

This year has been my third as chair and it has proved extremely busy with the parish continuing to face number of challenges and opportunities.

I would like to thank all Parish Councillors for their drive and enthusiasm throughout the year. It is a credit to all that we are able to maintain a strong group of people who work hard for the people of Gainford and Langton. Special thanks go to Lisa Johnstone who has developed the “Twittering” voice of the Council and worked closely with the Parish News team to make sure the PC continues to improve its overall communications.

The council has been involved in a number of initiatives during 2015/16 and I would like to summarise these below. As it has been an extremely busy year, with many major projects and achievements, it is not possible to cover everything that has been undertaken.

Visitgainford.com <http://www.visitgainford.com/>

Our Website continues to be a rich sources of information for residents and visitors to both Gainford and Langton.

Village Hall

The council has made a further grant to the village hall, this is the 4th year and we are committed to supporting this important village asset, working closely with the Village Hall committee to improve the overall capability. The PC is committed to offering support where it can in the future. It is clear that the support of the PC is having a positive effect and this combined with the enthusiasm and commitment of the Village Hall team, is paying off in providing improved facilities and increasing levels of usage by all age groups within our community.

Local Maintenance

It is with great regret I must continue to report that some of our village dog owners continue to use the village as a toilet for their dogs without thought to others. This is of great concern to me and the PC, and we have increased the activity of the Poover to try and limit the negative impact dog fouling has on our community. The PC is currently seeking advice on the use of CCTV to gather evidence where dog fouling continues to be a real concern. I once again ask that people take responsibility for their animals.

We continue to work closely with DCC and their Parish Paths team. Although funding for this team has been reduced Martin has worked hard to build good relationships and continues to ensure or network of paths and bridleways are maintained. We have been developing ideas to improve Christmas and have secured funding with the help of George Richardson and James Rawlinson to provide power to a Christmas tree display which will light up the island near the east end of the village. Once again

I am extremely grateful for the continued work of Paul Ryman who provides lots of help in maintaining the village on behalf of the PC. We are very proud of our “growing” ambitions with our floral efforts being increased again this year.

Balmer Hill Development

I am pleased to say the development idea which was proposed earlier in the year has been abandoned after “people power” from the residents with support from the PC. At the consultation event held in the Village Hall, it was pleasing to see so many people turn up to show their objection for the proposal. In the end common sense prevailed and the prospective development was

abandoned. Residents can be assured that the PC will always work to represent the views of the village matters, on planning matters.

Improving Gainford and Langton

Over the last 12 months the PC has worked extensively to improve the village infrastructure. We have been able to replace the bench to the north of the village and after much deliberation, discussion and consultation the installation of two new bus shelters. After lengthy internal debate I am pleased to inform all residents that the PC is now fully committed to developing a Neighbourhood Plan for the village. It is hoped that this key piece of work will add strength to the protection of the village long into the future. I am delighted that members of our PC have agreed to work as part of PC Subcommittee and it is hoped I will be able to report on the Neighbourhood Plan success in my annual report next year.

Sport in the Village

The use of the recreation field continues with the football team going from strength to strength. I am also delighted to say that we continue to support the provision of a sport instructor which has been a resounding success with many of the village's young people. We hope we can continue to fund this in the coming year.

General Matters

The council is committed to keeping the villages of Gainford and Langton looking their best. We employ a grass cutting contractor and a litter picker and both do a good job. We believe it is vital that we maintain a pleasant and quality living environment for all residents and visitors to our village.

We continue to work with the Police and Neighbourhood Wardens to monitor and enforce those constant problems of speeding through Gainford and will continue communicating with them and expressing residents' views. It is hoped that the intermittent use of the Speed Advisory Matrix to the eastern approach will encourage drivers to think about their speed making the village a safer place.

I am pleased to report that the hard work of the Fireworks committee once again resulted in the event going off with a "bang". The event (and the weather) was good and my thanks go to all those volunteers who worked hard to make the event a great success. Special mention goes to Mark Charge and Ann Pratt who year on year, work so hard to deliver a great display for the many people who attend the event.

Thank You to...

Finally, I would like to thank our clerk Martin Clark, whose excellent work and dedication to the village and its residents has been outstanding this year. We are very lucky to have such a highly qualified, experienced and hardworking clerk and we owe him many thanks. As mentioned early, I also want to thank Paul Ryman, whose constant hard work and enthusiasm has helped the PC transform the village.

I would also like to thank all of the councillors for the past year. We have had to deal with many challenges and some of these have occurred with tight deadlines and have meant a lot of additional work. The support and initiative and "can do" attitude of all those present has had a real impact on the village this year and I appreciate everyone's help, support and dedication. There is currently one vacancy on the PC and I would personally invite anyone who wants to get involved, to write to Martin or attend the next PC meeting. We need to make sure that we continue to fulfil the wishes of

the community and the best way to do this is to have a full complement of Councillors to help deliver the best outcomes for the villages of Gainford and Langton.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the residents of our parish. It is truly an honour to work within such a lovely community and many people have taken the time and trouble to give us positive feedback on the initiatives we have undertaken which means a great deal to us all.

Andie Mackay

Chairman