

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

At the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING of the ELECTORS of CORNSAY PARISH held on 19th May 2025 at 7.00pm in Hamsteels Community Centre, Western Avenue, Esh Winning.

Present:

Councillor Linda McKendrick (in the Chair)
and Parish Councillors Dawn Bottoms, Rhoda Makepeace, Hilary Pegum and Ashley Scott
and two members of the public

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Duncan Robb

Opening Remarks:

Councillor McKendrick welcomed those present to the meeting.

Minutes:

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council:

Although it hardly seemed possible, another year had passed during which we had seen improvements to the community centre and local projects getting underway.

With the recent election, we had seen new County Councillors, not least due to some not seeking re-election this time. Grateful thanks was extended to all the County Councillors for their hard work and support.

As the Area Action Partnership had now been replaced by the Local Area Network, ours becoming Crook, Mid Durham and Willington, we would have challenges getting to know the new service but hopefully with familiar contacts.

Thanks was expressed to Davey Walker for a year of exceptional service and to the Parish Councillors who had given their time and commitment. Also a big thanks was due to all those who worked so hard to make the Community Centre such a wonderful asset and service to local residents.

Reports from Other Organisations:

The Residents Association of Cornsay Colliery (TRACC)

During the year, funding had been secured from DCC AAP Neighbourhood funding which had been used for a Christmas event. Hargreaves plc had sponsored maintenance of the Christmas tree and the electricity used.

Events had included Easter fish and chip lunch for over 65s, Autumn Fayre, lighting of the Christmas tree with refreshments and carol singing, Christmas lunch for over 65s and two village litter picks.

Plants had been purchased for some of the village planters and a donation given towards the firework display at the Royal Oak.

The monthly Cornsay Colliery Chat newsletter continued to be produced alongside the half yearly TRACC newsletter to keep residents informed both formally and informally.

Based on survey results in 2023 the intention had been to create a wildflower area in the Millennium garden and refurbish two benches. Unfortunately the wildflower garden did not happen but the benches had been refurbished and the area cleared.

Into 2025, TRACC and residents were continuing the village speedwatch and organising litterpicking events. One pressing issue was the recruitment of new committee members which was proving difficult.

Finally, TRACC thanked the Parish Council for their support and consideration and looked forward to continuing the positive relationship.

Hamsteels Community Hall Association

It had been another busy and successful year with the regular groups continuing to meet and several new ones starting up too.

Events during the year had included regular Children's discos at Easter, Halloween and Valentines Day and also activities during the school holidays which had been well received. There had also been plays, acoustic story telling, country and western nights and a range of Christmas activities including a panto, Christmas party and Breakfast with Mrs Santa.

A grant from CDCF meant Welcome Space sessions had been offered again which, this year, had taken the form of twice weekly coffee mornings and a monthly community breakfast.

A survey had been carried out earlier in the year and actions drawn up based on the feedback. Key issues highlighted were around marketing and publicity with people not always feeling they were aware of what was on and also parking.

The recent environmental improvements had made a difference externally while internally Room 1, Room 2, the library area, main hall and drop in area had all been redecorated. Grants from the West Durham Wind Farm, Broomhill Wind Farm, West Durham Community Fund and Catherine Cookson Trust had been used towards improvements in the main hall and new furniture too.

Thanks was expressed to everyone that used the Community Centre, the volunteers that ran it and the Parish Council for its support throughout the year.

Issues Raised by Electors:

- Visibility at the junction of Rose Court/Newhouse Road was affected by a hedge, making it difficult to see when pulling out of Rose Court. This was compounded by the speed of traffic on Newhouse Road.
- Speeding issues continued to be a concern in Cornsay Colliery, despite speed limits being clearly painted on the road, signage throughout the village and regular community speedwatch sessions.
- The fireworks display at Cornsay Colliery seemed to be coming more popular each year, however this was leading to extensive problems with parking and potential for a serious accident due to conflict between both parked and moving vehicles and the substantial number of pedestrians.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm