

DALTON LE DALE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMANS REPORT MAY 7TH 2009

**Ladies and Gentlemen.
Fellow Councillors.**

As Chairman of this Parish Council I present my Annual Report.

Unfortunately it is with sadness that I begin with the death of Cllr. Olaman in December 2008 who held office since 1966 and who was a stalwart supporter of the Council. He will be sadly missed.

I also report the recent resignation of Cllr. Westmorland because of conflict of interests. There are now two vacancies on the Council which have been advertised and the Clerk to the Council is in the process of arranging the interview of applicants to be held very soon. It is very important that the Council returns to full strength.

I am pleased to report the completion of Dalton le Dale Parish Hall to which the Council contributed £10,000 and is being well used by St. Andrews Church, local organisations and private functions.

After protracted negotiations and meetings with the District of Easington Council the hardening of the grass verge at South View, Overdene Estate was finally completed at the beginning of the year. Subsequently, after representation made by residents a further hardening programme for three other sites are being considered and hopefully these schemes can be undertaken in the near future.

My last report indicated that the Council intended to embark on a project to improve the village green area which may take a matter of years to complete because of financial constraint. I am pleased to report that work has commenced with the cutting back of the undergrowth.

The flower planters and troughs were once again in full bloom throughout the summer and it is the Council's intention to continue providing these displays.

There are important frustrating issues where any appropriate decision to solve these needs to be taken by a higher authority such as Highway matters. Your Parish Council will continue to fight for action to be taken about speeding on the Times Inn bank, the care of our environment and close attention to planning applications.

It is important that close links are forged with our County Councillor Alan

Napier in the newly formed Unitary Authority for County Durham and our M.P. John Cummings.

It has also been a busy year for our clerk Geoff. Price working hard to attain the Certificate in Local Council Administration as part of the process in attaining Quality Status for the Council and on behalf of all members I wish him every success.

Throughout the year the clerk and I have attended all meetings appertaining to the proposed Unitary Authority, the vesting day being April 1st 2009, and it is very apparent by the questions that are being asked that there is an atmosphere of unease amongst councils both large and small.

There is an element of haste in establishing structures which gives councils cause for concern and begs the questions, will local important issues become lost, and how confident can we be that we will have a say in our own destiny under the revised governing structure for County Durham?

It is extremely important that smaller councils maintain a high profile and avoid complacency as I would suggest that council representation on the local AAP will become an important issue and will need to be re-addressed.

It is the aim of all members of this council to conduct its affairs with honesty and integrity for the benefit of all residents in this parish and I conclude my report by suggesting the coming year will be interesting to see how the best laid plans are working and I thank my fellow Councillors and the Clerk for their support throughout the year.

Wendy Kennedy

**Chairman
Dalton le Dale Parish Council**