses for the site. The Chair expressed his disappointment to see developers breaking their promises on developments such as this and expressed his amazement that the case appears to have been approved on the basis that Durham needs more executive homes. More affordable and greener housing is what is really needed.
- The Chair advised Members that a walkthrough of our new heritage trail took place earlier today with David Miller. The Chair advised that he was very pleased to see the finished product and thanked David for all his work on this.
- The Chair also highlighted that Members have a copy of the Wear Rivers Trust leaflet in front of them this evening and that he was pleased to see how informative it is as well as the call for volunteers in helping to deal with the significant issue of invasive non-native species along the riverbanks.
- The Chair reminded Members that the Parish Council's grant funding window officially opens from 1st April running until June this year. The Chair remarked that supporting local community and voluntary organisations in the brilliant work they do for the City is a key role of the Parish Council and reminded Members that the Council is due to hear about this year's funding and the difference this has made at our next Full Council meeting.
- The Chair also reminded Members that the Clerk has arranged for a photographer to attend before the April Full Council meeting to do the official photos for the new website. The Chair again reiterated his request that Councillors make a special effort to attend this at 6pm. The Chair advised that the Clerk will put out a further reminder about this nearer the time.

- The Chair thanked everyone involved in the extraordinary amount of work for the beacon handover event on Monday 27th March and asked all Members to let the Clerk know if they are able to attend this event.
- The Chair also thanked the Clerk for all his work for the Coronation in May. The Chair remarked that it is excellent to read about all the plans for this event and that he was delighted to see that the Parish Council's application to the National Lottery was a success.

7. PROPOSAL TO REQUEST A VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION TO THE PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2023/24

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council's Environment Committee has highlighted that a huge increase in resources is required to deal with the environmental issues associated with such a high student population in a compact city centre.

The Clerk also reminded Members that, in the Summer of 2022, the Environment Committee proposed that the Parish Council formally requests a voluntary contribution from local landlords towards the Parish Council's precept in order to meet this resource need. At the time, it was anticipated that any additional funding acquired from this appeal to landlords will be directed towards additional bin provision, warden and/or officer time to deal with bins and other issues.

The Clerk highlighted that this proposal did not receive full support when presented in July 2022 and it was agreed that the decision on this should be deferred until after the Chairs of both the Environment Committee and the Business Committee had met to discuss this. The Clerk also highlighted that it was agreed that this proposal would thereafter be revisited by Full Council in early 2023.

The Clerk also advised that the Parish Council's Business Committee has been engaging further with the private rental sector in the City and had recently launched a survey for landlords; to which only three landlords had responded.

The Clerk reminded Members that this was discussed at the February Full Council meeting and it was unanimously agreed to defer a decision on this item until the Chairs of both the Environment Committee and Business Committee had had the opportunity to meet and discuss a way forward with this proposal.

Councillor C Lattin advised that she had met with Councillor R Ormerod and they had both **agreed** that the request should be submitted, provided the following:

- That any communication should not go out too soon after the most recent communication (survey) to landlords.
- That a sympathetic landlord be approached as a starting point with a view to getting the supporting this initiative by the Parish Council and encouraging others to take part.
- That any monies raised should not be for general expenditure but for a targeted purpose where landlords may see some mutual benefit, e.g., an

additional Neighbourhood Warden to tackle the issue of waste directly with the tenants.

Councillor C Lattin also thanked the Clerk for circulating a draft letter to all landlords in advance of this meeting so that Members might appreciate what this request would look like.

Councillor E Ashby expressed her concerns about this proposal and felt that this could undermine the important work of the Business Committee in engaging further with local landlords. Councillor E Ashby also expressed concerns at the workload implications administering such a request might put on the Parish Clerk.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that she supported this request and felt that this was long overdue. Councillor V Ashfield advised that, as part of the proposal, the Parish Council would be publishing which landlords have contributed to this scheme so that the Parish Council might "name and proclaim" the good landlords willing to contribute to the City.

Councillor C Lattin expressed her support for this proposal, highlighting the difficulties with Green Move Out day last year and the enormous burden this places on local services provided by the Parish and County Councils. Councillor C Lattin expressed regret that this could not be a mandatory scheme so that landlords paid the same amount as local residents do.

Members voted in favour of this proposal (6 votes in favour, 2 abstentions and 2 against) and it was therefore **agreed** that the request should be made to landlords.

8. PROPOSAL TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL YOUTH MARKET COMPETITION IN DURHAM CITY 2023

The Clerk highlighted that the Young Traders competition is a national annual event created by the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF) for young people aged 16-30 who have an existing business or who wish to trial an idea for a product/business in front of real customers.

The Clerk also highlighted that Durham Markets Company has regularly held a local heat and are doing so again on May 1st but are absolutely delighted to have been asked by the NMTF executive to host the North East regional finals on Sunday 2nd July.

Traditionally, these regional finals are held at Newcastle or Stockton so it is a real honour for Durham to be asked to host the final and the Clerk advised that the Markets Company wants to put on a market which showcases the best of young talent in the North East at the same time as encouraging additional footfall into the City Centre at a traditionally 'quieter' time, creating a win-win situation.

In addition, Durham will receive some good positive national coverage with the NMTF organisation and publications, which hopefully might result in some enquires to trade in markets across the County.

This initiative is a fantastic way to encourage young people to seriously consider the merits of becoming a small independent business owner, hopefully in Durham, in a supportive environment with little to no overheads.

For the final, the Clerk advised that the Markets Company would like to provide a great fun family atmosphere with family entertainment, live music and arts and craft activities throughout the day which will be free of charge to encourage families to come into the city centre on a Sunday.

The Clerk advised that the Markets Company anticipates the cost of providing the above to be in the region of £1850.

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council has agreed a total fund of £25,000 in 2023/24 towards hosting events in the City centre and this event was specifically highlighted as one the Business Committee would like to support.

Members unanimously **agreed** to support this event as set out in the report provided with a contribution of £1,850.

