



AUDLEY RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 19 APRIL 2012

The AGM is held in May each year. The Chair Bert Proctor and Vice Chair Val Pearson were appointed at the meeting in May 2011. The Council is made up of 3 wards involving 15 councillors:

Audley Ward	Councillor	Mr D Cornes
	Councillor	Mrs V Pearson
	Councillor	Mrs B Kinnersley
	Councillor	Mr P J Morgan
Bignall End	Councillor	Mrs C D Cornes
	Councillor	Mrs A Beech
	Councillor	Mr A Wemyss
	Councillor	Mr H Proctor
	Councillor	Mr M Dolman
Halmer End	Councillor	Mr P Warren
	Councillor	Mr E Durber
	Councillor	Mr T Sproston
	Councillor	Mr C C Cooper
	Councillor	Mrs K Davison
	Councillor	Mr P Breuer

Council Meetings

Council meetings are normally held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at various locations around the Parish. There have been additional meetings during the year to cater for the extra volume of business.

County and Borough Council Representation

The Parish is also represented at Staffordshire County Council by Cllr C D Cornes and at Newcastle Borough Council by Cllr Andrew Wemyss, Cllr Ann Beech, Cllr Dylis Cornes, Cllr Ian Wilkes and Cllr David Beckett.

Parish Clerk

Following the retirement of Maureen Smedley after 29 years' service to the council, a new clerk was appointed in May 2011. Clare Pellatt has settled very well into the role after previous experience with Stoke on Trent City Council. Clare has performed her duties in a professional manner and will be an asset to the Parish Council.

Planning applications

During the year the Council have received 46 planning applications for consultation. The Council is committed to avoiding inappropriate developments and can comment on behalf of the residents of the Parish in an advisory capacity but of course the final decision in each case rests with the Planning Authority.

Allotments

The parish has allotment sites at Audley and Halmer End with a total of 75 plots being provided on all sites. There is currently a waiting list of 7. The allotments are generally well cultivated.

Community Chest Applications

A total of 11 applications, shown below, have been supported by the Parish Council amounting to funding of £4,023.

Audley Football club and Audley Millennium green/Clean it up
 Audley Scouts – New equipment
 Audley Community Centre - Audley day
 Audley Parish Bowman – New equipment
 Wood Lane Community Centre
 Halmer End Methodist Church
 Audley Patients Panel
 Millennium Green Trust
 Footpath 66 resurfacing work
 Audley Ladies Choir
 2 x Grit Bins in Halmer End

Notice Boards

There are 8 notice boards within the Parish and two new ones have been provided one in Halmer End and one in Bignall End.

Children's Play areas and Wildlife Area

The Parish provides and maintains 8 play areas based at Alsager Road Audley, Albert Street and Bignall End Road in Bignall End, Miles Green, Halmer End, Alsagers Bank and Scot Hay. The wildlife area in Leddy's Field is a very popular venue with residents. The play areas are subject to monthly inspections with reports submitted to each parish council meeting.

Painting and repairs were carried out as required through the year. Repairs were also carried out to repair play surfaces due to acts of vandalism. A decision was taken to pursue funding for equipment suitable for older children in Rileys Field at Wood Lane via the Youth Club Charity Account held by Mr Chidlow. This decision was in response to a very well presented letter by a young teenage lady who lives in the village.

The Play area and playing fields in Queen Street are funded and maintained by the Children of Audley Residents Association on a 99 year lease.

This group have worked tirelessly over many years to provide facilities but have been hampered by a slowing down in the number of grants available. They have plans to provide more equipment for older children including a wire slide and a BMX track on this site.

CARA have also begun the process of having the site included in the "Fields in Trust" Queen Elizabeth II playing fields deed of dedication involving the National Playing Fields Association. A deed will eventually be signed by the parish Council as the land owners, CARA as the tenant and the National Playing Fields Association. This deed would as part of the Queens Jubilee protect the area as playing fields in "perpetuity".

Website

In June a website was created to provide Parish information to the wider community. The website is visited at regular intervals, and to date has been visited by over 3,600 people.

Millennium Green Trust

In August a payment of £700 was authorised to the Millennium Green Trust for its on-going work.

Quality Status

A decision was made to form a sub group to work towards Quality Status for the Parish. This work will be on-going.

Long Service Award

At the November meeting, a plaque was presented to Ethel Brayford who retired from the Parish Council in May after many years of loyal service to the Parish and especially to Bignall End and Wood Lane. The Plaque bore the Audley Coat of Arms.

Boundary Commission Consultation

The Parish Council completed a response opposing the proposed changes caving up Newcastle to move Audley into a new Stoke on Trent seat called Kidsgrove and Tunstall.

Bateswood Proposals

At the December meeting 14 members of the Public presented views on the proposals to allow fishing and create additional bridle paths in Bateswood.

Great Oak footpath closure

Following complaints from members of the public that the footpath from Bignall End to Great Oak had been closed due to fencing, representation from the parish resulted in the path being reopened.

Grit bins

At the January meeting, it was agreed to purchase grit bins for siting outside Horsley, outside the village dentist and near the car park alongside the Butchers Arms, all in Church Street Audley to allow for footpath to be treated. A further bin was sited near to Wood Lane school in Apedale Road.

Two further grit bins have been funded by the Community Chest and will be placed at Halmer End one near the school and the other near to W M Rileys in the High Street.

Purchase of Land – Margaret's Garden

Following lengthy negotiations with solicitors, the purchase of Margaret's Garden next to the Co-op in Church Street was completed. A very large thank you must go to Councillor Val Pearson for her involvement in securing this area for the Parish.

Annual Maintenance Programme

Tender documentation has been issued for the Annual Maintenance programme for 2012/13 to achieve best value for the Parish in these areas of cost.

Miles Green Car Park

The Parish Council have taken back the control and management of the car park from the Newcastle Borough Council. Consultation with the residents has been on going to ensure best use of this facility.

Bowling Greens

The Audley Bowling Club continues to thrive. The building has been maintained in a good order. Trees on site have been pruned by a tree surgeon. The Halmer End Bowling Club is having a difficult time with falling membership but a dedicated group continue to work hard to keep the club going. Following negotiations the Parish Council has relinquished the lease back to Staffs County who have reached an agreement with Peak Pursuits for the whole site. The security of the bowling club has been achieved and the Parish Council will continue to pay the rent for the Bowling Green. Peak Pursuits are in the process of upgrading the facilities to satisfy the bowling club commitments to league rules.

Parish Plan

Consideration has been given to developing a Parish Plan and further discussions will take place to continue this important journey involving a number of partners.

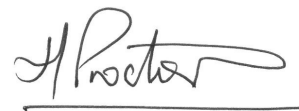
Public Seats

A total of 75 seats are placed around the Parish and an ongoing maintenance programme will continue to keep these in good condition. Half of these were repainted during the year.

Parish Precept

A decision was taken not to increase the Parish Precept in the present difficult financial climate for everyone. The Council managed to work within the annual budget despite the difficult times when there are many demands on its resources.

As Chair of the Parish council I would like to thank all of the Parish Councillors for their support during the year and their ongoing hard work on behalf of the people of the Parish of Audley.



Bert Proctor
Chair 2011/12