



# LESBURY PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

(Issue 40 - June 2014) The Parish web site is  
[www.lesbury-pc.org.uk](http://www.lesbury-pc.org.uk)

**Chairman's Report-** The Chairman, John Wright, reported on the Parish Council activities for 2013-14, including finance, parish maintenance, Northumbria in Bloom, S106 Money and the Speedwatch Programme. The full Annual Report is posted on the parish website and placed on the parish noticeboards for inspection by the public.

**Changes to the Parish Council-** Regretfully both Tom Wilson and Pat Tulip have decided to stand down from the PC. Pat joined the PC in 2002 and served 7 of her 12 years as the Vice Chairman; she brought with her a vast amount of local knowledge and in particular led the Planning Assessment Group. Tom joined the PC in 2005 and served 7 years as Chairman. His successes in the Parish are numerous and he has especially tried to bring openness between the PC and residents; the concept of the Newsletter was one of his innovations; the use of a web site another. There have been tangible improvements to the Parish environment which can be clearly seen by all. The PC thanks them for their services and wishes both of them well in their future ventures.

As Councillors leave others step forwards and it is our pleasure to announce 3 new volunteers, John Gebbie (Townfoot), Douglas Hunter (Bilton) and Adrian Vass (Lealands). Each will bring new skills to the PC, however the PC still needs another member and if you are interested please contact the Parish Clerk (details below).

Previously John Wright, the current Chairman has advised that he wishes to stand down. At the recent AGM there were no proposals to fill his place and John has offered to stay on until September but no longer; it should be noted that the PC cannot function or make decisions as a PC unless a Chairman is appointed.

**Precept-** the PC has received an enquiry as to why the precept has been increased in these difficult economic times. A detailed reply has been sent to the enquirer but in summary the precept has increased due to some services being devolved from County and other new needs resulting from this:-

1. Maintenance and insurance of bus shelters.
2. Introduction of a Parish maintenance plan implemented using professional labour as too few volunteers have stepped forwards to help.
3. The maintenance of the Pond Field play facility.
4. Advice from our County Council representatives' that future precept increases may be capped.
5. Future requirement from Central Government of a professionally conducted Local Development Plan which is likely to run into a 5 figure cost.

We re-iterate that our precept is one of the lower ones in the County and represents approximately a £5 increase on a band D property over the year.



**Alnmouth Railway Station and Resident Parking scheme consultation-** This consultation by NCC is a result of issues that residents in South View and Curly Lane had raised about commuters parking inconsiderately and/or blocking the highway. The PC raised these issues with NCC 18 months ago and asked if they could offer some solutions. Residents in that area have received a letter from NCC outlining a proposed scheme, one major objection appears to be that some residents are unhappy that they would have to pay £15 as part of the parking scheme and also have only 2

permits. The discussions at this stage are between the residents contacted and NCC. The problem arises due to insufficient car parking at the station, despite a new car park on the northbound side. A meeting recently took place between NCC and Railtrack to discuss this issue. The meeting looked at all areas of the station and the land that Railtrack owned. Railtrack confirmed that the coal yard was for freight only and that no other areas on the southbound side of the platform are available for extra car parking! The area fenced off on the northbound side of the platform was being used by Railtrack to store essential equipment for maintenance. Railtrack agreed to review moving the storage containers but this would only create a further 29 spaces, which would not fully alleviate the problem. **It is clear that there is no quick or easy solution to this problem.**



The Northumberland Estates

**Proposed development, rear of the Post Office and cottages (13/03037/FUL)**- This application has been refused by the NCC Planning Committee due to objections from the Conservation Officer on its impact on the village conservation area. Councillors on the Planning Committee sided with objectors and had some issues on the layout and scale of the development and refused it on a 6-1 verdict. It is not known if Northumberland Estates plan to take the decision to appeal.

**Speedwatch**- we are pleased to report that 3 new volunteers have come forwards to assist on this scheme and will be trained shortly in use of the equipment. If this is successful a radar gun and kit will be purchased from Heather Cairn's small works fund.



**Shepherd's Hut**- The hut was formally opened by Rev MacKarill. Carol Southam kindly provided refreshments for all those attending but the weather rather put a dampener on plans for the morning. The facility is now being used by the community for meetings and as an information point for *Dementia* as part of the national *Dementia Friends* programme." For more information on the programme please contact Carol or go to [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk). We hope you agree that this is a welcome addition to the Parish. (Photo P Hignett)

**Nature note**- "Pretty dear, pretty dear!" Last thing at night, and first in the morning, a Song Thrush is singing in Hipsburn. 'That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over', in the words of Robert Browning. One brood has already fledged, and so a second may already be in a nest. Despite this obvious success, populations have dramatically declined in the UK, and research has shown that it is in their first winter when most young thrushes struggle to survive. In hard weather snails are a favourite food and the sound of the 'blacksmith' should be music to the ears of the sympathetic gardener. Our friend is using a stone or step as an anvil to extract the juicy morsel from its shell. It would be a shame if future generations were not able to appreciate Browning's 'Home Thoughts from Abroad.'



**Spring Thing Concert 9<sup>th</sup> May Lesbury Village Hall**- A big thank you to all who helped to make this event such a success: Misspent Uke, the Attic Band and comedian Geoff gave us all a night to remember. An audience from Alnmouth, Hipsburn, Lesbury and beyond were thoroughly entertained and contributed generously to raising £486 towards the cost of Village Hall improvements. This figure included £157 from the raffle. Check the website [www.lesburyvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.lesburyvillagehall.co.uk) to be kept informed of developments and events. (Mary Hollins). Photo of Misspent Uke and Attic Band by Colin Platt.

**Mega Makers! The Church's Children's Holiday Club**-The parishes of Lesbury, Alnmouth, Longhoughton and Howick will be running another children's holiday club this summer from 21st to 25th July. It will be based on Bible stories with associated music, dancing, crafts and games and held at Longhoughton First School, from 10.00am to 12 noon each day. Children aged 4 - 9 years old are welcome and there will be a crèche for toddlers of parents who wish to help at the club. For more details please contact Isabel Chalmers on 830362 or at [isabelchalmers@btinternet.com](mailto:isabelchalmers@btinternet.com).

**Lesbury Indoor Bowls**- Note in your diary that the new season will begin on the evening of Thursday, September 4<sup>th</sup> in Lesbury Village Hall. Please come along if you are interested in playing.

**Alnmouth fun day**- Date, 26<sup>th</sup> July at Hipsburn School. Attractions include a fun-fair, tug of war, mini football, games, children's fancy dress, bar, car boot sale, tombola and raffle. Proceeds to the Stephen Carey Fund.

**Parish Council Contacts.**

**Parish Clerk** - Mrs Elizabeth Taylor, Rivendell, Steppey Lane, Lesbury, NE66 3PU, Tel: 01665 830040, e mail. [lesburyparishclerk@googlemail.com](mailto:lesburyparishclerk@googlemail.com).

**Parish Council Chairman:** John Wright; Tel. 01665 830127, email [lesburyparish@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lesburyparish@yahoo.co.uk)

**Parish Council meetings** are held in Lesbury Village Hall on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. All residents are welcome to attend.

**The Parish Council members** are Gareth Breese, Bob Dutton, John Gebbie, Douglas Hunter, Dave Knowles JP, Roger Styring, Adrian Vass, Heather Cairns (County Council) and Gordon Castle (County Council.).