9. UPDATE ON EVENTS PLANNING FOR THE CORONATION IN MAY 2023

The Clerk advised that the planning for the Coronation events in the City over May was going extremely well and advised that the following events were set to be delivered as part of this:

- A commonwealth-themed local arts projects by the Merryoaks WI opposite St. John's Church in Neville's Cross.
- A Coronation Tea Dance event in the Town Hall on Thursday 4th May
- A music entertainment event on the evening of Friday 5th May
- A 'Coronation on the Big Screen' event on Saturday 6th May
- The Beacon lighting ceremony on Saturday evening 6th May
- The 'Big Coronation Party' in the Market Place on Sunday 7th May
- The Big Help Out on Monday 8th
- Durham Cathedral Evensong event on Tuesday 9th

Members thanked the Clerk for all his work on these events.

10. DCC CONSULTATION ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIPS

The Clerk advised Members that an independent review of DCC's current engagement practices has made several proposals to change the way the County Council does things and better meet the needs of residents, communities, Councillors and main partners.

This review primarily focuses on the work of the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) in Durham.

Since AAPs were established, there have been a lot of changes to local and national policies, so DCC considers that it is the right time to request an independent review to see if AAPs were still fit for the purpose they were created. The Clerk advised

that the proposals have been developed by independent consultants, working with AAPs and partners, over the past six months, having been appointed to carry out a review in June 2022.

The consultants have come up with a series of proposed changes covering:

- model
- boundaries
- funding
- community development

The Clerk advised that, if these proposals are to be adopted, the consultant believes that it will have the following benefits:

- increase the effectiveness and consistency of community engagement across the county
- provide opportunities for more people to affect policy and include the opinions of all our communities
- make it clearer how local needs are identified and considered in the development of wider policies and allow for more meaningful discussion around community issues instead of being often just about funding
- community staff will be able to spend more time in communities and be more responsive to local needs

Members **agreed** to respond positively to these proposals. Members **agreed** that Durham residents have benefitted from the regular opportunity to meet with and hear from public service representatives via Board meetings and also vote for local priorities.

As a means of disbursing public funds more promptly, Members **agreed** that the application forms and the system need refining. However, abolishing or cutting the number of AAP's would make the grants process more remote but not necessarily more efficient.

Members also expressed concerns about the proposed changes from AAP Boards to "community networks" as there was very little detail in the proposals as to how these would operate differently to the current AAP Boards.

Councillor E Ashby highlighted the important role the AAPs had played since 2009 in order to bridge the perceived gap between local communities and the new Unitary authority and provide residents with regular information about, and an opportunity to comment on, how DCC services are provided.

The Clerk **agreed** to draft the response to this consultation in conjunction with Members.

11. TO REVIEW THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Councillor G Nair advised that he would like to resign from both the Planning and Licensing Committee and Business Committee. Councillor G Nair thanked

colleagues for their collective work on these important Committees but advised that, on health grounds, he would need to resign from both Committees.

The Chair thanked Councillor G Nair for his work on both Committees.

It was unanimously **agreed** that Councillor V Ashfield should become the new Member of the Parish Council's Business Committee in Councillor G Nair's place.

It was unanimously **agreed** that Councillor A Doig should become the new Member of the Parish Council's Planning and Licensing Committee in Councillor G Nair's place.

12. REPORT FROM PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr C Lattin provided the following report on the most recent meeting of Durham University's Community Engagement Task Force Live-Environment Sub-Committee:

Report from the meeting held on 13th March 2023

- 1. EDI (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion) Strategy.** This was presented by Natalie Saunders who has been working on the strategy with her team. Focussed on Respect. Classism specifically listed with racism, etc. This strategy is to be woven into all University action. Lots of talk about integrity, boldness and vision, and the university being known 'for our inclusive and respectful culture.' 65 stakeholders were consulted – all within the university. Comments were made suggesting also consulting the wider community which were accepted. Natalie is prepared to give a presentation to CODP if we wish. Walia Kani got permission to forward the presentation to 93% group (students from the 93% who went to state schools)
- 2. Capital projects:**
 - Chemistry refurb £15 million. This includes health and safety work.
 - Dawson Building roof needs repair
 - Business School to start April 2024. Swift boxes raised again by Walia who, sent link to David Loudon.
 - Collingwood recording studio funded by a private donor
 - Rowan House: work (top of science site beside the pond) on hold because of Tolent going bust
 - Hild-Bede update: 240 students on site, 250 at Ernest Place near Tesco. The university have now taken over all of Ernest Place which holds 360 beds. Some 30 or 40 students previously resident there have chosen to stay on. There will be 70 rooms for postgrads. All overseas students now have a guaranteed accommodation offer which this will help deliver. Students will continue to use the riverside site 2023 – 4 and full redevelopment of the site will take place 2024 – 5.
 - Baths and Elvet waterside. The university is still looking at options here. Some work will be carried out soon for health and safety. Essential repairs will be done to make it safe to open the Vennel. Some suggestions of potential use were made but not given much attention. The university is

still 'considering options' but it sounds as if some of the external fabric will be retained because the building is an important defence against flooding.

- On going maintenance programmes. I raised the facts that many residents have complained about the dilapidated state of many university buildings. Hannah Shepherd asked for updates to be included in the university's community newsletter and also for 'consultation and pre-engagement with the community on the Baths.' There was agreement to this.
- 3. **River safety group**: A report was produced in March 2022. Three boat landing stages need work.
- 4. **Cricket Club Arson**:; bins will be moved indoors
- 5. **Telecoms monopole**: University has done an objection and will do so again at next planning stage. There is another mast application at St Godrics.
- 6. **Bins along riverbanks**: I produced a 'map' showing 12 bins sited on the Maiden Castle and Racecourse side of the river and none at all on the Pelaw Wood and the playing fields side. David Loudon said that the university would discuss with DCC and potentially allow them access across their land to empty the bins. I asked whether the university could not also provide some bins, especially opposite Maiden Castle along the stretch of path past their sports fields. DL said he would consider this. They are also responsible for the Hild Bede boat house and steps and should provide a bin there.
- 7. **Green Space Festival** will be held at Grey 14th June 2023.
- 8. **Warm Spaces**: Hannah reported that although all university premises allowing public access were prepared to be welcoming to those in need of warmth, in practice it had not had much effect because of the lack of consistent information which was provided to the public. Information (dates, accessibility) will be gathered earlier for next winter.
- 9. **Spigot storyboard**: Nothing has happened on this site since the earlier clearing of it. At the previous meeting, the suggestion was made for the installation of a noticeboard and I asked for any developments here. DL said he would look into this.

