



AUDLEY RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT FOR ACTIVITIES IN 2018/19

Audley Rural Parish Council consists of fifteen councillors and is divided into three Parish wards.

Audley Ward	Councillor	Mrs Valerie Pearson
	Councillor	Mrs Catherine Richardson
	Councillor	Miss Nicola Mayer
	Councillor	Ms Anna Borowski Baskeyfield
Bignall End	Councillor	Mr Nick Hayes
	Councillor	Mr Deane Jervis
	Councillor	Mr David Butler
	Councillor	Mr Ron Kinnersley
	Councillor	Mr Nick Crisp
Halmer End	Councillor	Mr Matthew Whitmore
	Councillor	Mr Herbert Proctor (Chair)
	Councillor	Mr Mick Joynson
	Councillor	Revd John Taylor (Vice Chair)
Parish Clerk		Mr Chris C Cooper
		Mrs Clare Withington

The Parish Council A.G.M takes place in May each year. At the 2018 meeting, Cllr B Proctor and Revd J Taylor were appointed as Chair and Vice Chair respectively for the ensuing year. On Thursday 3rd May 2018, local council elections were held to elect 15 Parish Councillors who will serve for four years until May 2022. The Parish Council were very sorry to see Mr R Moody, Mrs A Beech, Mr M Dolman Mrs A Frankish and Mr P Breuer stand down from the Parish Council and would like to thank them all for their contribution over the years. We are also very lucky to have a young lady from Sir Thomas Boughey Academy who attends each Parish Council meeting, to provide representation from the school. Meetings are normally held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at various locations around the Parish, there may also be additional meetings during the year to cater for any extra volume of business.

County and Borough Council Representation

The Parish is represented at Staffordshire County Council by Cllr Ann Beech and at Newcastle Borough Council by Cllr Bert Proctor, Cllr Sue Moffatt and Cllr Ian Wilkes. The number of Borough Councillors have now been reduced following the ward boundary review – details can be found here [at www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

Planning applications

Throughout the year, the Council receives planning applications for consultation. The Council is committed to avoiding inappropriate developments and is asked by the Planning Authority to express its views on each application and also any comments passed to it by the residents. This they do in an advisory capacity only as the final decision in each case rests with the relevant Planning Authority. Between the period of April 2018 and March 2019 – the Parish Council have commented on 85 applications. As in previous years, several of them have been called in to the Borough Council's Planning Committee for full deliberation of the decision, usually due to a number of objections and where it involves developing green belt or large developments on the boundary of the Parish. The Parish Council continues to input into the consultation for the Borough's Joint Local Plan, which will identify new housing sites and may involve some areas being taken out of the Green Belt in parts of the Borough. Although that has been put on hold by the Borough until later on in 2019.

Allotments

The parish has allotment sites at Audley and Halmer End. The Audley Allotment Association successfully run the Alsager Road site which has 58 plots let and a waiting list of 9. Recent successes include the social evening talk by Harry Delaney in February, with all 80 tickets sold. They also planted a memorial tree was at a special ceremony to mark 100 years since the end of The Great War/Minnie Pit Disaster, which was attended by plot holders and other local groups. The Parish Council manage the Halmer End Harrison Close site, with all 21 plots let and a waiting list of 4. There has been a large turnover recently due to the inability of tenants to maintain their plots. A skip has been provided and a site clean up has taken place. The tenancies have also been changed so that they renew in February rather than April, to coincide with the growing season.

Grant Applications

There is no grant programme at the Parish Council, however there are a small number of groups which receive help annually to support their activities that benefit the Parish. These include the maintenance of the Audley Millennium Green, Children of Audley Residents Association and Audley in Purple. This year a donation for Audley Health & Wellbeing day to be held in October 2018 was also made.