Next meeting in May possibly Alington House as John Lowe is a trustee.

End of report

Due to the confidential nature of the following items, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the LGA 1972 Act and section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. At this point in time the press and the public were asked to leave the room.

13. GOOD CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2023 AWARD

Members **agreed** that the Good Citizen of the Year 2023 Awards should be offered to: Inspector Dave Clarke, Ms Alice Wilkes, Ms Alice Severs, Ms Valerie Standen, Mr Barry Gower and Ms Nicola Duckworth

There being no further business, the Chair thanked Members for their attendance and participation and closed the meeting.

Signed,

**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council
(27th April 2023)**

ITEM 5: OBJECTIONS TO PLANNING APPLICATION AND CALLS TO COMMITTEE: DCC CENTRAL AND EAST PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. It has been brought to the attention of the City of Durham Parish Council that there has been concern at DCC about (i) the number of objections to planning applications and requests that the applications are brought before the Central and East Planning Committee by the City of Durham Parish Council Planning and Licencing Committee and (ii) objections to planning applications where the application – invariably involving HMOs – appears to fall within the formal requirements laid out in the County Plan (and especially in relation to Policy 16[3]).
2. The City of Durham Parish Council wishes to make a number of points that may explain its actions and why it considers that its approach is valid, intentional and likely to continue.
3. First, the City of Durham Parish Council receives a disproportionate number of planning applications for the size of the Parish area – and a disproportionate number of those relate to conversion of residential properties to student accommodation. As it is well-known, one of the most controversial issues facing the City of Durham has been that of the growth of student numbers in the private rented sector and persistence of a number of developers who, whether or not any evidence of 'need', push for conversion of more and more residential properties across the Parish area.
4. In particular a growing source of complaint and distress has been the impact on stable, long-established and mixed residential areas with a cohesive mix from families with young children and some students to the elderly and retired. These tend to be the type of "healthy community" which the NPPF and County Plan claim to want to promote. The concerns of permanent residents in such area are entitled to be expressed through their democratically-elected institutions. The number referred to the Central and East Planning Committee is not a disproportionate percent of those considered but, after careful debate by the City of Durham Parish Council Planning and Licencing Committee, those where the Committee is giving voice to those valid concerns as a matter of public discourse which it wishes to have presented to the Central and East Planning Committee.
5. These valid concerns are of public interest to the lectors of the parish area and are fourfold.
 - 5.1 First, HMO conversion and expansion continues in the Parish area – and shows no evidence of diminishing. The expansion now involves residential areas which have not thought that their road or street would be affected. Thus, a number of referred cases are those where the City of Durham Parish Council wishes to reflect the strength of concerns and consider they should be brought to the attention of the Central and East Planning Committee. As democratically elected representatives of their wards, the membership of the Parish Council considers that such concerns should be aired and in terms of ongoing and emerging issues that the Committee and planning officers may be unaware.

5.2 Second, the Policies in the County Plan are now a number of years old. Like many such policies they do not include means of flexibility and revision, particularly in terms of the dynamics of student accommodation within the Parish area and the consequences of the expansion of student numbers in recent years. The City of Durham Parish Council is aware that some of the concerns on the part of DCC relate to those referred applications come within the remit of the Policies but the City of Durham Parish Council feels that hiding behind the letter of the Policies should not deter the City of Durham Parish Council's objections which are based on the spirit or intention of the Policies. DCC must give consideration to how to update the County Plan to reflect changing circumstances and concerns.

5.3 Third, the interpretation of certain Policies by DCC continues to frustrate both the City of Durham Parish Council and constituents. This particularly applies to the calculation of existing HMOs where DCC uses Council tax exemptions lists. It is clearly demonstrable that a number of student landlords now pay the Council tax to avoid making a planning application or registration. This also applies the actual locus of the 100m radius within the property subject to the planning application.

Together the decisions based on both are contested by constituents. Indeed, 10% radius as the basis for a decision is in itself debatable. 10% should be seen as an approximate tipping point – a measurement for guidance - and not a definitive, rigid criterion because the data used to populate any decision is neither robust nor accurate. This is particularly important when the data appears to be open to interpretation over the number of properties (previous experience, which suggests the use of Council Tax records to estimate the level of HMOs in an area may significantly under-estimate their number) and the placing of the radial point on the property map of the application. Any decision informed by such data should be transparent in terms of the sources used and the verification process. The basis of the calculations should be provided to all parties and the right to challenge the data should be made available.

5.4 Fourth, the piecemeal individual applications fails to take account of an overall view of the Parish area, in terms of County Durham Plan and NPPF intentions to place a primacy on creation of mixed and balanced communities, including affordable family homes. Allowing developers priority over conversion of further available accommodation in the private sector denies families in Durham the opportunities to be part of mixed and balanced communities. Aligned to this concern is the potential degradation of the Conservation Area. Piecemeal applications must be seen within the context of their potential to incrementally and adversely affect the overall character, appearance and special significance of the Conservation Area through Permitted Development Rights, development pressures, proliferation of student private rented accommodation, rigid adherence to the County Plan's Policies, etc. This is to the overall detriment of the Conservation Area.

6. Overall, the City of Durham Parish Council Planning and Licencing Committee feels justified to continue its approach to planning applications. It is up to DCC to decide if it wishes to take a more coherent and balanced approach to the City of Durham as a place to live for permanent residents and a place that is one of

the country's foremost Conservation areas. The City of Durham Parish Council Planning and Licencing Committee also wishes to represent and reflect the views of residents who feel that their amenity is increasingly eroded and degraded – and their views ignored – when faced by a continuing exploitation by property developers. The City of Durham Parish Council Planning and Licencing Committee would invite DCC to review and revise existing Policies to reflect changing circumstances and take a much more robust approach to the protection and preservation of the Conservation Area and the Parish area as a whole.

ITEM 5: REPORT ON THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH DURHAM POLICE FOR AN ENHANCED POLICING OF THE CITY CENTRE

As Members are aware, the provision of the additionally funded police service commenced on 1st April 2023 for a trial 12-month period.

This service is for the provision of two additional dedicated police officers on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays (10pm – 3am) to conduct safety patrols in the City of Durham Parish area. The deployment of these additional resources is aimed at enhancing safety within the city by visible presence and reacting to incidents within the city centre and surrounding residential areas. The final decision on the deployment of the officers to achieve those aims rests solely with the police.

Policing is managed entirely by the City Neighbourhood Policing Team Sergeant/Inspector based on operational need to increase safety by conducting mobile patrols in key City Centre locations. A marked / unmarked vehicle has been supplied by police in order to support this SLA.

Preliminary discussions between the City of Durham Parish Council and Durham Police and Crime commissioner were that a city centre safety co-ordinator may be provided to act as a SPOC between Durham Police, Durham University, Durham County Council and City of Durham Parish Council, in order to ensure confidence and satisfaction in the community and increase positive communication.

Initial indications from the PCC were that the contribution (including on costs) would be £30,000 p.a. and it may be a role employed by Durham Agency Against Crime (DAAC).

As reported in previous meetings of the Parish Council Environment Committee and Full Council, the designated coordinator for this SLA has now left post and therefore there is a need for recruitment of a suitable new coordinator to take place.

The following job advert and job description was agreed between DAAC, Durham Police and representatives from the City of Durham Parish Council following a meeting with the OPCC:

Role: Community Safety and Engagement Officer

Employment

Contract Type: Contract / Temporary

Hours: Full time

Application deadline: Friday, 28 April, 2023 - 12:00

Based: Durham

Fixed Salary £32,500 Per Annum

Employer: Durham Agency Against Crime

To be embedded within Durham City Neighbourhood Policing team and Lead on the provision of a coordinated partnership response to community safety and engagement. To encourage and develop a wide range of strategic problem-solving activities. Use innovative and pioneering tactics to assist in the prevention and detection of crime, reduce antisocial behaviour and to increase confidence in the police and partner agencies. To successfully engage and communicate with key organisations and the Safe Durham partnership, developing strong working relationships with the community and key networks to encourage collaborative working relationships. To coordinate several key projects and personnel within the Durham City policing area, developing, and producing sustainable reporting and feedback processes. To support victims of crime and antisocial behaviour, ensuring that they are satisfied with the response from the police and signposted to suitable external organisations where appropriate. To act as an ambassador for policing and partner agencies, promoting values of positivity, fairness, courage, inclusivity, and integrity.

Main Duties & Responsibilities

- To lead on strategic safety issues, working directly with Durham Neighbourhood policing team as a single point of contact and coordinator, liaising with key partners to ensure that a multi-agency approach delivers organisational goals and increases public confidence in the police and all key partners.
- To proactively help the delivery of activities which address community concerns as noted in PACT meetings, residents' meetings, parish council meetings, pubwatch, shopwatch and other key engagement forums, such as social media. Report back to any relevant forums or partner agencies on the monthly priorities and actions taken to address the concerns and solve problems.
- Work with the local beat team on problem solving plans, ensuring that actions are completed in a timely manner, applying for funding to assist the neighbourhood teams in innovative community engagement.
- Co-ordinate the response to rough sleeping, nuisance begging and Antisocial behaviour within the city center, compiling reports for the application of criminal behaviour orders and other powers within the Antisocial Behaviour Crime Policing Act 2014.
- Liaise with key partners to ensure the swift delivery of the Governments ASB action plan.
- Co-ordinate targeted safety patrols, tasking officers and staff with weekly or monthly priorities following consultation with key partners. Collate the results of the targeted safety patrols and the activities of city teams and the safety hub to provide a monthly report to key partners.

- Participate with the City Safety Group and deliver innovative safety measures in the city by working with key partners.
- Work with Durham University to deliver key safety messages to the student population, including working with the DCC PPO to identify ASB hotspots, taking necessary action to reduce the issues.
- Collate information on planned demonstrations and protests in the city ensuring that key partners and policing departments are aware, and risks assessed.
- Co-ordinate volunteers and support and grow the volunteer cohort, including street friends and other volunteer roles.
- Engage with local communities to help them play an active role in crime prevention and resolve local issues, including feedback on complaints and issues.
- To capture evidence of successful activities which address the priorities identified by the local communities (photos, videos, and other digital means).
- To support Durham Police and partners at a range of external events.
- To undertake any other tasks, duties or projects that may arise from time to time which are commensurate with the general level of the post, as directed.
- To have flexibility in working hours to enable attendance at events held in the evenings and at weekends.

The post will be fixed for one year from start of employment

Pending the application deadline, a short-listing process will take place between representatives of DAAC, Durham Police and the City of Durham Parish Council and it is hoped that interviews can take place as soon as possible thereafter.

The Parish Council has been offered a place on the interview panel and the Chair of the Parish Council has asked that the Clerk take on this role on behalf of the Parish Council.

In the meantime, the additional two officers for the City centre have been provided by Durham Police and have already been taking action on incidents in and around the City centre as well as undertaking safety patrols around residential areas on the nights specified above.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to note the content of the above report and await the outcome of the recruitment process for the new Community Safety and Engagement Officer
------------------------------	--

ITEM 7: PROPOSAL FOR A NUCLEAR FREE PLEDGE FOR DURHAM CITY

In January 2021 the United Nations' [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#) entered into force. This Treaty makes the possession and use of nuclear weapons illegal under international law, and has so far been signed by 92 states – half the membership of the UN. While states that have signed the Treaty include Austria, Ireland and New Zealand, the UK, along with other nuclear weapons states, has not.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which has campaigned for the adoption of the TPNW, has established a [Cities Appeal](#). This asks towns and cities across the world to express their support for their own country signing the Treaty. [In the UK 30 towns, cities and other bodies have passed resolutions to sign up to the Appeal](#), including parish-level councils like Keighley and Aberystwyth, large cities such as Glasgow, Manchester and Leeds, and even the Welsh Senedd and Scottish Parliament. So far there have been no signatories to the Appeal in the North East.