Notice Boards and Website

There are eight Parish Council notice boards situated throughout the parish. The Parish Council plans to replace the old tired wooden noticeboards with new ones over the coming years. The first one will be Halmer End by the shop. In the meantime, they continue to be well used and contain the latest information in relation to the Parish council meetings plus other relevant public sector information. A website exists to provide Parish information to the wider community. The website is updated at regular intervals and was viewed nearly 9000 times last year. Standard information about the Parish Council is also published in Audley Community News and through local social media groups.

Children's Play areas and Wildlife Areas

The Parish provides and maintains 8 play areas situated at Alsager Road Audley, Albert Street and Bignall End Road in Bignall End, Miles Green, Halmer End, Alsagers Bank, Rileys Field and Scot Hay. Play areas are subject to monthly inspections and reports are considered at the parish council meetings. On-going painting and maintenance of all the equipment is carried out as required during the year. Although it has improved, dog fouling on the playing fields still continues to be a problem. Worst sites include Scot Hay play area, Queen Street (CARA). As a result, there have been occasions when known people allowing their dogs to foul or breach the Dog Control Orders have been reported to the Dog Warden who will issue fixed penalties. New play equipment was installed at Halmer End (Harrison Close) towards the end of 2018. This scheme has also been a great success. As before all credit must go to the young people of the Parish who helped to choose it and are also doing a great job in looking after it. Consultation will soon start with the local schools to pick the new play equipment at Bignall End (Albert Street). This will be installed around the summer of 2019. CCTV (with infra-red night vision) has also been installed at Bignall End Road and Albert Street – to help identify anyone causing unnecessary damage or trouble.

Annual Maintenance Programme

The Annual Maintenance programme of the parish assets continues, and the contract has been awarded to a local contractor to provide a 3-year maintenance contract until March 2021.

Parish Bowling Greens

The Audley Bowling Club continues to prosper with the new fencing helping to resolve issues. New members continue to join, raising the total to over 50 with 8 teams. Membership costs as little as £25 per year. Funds are being raised to purchase a defibrillator for the exclusive use of members and visitors with a 'Bring and buy' sale to bolster the fund. Halmer End Bowling Club have had a successful

year winning promotion to the top division. There have been 7 new players joining from other venues, and a new team has now been created. Over £2000 has been spent to improve the ground. New players are always needed to help maintain the standard.

Public Seats and Bus Shelters

A total of 75 seats and 5 parish owned bus shelters are located around the Parish. An ongoing maintenance programme will continue to keep these in good condition.

Leddy's Field

Leddy's Field is a pleasant wildlife area in the centre of Audley village for the benefit of the parish. A fourth phase of tree thinning is planned for the winter of 2019, along with the ongoing routine maintenance.

Bluebell Wood, Alsagers Bank

This area continues to be monitored for any future work that is required.

Margaret's Garden, Church Street

Mrs Pearson continues to maintain this area with the help of volunteers, and it provides a lovely feature for the centre of the village.

CCTV

The CCTV cameras installed are proving to be of benefit. There has been a marked reduction in the ASB around those areas, and the Police are now able to piece together evidence of the known perpetrators to take action. The Parish Council would urge residents to continue report these crimes to 101 as soon as they can – as the Police resources are allocated based on the number of reports received. We are pleased to see that damage caused by ASB is much lower than last year, however there has still been £2500 spent on repairs following criminal damage and vandalism. In order to make the Parish a safer place for people to live and work, a bid will also be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner to raise £8,000 to install CCTV in the Village centre.

Staffordshire Safer Roads Funding for Vehicle Activated Signs

The Parish Council successfully bid for £5k to purchase and install 2 new speed warning signs. One has been located on the approach to Old Road, to warn of the speed limit. The second has been located by Bignall Hill to capture the speed travelled by vehicles. As the signs have been a success, funds to provide a further 2 speed indicator signs are being sought this year through the scheme.