The international situation is now more dangerous than it has been for a very long time, particularly with Russia's invasion of Ukraine now in its second year. Nuclear weapons threaten the very existence of all of us, and their continued possession by the UK does not help to promote peace.

Nuclear weapons are also a local issue for Durham. Britain's nuclear weapons are produced and maintained in Berkshire, but the submarines that carry them are based in Scotland. Moving the weapons between the two places is done by road transport, utilising two routes – one on the west coast, using the M6 and A74, and another on the east coast, using the A1(M), which passes close to Durham.

The dangers of transporting nuclear material and weapons by road are clear, and [an exercise conducted by the Ministry of Defence in 2018](#) (and only recently revealed by a Freedom of Information request) found the response to a simulated accident involving a nuclear weapons convoy in Cumbria was massively insufficient.

Further, local authorities are not themselves notified of the movements of nuclear weapons convoys through their area – [Leeds City Council confirmed](#) this was the case in 2016.

Signing the ICAN Cities Appeal is a way for the City of Durham to join with hundreds of other cities around the world in expressing their opposition to nuclear weapons, as well to lead the way for other towns and cities in the North East to do so as well. It also opens the door to collaboration with other like-minded cities around the world – there are particularly close links between British nuclear-free cities and their counterparts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

[Mayors for Peace](#), another international group of local governments, was founded in 1982, with its two founding members being Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There are currently 8,240 members of Mayors for Peace around the world, with 88 in the UK – however, there are only currently two members in the North East.

While the Mayor of Durham is not directed by City of Durham Parish Council, the Mayor's membership of Mayors for Peace would be another way for Durham to be at the forefront of promoting peace both regionally and nationally.

DECISIONS REQUIRED	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. For Members to note the above report and to agree to support the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons Cities and Towns Pledge, which supports the UN's Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons and by doing so effectively ban any presence of and support for nuclear weapons from our Parish.2. For Members to express their wish for Durham County Council to also take similar measures and to formally request that the Mayor of Durham becomes a member of the Mayors for Peace.
-------------------------------	--

ITEM 8: UPDATE ON EVENTS PLANNING FOR THE CORONATION IN MAY 2023

As Members are aware, the Parish Council is taking a lead locally on planning events for His Majesty the King's Coronation in May 2023.

In order to support this work, the Parish Council has established an Operation Golden Orb Working Group which is meeting regularly and includes a number of local stakeholders.

In order to finance these events, the Parish Council recently submitted a successful grant application to the National Lottery and has been awarded a grant of approximately £10,000.

Local County Councillors on the Parish Council, Durham BID, DCC Culture team and Durham University have also provided financial support towards these events.

This report sets out events which are currently being organised. A further meeting of the Golden Orb Working Group is planned for the 2nd May as a final planning meeting ahead of the weekend of events.

- Update on commonwealth themed local arts projects

Merryoaks WI have now completed work on a knitted display for the bench opposite St. John's Church in Neville's Cross. This will have a commonwealth flags theme and will be installed on Monday 1st May 2023.

Merryoaks WI are looking for ideas on how to reuse the wool and the flags and Councillor Ashby has suggested that the children's section of Clayport library may be able to receive and display these after the Coronation weekend.

- Coronation Tea Dance in the Town Hall

Diane Ross (dance instructor) is confirmed for Thursday 4th May 2023 and the students of New College Durham will be able to once again provide a high tea catering as they did so successfully over the Jubilee celebrations last year.

The event is now sold out and the proceeds of this event will be donated to the Working Group's chosen Coronation charity this year St. Cuthbert's Hospice. The Vice-Chair of the Parish Council Coun. Liz Brown will be presenting a "cheque" to the charity at this event.

- Music event in Millennium Place on Friday 5th May

Spark! By Worldbeaters (LED drummers) will be giving two performances – one at 6:30pm and another at 8:00pm in Millennium Place in order to get the carnival atmosphere going ahead of the weekend of celebrations.

ITV News will hopefully be in place to provide excellent coverage of the City centre for this historic moment.

The event has been widely publicised on social media.

- Coronation on the Big Screen event on Saturday 6th May

Durham University will be hosting the 'Coronation on the Big Screen' event at Durham City Rugby Club on Saturday 6th May to allow everyone in the community to come together in celebration for His Majesty's Coronation.

Tickets for the event can be acquired from either Clayport library in person or via the online booking form.

Attendees can bring a picnic, or enjoy a bite to eat from the Rugby Club or food vendor Fat Hippo who will be on site for the event. Drinks will be available from the Rugby Club and attendees can bring your own but please note the marquee is strictly alcohol free.

Free family entertainment for our youngest residents is also going to be provided.

Ticket uptake is increasing but is slow and numbers are presently rather low. All partners have been asked to promote this event through their regular communication channels.

- Beacon lighting ceremony on Saturday evening 6th May

A beacon lighting event will take place on the evening of Saturday 6th May.

The event will commence with a drinks reception at 7:30pm and guests will then be invited to the beacon lighting itself which will be carried out by the Mayor of Durham.

VIPs in Durham such as the Chief Executive and Chair of the local NHS Trust, the Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellors of Durham University, the Chief Fire Officer, Local MP, Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable, (Acting) Dean of Durham, Chair of the Durham City Freemen, Leader of Durham County Council and the Chair of Durham County Council have all confirmed their attendance

Catering is being provided by DCC's in-house catering team and this is being part-funded through the Charter Trust.

- Big Coronation Party in the Market Place on Sunday 7th May

The Parish Council and Durham Markets Company are currently working together to host a Big Coronation Party in the Market Place on Sunday 7th May. This will be done on a "Bring your own Picnic" basis (as with Jubilee 2022) and will include live bands and family entertainment.

- The Big Help Out on Monday 8th

A number of proposals for the Big Help Out are being delivered by colleagues at Durham University and St. Nicolas Church:

- Having a presence in the Market Place to collect food for the 'Feeding Families' initiative supported St. Nic's Church where everyone will be encouraged to donate food.

- The University is arranging for a mass litter pick to take place on an “adopt a street” basis across Durham.
- A “Pledge to Volunteer” stall in the Market Place also seeks to ensure that local residents can find out about more volunteering opportunities and that the legacy of volunteering in Durham may continue after the Coronation.
- The Wear Rivers Trust is also hosting a “balsam bash” event along the Riverbanks in Durham where this is a significant issue.
- **Durham Cathedral Evensong event on Tuesday 9th**

Durham Cathedral is to host a Special Evensong event from 5:30pm on Tuesday 9th May. This will be a walk-in event only and seats will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and not by invitation.

Durham Cathedral is also going to be lit red, white and blue between the 5th and 9th May 2023.

- **Any other events/ updates**

Coronation bunting has been installed up Saddler Street and Prince Bishops is also hoping to have a Union Jack theme to its Umbrellas this year too.

DCC may be able to explore the possibility of giving the new bus station on North Road a Coronation-themed name e.g. “King’s Station”.

A leaflet advertising the Coronation events, Spring/ Summer events in the City and donation/ volunteering opportunities has been delivered to around 10,000 doors in and around our parish area.

DECISION REQUIRED	For Members to note the above report and support the Council in promoting these events to local residents to ensure maximum uptake.
------------------------------	---

ITEM 9: REPORT FROM VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS ON GRANTS AWARDED IN FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23

As Members are aware, in June 2022 the Parish Council agreed to support local voluntary and community organisations with a grant.

All applications were considered in line with the Parish Council's agreed Grant Awards policy and all successful organisations were advised accordingly of the outcome of their applications.

Members are reminded that, under the terms of the Council's Grant Awards policy, organisations have up until June 2022 to spend the funds as per their original application. The Clerk continues to monitor progress on each application and has brought this report to Council in order to allow Members to consider the impact this funding has had on partner organisations. The below is the feedback received from all successful applicants:

Durham Sixth Form Centre

- Details of the project/ events funded.

We used 50% of the funding to support our Christmas Ceramics classes with artist [Jack Warren](#).

See photos here - [Link](#)

See poster/advert here - [Link](#)

Dates:

Thursday 24th November	Tree decorations - Cookie cutter	4 - 6pm
Thursday 1st December	Tealight holders	4 - 6pm
Thursday 8th December	Gift boxes	4 - 6pm
Thursday 15th December	Glazing session	4 - 6pm

Data:

	Total signed up	Total attendees
JW Christmas Ceramics #1	17	15
JW Christmas Ceramics #2	21	19
JW Christmas Ceramics #3	21	19
JW Christmas Ceramics #4	18	19

Total: 19 unique visitors
92 places filled

Notes - There is a small cost to participants to ensure booked space are used, whereas free events people often do not turn up. This also goes on the class refreshments and any spare goes back into the pot for more classes.

The remaining 50% has been commissioned into our next batch of classes launching in April which is Life Drawing and more ceramics classes. The final details are being confirmed and the publicity for this should go out after the Easter holidays. We are aware this grant needs to be spent before July which will be 1 year since it was offered.

- What impact has this funding had on your organisation?

We were delighted to be able to offer this seasonal workshop, we would not have been able to without the Parish council funding. We were pleased to welcome a diverse range of participants into the centre and were able to work with artist and ex-student Jack Warren once again. Ceramics has been our most popular class by far and there was much demand for this.

This work supports our ambitions within the school vision particularly points 2 & 4:

Over the next five years, we aim to:

1. Ensure our students continue to achieve above the National Average and can successfully progress as a result of the high quality, inspirational teaching and learning which our school values.
2. Reset, rebuild, and recover with a renewed emphasis on wellness, resilience and the skills needed to thrive in a dynamic and ever-changing landscape.
3. Lead and champion excellence in post-16 education through extensive and sustainable partnership networks.
4. Further enhance and progress our arts outreach through the development of an accessible community Visual and Conceptual Arts space.
5. Establish the first Mathematics School in the North of England for 16–19-year-olds in partnership with Durham University.
6. Strive to be ambitious in our pursuit of being beyond outstanding.

- What impact has this funding had on users of your services/ facilities?

Our participants were delighted to have the opportunity to create more ceramics work and especially a seasonal theme. Jack has been a very popular workshop lead; we are pleased to be able to support him. He has Asperger's and this opportunity has really helped him with his self-confidence. Some of our participants had come to his previous classes and some were new. We recruit largely through charity contacts before a public flyer and advert comes out.

Here are some quotes from participants collected from our evaluations:

Christmas ceramics with Jack

Great content and value

Well organised. Good atmosphere. Nice people. Very good. Jack is very good and helpful. Hannah very organised

Very reasonable cost. Everyone involved was very enthusiastic. Good tuition. Variety of activities encouraged. Produced several objects in such a short time. Very good for me as it is walkable from home and spacious"

A most enjoyable course in a very suitable venue at a reasonable cost

Excellent tutor, very helpful and encouraging

Jack and Hannah are very good. Value is ridiculous! We made loads. Venue nice and clean.

I love the ceramics classes as Jack gives us both instruction with techniques and encouraged creativity and personal expression

- How has this funding helped you to achieve your organisation's strategic objectives?

We are moving closer to opening our on-site gallery. The continuation of our community classes is helping to welcome out community into the school regularly. We want to bring together our community's post pandemic, particularly those who have been isolated or disadvantaged. This has been successful once again. We hope we have improved levels of wellbeing; the feedback has certainly been positive. This funding allowed us to increase capacity of the project while maintaining quality. Finally, we are very nearly ready to launch our new conceptual arts and community space where this activity will soon be transferred to.