Annual presentations

The Parish Council annually awards three trophies:

R.W Edwards Community Award - Open to individuals or groups that have made an important contribution to the Parish. This year it was awarded to David and Sue Hughes, for their tremendous efforts to fund raise well in excess of £100k for the Cardiac Risk in the Young charity, following the sad and sudden loss of their beloved son Dan. To date 1204 young people have benefited from cardiac screening as a result, with 37 receiving heart treatment as a result. Thank you from all within the Parish of Audley.

Capewell Naylor Trophy for Services to the Environment - Open to individuals or groups that have made an important contribution environmentally to the Parish. This year it was presented to the Beavers and Cubs of 77th Audley Scouts, for their fantastic litter picking to keep our village nice and clean for everyone's benefit. The Parish are very grateful for their efforts and enthusiasm!

Elsie Kelsall Young Persons Award - Open to individuals or groups that have made an important contribution to the Parish. There is an upper age limit of 18. The Parish Council were delighted to award this to 14-year-old twin brothers Thai and Tam Lieu, who have already achieved grade 8 and grade 6 piano respectively. They have played locally for the Audley Methodist Church and alongside

the Audley Ladies Choir at the Minnie Pit Memorial concert, plus performed as soloists. They are a credit to their parents and our Community, and very worthy recipients of the Young Persons award.

Millennium Green Trust

Once again, a payment of £800 was authorised to the Millennium Green Trust for its on-going work. This year has seen a change of management within the Trust, with Paul Sargent taking on the position of Chair. We would like to thank Tony Lancaster for the years he has devoted to maintaining a valuable asset in the heart of the Parish.

Audley LAP Litter Pick

Thank you to those who have helped with the bi-monthly litter pick in Halmer End, Bignall End and Audley. All are welcome to join to help keep the Parish clean and tidy.

Parish Finances for 2018/19

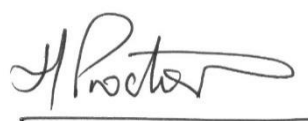
A total income of £180,500 was received: Precept of £141,436, a reducing Newcastle Borough Council grant of £5,076 for concurrent functions and a grant of £4,397 for the reduced council tax base. The rest of the income (£30,000) is from other sources such as funding bids, VAT reclaim etc. There is approximately £19,000 of unringfenced reserves going forward (plus committed spend of £97,000 for Halmer End play area outstanding amount and Albert Street play area).

A total amount of £155,000 was spent as follows:

- £7,300 (5%) on office administration
- £30,600 (19%) on staff costs
- £1,200 (0.8%) Chair allowance
- £20,100 (13%) play area (maintenance)
- £44,400 (29%) play area (investment in new equipment)
- £2500 (1.5%) on wildlife areas (maintenance)
- £160 (0.1%) parish bowling greens
- £700 (0.5%) Parish Allotments
- £1,800 (1%) donations to community groups and other S137 activities
- £1,700 (1%) Seats, bus shelters, notice boards and grit bins (parish)
- £Nil (0%) footpaths
- £22,100 (14.5%) bus subsidy
- £1,800 (1.5%) on legal fees for the car park leases
- £9,300 (6%) on miscellaneous including Christmas decorations, CCTV, bunting, unadopted land
- £10,400 (7%) on VAT

The coming year (2019/20) will see an increase of £0.10p per week (based on a Band D Council Tax) to the Precept, which will be used to repair the village car parks and other special projects. More information can be found on the Parish Council website – www.audleyparishcouncil.org

As Chair I would like to thank my Vice Chair Rev John Taylor for his tremendous assistance over the last year. My thanks also go to ALL Parish Councillors for their work on behalf of our Community. This year we have also had a Traffic and Transport Sub group who have worked hard to resolve some of the issues affecting the Parish. I would like to thank the residents who have attended the various LAP Litter picks throughout the year in an effort to keep our villages tidy. A special thank you to PC Jez Moore and his team for working in our community to ensure our safety and wellbeing. My final thanks go to our outstanding Parish Clerk for her amazing service day after day on our behalf.



Cllr B Proctor
12 April 2019