Statistics from all classes from 2022 (Spring and Autumn)

- "As a result of attending this workshop I feel more engaged with the community" 84% of participants agreed
- "As a result of attending this workshop I feel more engaged with artists." 87% of participants agreed
- 70% of participants answered either "Don't know" or "Disagree" about the statement: "There are lots of creative opportunities In County Durham"
- 33% of participants noted feelings of Social Isolation as a result of the pandemic
- 47% of participants said they hadn't taken part in any community activity since the pandemic
- 86% of participants thought the workshops were "Excellent" with 14% answering "Good"
- Another way: 100% of participants when asked What did you think of this workshop answered "Excellent" or "Good"
- 62% of participants disagreed with the statement: "There are lots of arts workshops for people like me."
- 98% of participants agreed that "The arts make a difference to the area where I live"

Elvet Residents Association

- Details of the project/ events funded.

The Parish Council provided a grant to the Elvet Residents' Association towards the cost of creating a mural for the 'football wall' in the St. Oswald's playpark (Church St, Durham). Lewis Hobson ('Durham Spray Paints') was commissioned to design and paint the mural, which will include a depiction of the 'Dun Cow' and milkmaid on one side of the wall, and a red squirrel on the other.

(The project is underway, but is not yet complete. Because the wall sits in land which belongs to the Diocese of Durham, we had to obtain a Faculty from the Diocese before work could begin: this was granted towards the end of 2022. Lewis was able to start painting in early March 2023, but bad weather has since caused some further delays. The mural should, though, be complete by the end of April.)

- What impact has this funding had on your organisation?

We are a small organisation with a very limited budget. This grant has allowed us to take on a much bigger project than would normally be possible, and one which will (we hope) have a lasting, visible and positive impact on our part of the city. The project would have been completely impossible without the financial support of the City of Durham Parish Council, and we are hugely grateful for your help. (We would also like to note our thanks to the Clerk to the Parish Council for his invaluable guidance on practical and logistical matters.)

- What impact has this funding had on users of your services/ facilities?

The goal of this project was to improve the appearance of an existing facility (that is: the 'football wall'), and, by extension, to make the park in which it sits a more attractive place. We also wanted to ensure that the wall could still perform its original purpose (to provide a place for local children to play). It is still too soon to assess the full impact of the project (as noted above, the mural is not yet complete), but initial feedback has been very positive: local residents are pleased to see the wall looking less bedraggled; university students have called into the park to see what is happening (one student has even offered to create a photo journal of the mural's creation); a parent at St. Oswald's Primary School reports that 'everyone at St. Oswald's School is delighted with the squirrel'; and – very importantly – local children are still happy to use the wall for their football practice.

- How has this funding helped you to achieve your organisation's strategic objectives?

This project is particularly relevant to three of the ERA's objectives, namely to:

- promote and sustain balanced communities in the City
- promote membership within the local community
- build partnerships and improve relations between local business, the council, other local agencies and residents

The project has enabled us to raise our profile in the community, and to enhance our partnerships with other important groups in Elvet (particularly St. Oswald's Church, who worked with us in obtaining permission from Durham Diocese to install the mural, and the Friends of St. Oswald's School, who have been enthusiastic supporters of the project). For example: a recent event to raise additional funds for the project was very well-attended by residents, by members of the school and church communities, and by members of the University. It therefore not only helped to generate funds, but also provided a valuable opportunity for these groups to interact with each other. We have plans for further co-operative events in the future (e.g., a litter-pick in the playpark, organised by the Friends of St. Oswald's School).

Before



After



Harbour

The funding awarded contributed to enabling up to support clients in the Durham Area for a new project called *Stronger together*. This is a group whereby we help support friends and family of our clients, done in a confidential manner.

We launched the group last summer and advertised this via social media and within our client base. We did this around all areas but your funding covered the cost of the delivery in the Durham Area, for hosting, admin, planning and staffing costs. See attached poster at the bottom of this feedback.

We have been running this monthly, when we have attendees, but it has had difficulties getting people to attend. This has enabled us to provide an additional service to people who need some level of support but they are not directly victims of domestic abuse so they aren't covered under our usual funding sources. So this has enhanced the services we can provide to a wider capacity. In turn, this has helped our clients and service

users as their friends and family and been given advice and guidance around dealing with them and their personal experiences of domestic abuse. With this in mind, it meets our objectives in helping as many people as possible, with a wider

area range, capacity and in turn having a knock-on effect in helping our clients. Whilst also providing training and education to more people and raising domestic abuse awareness, which is always our aim.

Here are the minutes from the last meeting which was on 17th March 2023.

"I had two attendees to ST Group today, out of a possible 12. I did send reminders out on Tuesday, and had a few responses.

Discussed in the meeting today was what has been happening with one group member regarding court for her granddaughter, issues with other professionals and support from other peers in the group.

Discussed the 'Grey Rock Method' to dealing with Narcissistic behaviours.

We looked out time for each other and positive ways to take time for themselves.

It was a really positive group, just such a shame on numbers.

Next meeting is booked another group for 28th April."

Merryoaks WI

Durham Merryoaks Women's Institute were very pleased to receive their 2022/23 grant and to continue their successful partnership with the City of Durham Parish Council. The grant has enabled us to continue with our full Zoom subscription so we have the option of hybrid meetings, having speakers from other parts of the country and if possible, to allow members to join in from home.

While we can all agree meeting in person is very much the best option, we have learnt in recent years it is best to keep all options open. Our aim to advance the education of women and girls is fundamental to our organisation and having a variety of speakers and activities is a vital part of this.

Another of our aims is to advance health and with reference to accessibility we now have two microphones for use by our visiting speakers and own members giving full access to all, irrespective of their hearing. Our membership continues to grow and the funding we have received has helped greatly with this, enabling us to be inclusive and sustainable.

Another of our aims is to advance citizenship by promoting civic responsibility and volunteering, our most recent project as part of the city-wide Operation Golden Orb for the Coronation of King Charles 3rd is bringing our group together, promoting the WI in the community and we very much hope bringing joy to everyone who sees it.

Our sincere thanks to the Parish Council for their continued support, it means a great deal to us.

St. Cuthbert's Hospice

We were fortunate to receive a grant of £1,750 from the City of Durham Parish Council in July 2022. Funds were awarded to pay for essential works, repairs and improvements to our gardens and grounds.

Our gardens provide real therapeutic value for our guests and their families, offering a haven of tranquillity at what can be the most difficult time of life. Funds from the City of Durham Parish Council have enabled us to ensure our gardens and grounds remain a safe and welcoming environment for those who use them, paying for tools and essential repairs.

We rely on our team of loyal volunteers to maintain our gardens and when they were told of your donation, they asked if we could pass on their gratitude. They understand that the work they do is only possible because of your generosity. Some of our volunteers are pictured below. We have seen footfall from the public increase over the last year and our gardens continue to provide opportunities to purchase bird houses, plants and produce to name a few items on offer.

Before the cost-of-living crisis hit the headlines, it cost c.£3million per year to provide our care. Though we are supported by NHS/local commissioning bodies (providing 41% of our income); we must raise the remainder from elsewhere.

The impact on our service thank to your continued generosity, is that we have been able to continue offering the highest level of care through the therapeutic value of nature. Guests and families have somewhere they can safely and comfortably enjoy nature, which provides real benefit to mental wellbeing. As the cost-of-living crisis continues to affect the sector, with energy prices and staffing costs rising at an alarming rate, your continued support means the world. If permitted, we would like to submit another application for support in 2023/2024.

For your interest, please see some photos enclosed of our gardens taken in 2022/2023.





St. Nicholas Church (graveyard project)

1. Details of the project/ events funded.

The project is a major one to restore the neglected and overgrown Churchyard at The Sands as a green space for the benefit of the residents and visitors alike. It is being overseen by the St Nicholas Churchyard Group, which is a group formed by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Nicholas and comprises not only members of St Nic's, but also local residents, with whom we are consulting on the draft master plan, which, as explained in more detail later in this report, has been funded entirely out of the grant from the City of Durham Parish Council (CODPC). A copy of the latest draft Master Plan has already been submitted to the CODPC and should be circulated with this report.

The project will be implemented in two parts: the first part is to develop a Wildflower meadow on the north-eastern side where land will be carefully cleared and seeds or plug plants of specially selected wildflowers will be sown. Eventually at least one seat will be added and the area maintained so that locals and visitors can enjoy the peace and the natural environment.

The second part will be to clear the remainder of the overgrown Churchyard and uncover and explore hidden graves, restore damaged headstones (so far as it is the legal responsibility of the PCC to do so) and allow for sensitive re-wilding so that a range of flora (rather than the existing brambles, nettles and self-seeded sycamore saplings) will allow a wider range of fauna to return.

Cleared paths and seats will be provided, graves will be restored (again so far as it is the legal responsibility of the PCC to do so), interesting historic aspects will be signed, an outdoor meeting space will be established and the natural flora and fauna will be explained with appropriate signage.

A community orchard will be established. Finally, the rebuilding of a gatepost and the provision of new gates at the entrance will help improve the security of the

site as well as that of the Old Cemetery Chapel, in addition to making fly tipping much more difficult as there will be separate gates for pedestrian and vehicular access, thus giving more control of who has access to the site.

The specific funding (£3,200) which the CODPC provided:

- a) has been used to pay for the professional preparation of a draft Master Plan from which all the ideas have come and on which the other bids have been based,
- b) will be used to pay for the professional checking of all of the headstones (the "Topple Test"), in particular those which are 2 metres high or over to ensure their safety before any other work is carried out. One way of doing this is to make the headstones safe by the insertion of metal rods. The other alternative is to lay flat the headstones which are unstable. The number of headstones which would need to be made safe is not yet known as, by way of explanation, it has been extremely difficult finding someone who is qualified to do the Topple Test and it is only very recently that we thought that we had found someone to do it, but they are no longer in a position to do so. We are now awaiting a new quote for this work. If there is any of the grant from the CODPC under spent when this work has been done, then it will be put to good use to do other outstanding work in the Churchyard.

2. What impact has this funding had on your organisation?

The funding from the CODPC has in effect triggered a stream of further funding for the project.

The trust that the CODPC showed in the project has enabled further grants to be provided: two have been forthcoming from the AAP and a further 2 grants have been promised by the local County Councillors, plus some matched funding from the church community itself.

This is all in addition to the hours of volunteer time which has already been given and been promised by St Nicholas Church, the local community and the university volunteering societies. This has all enabled a seemingly impossible project to be launched.

3. What impact has this funding had on users of your services/ facilities?

The eventual service users will be the local community, relatives of those buried in the Churchyard and residents (including residents of the neighbouring flats) and visitors to the area. They will have a huge area of greenspace at the edge of the city centre in which to relax and enjoy peace and wildlife or reflect on the lives of those loved ones they have lost.

The immediate impact on the community has been to draw disparate groups together, for example:-

- the local residents' association, St Nicholas Community Forum, (which is a separate entity from St Nicholas Church),

- St Nicholas Church,
- St Cuthbert and St Bede Eastern Orthodox Church (which now owns the old Cemetery Chapel),
- the National Trust which owns Crook Hall. (The Churchyard is situated at the gateway of the proposed "Green Corridor" (a joint initiative between Durham County Council and the National Trust),
- students,
- other residents of the Parish

into a collective volunteering project with a single aim: to restore this area to provide dignity to those buried here and to their families and offer a delightful area of peace, tranquillity, and wildlife to flourish again in the city.

4. How has this funding helped you to achieve your organisation' s strategic objectives?

Without the CODPC's initial funding we could not have paid for an extraordinarily creative, professional draft Master Plan, which has inspired the local communities and convinced other grant providers that this is a project which can be tackled. In short, we would not have managed to get the project off the ground. Once the consultation period has finished and the comments made considered and any amendments made by the PCC, it will then adopt the Master Plan.

On May 8th to help mark the Coronation of HM The King, there will be "The Big Help Out", a day which thousands of organisations will get involved in across the country. As part of this we are buying in the support of the Durham Wildlife Trust to lead the work and to train the volunteers. Before this begins, hopefully we will have had some of the ground cleared and former pathways made passable.