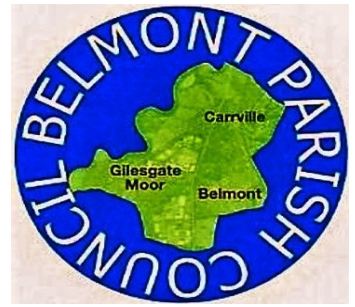


# NEWSLETTER

## Belmont Parish Council



**SPRING 2023**

### **BELMONT LOCAL HEROES 2022**



It takes a community to make a community work and often it's the unseen work that makes a difference to our village and the lives of residents. During summer 2022 Belmont Parish Council asked for nominations for local heroes and we were delighted with the response. From a young resident who set up a book swap in an empty rabbit hutch, to a team involving 170 children and 37 volunteers to deliver Belmont United football team, our parish councillors were highly impressed.

On 19th November 2022 we held our first Belmont Local Heroes Awards and enjoyed an afternoon of

celebration. Medals and certificates were presented to the following:

**Community:** Cheesy Waffles; Wider World Project; Sally Gladstone (Community champion); Joanne Malarkey and David Thorpe (Cemetery); Julie Gittens (Travellers Rest); Tracey Espin and Sandra Poulter (Christmas Tree)

**Sport:** Bryce Denholm (Cheesy Waffles FC); Phil Scope (Belmont United)

**Environment:** Friends of Kepier Woods; Friends of The Scrambles; Mark Turner (Gilesgate Primary); Ron Potter (Belmont Allotments); Edward Malarkey (Belmont Gardener)

**Covid Support:** Amelia Cort (Young person); Tracey Espin (Adult); Gilesgate and Belmont Wellbeing Project (Group)

We also took time to recognise the wonderful efforts of residents involved in Northumbria in Bloom and Beautiful Durham, including Ramside Hall, Broomside Court and Mr Wall of Dinsdale Drive.

We look forward to receiving nominations for future Local Heroes Awards.

### **BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR!**

You can also make a difference to our community by being considerate and doing the following:

\*Avoid parking on pavements or double yellow lines, do not obstruct traffic or driveways, particularly at the entrance to Wantage Road

\*Watch your speed, most areas in our parish are now 20mph zones, stick to this, if you notice speeding drivers, note down their licence number and pass on to the parish office

\*Pick up and dispose of your dog dirt

### **DEVOLUTION DEAL FOR THE NORTH EAST**

Council Office : Belmont Community Centre, Sunderland Road, Gilesgate Moor, DURHAM, DH1 2LL  
Open 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Monday to Friday. Tel 0191 386 0664 Email [belmontpc@btconnect.com](mailto:belmontpc@btconnect.com)

On 28th December, a joint statement between Michael Gove, Levelling Up Secretary of State and council leaders in the region said the Government is minded to approve a North East Mayoral Combined Authority with a regional Mayor possibly elected in May 2024.

Northumberland, County Durham, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside council leaders have agreed the proposal, but it is subject to a consultation. Belmont Parish Council has formally requested Durham County Council to arrange public meetings through the Area Action Partnerships on this crucial matter affecting the future of our area. The 48 page statement can be accessed at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1126764/North\\_East\\_Devolution\\_deal.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1126764/North_East_Devolution_deal.pdf)

## **CONSULTATION ON ELECTORAL DIVISION BOUNDARIES FOR DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Local Government Boundary Commission is minded to reduce the number of Durham county councillors from 126 to 98 and review division boundaries. Belmont Parish Council has submitted comments on these proposals as they could affect this area. At present we have three county councillors representing, Belmont, Carrville, Gilesgate Moor, Sherburn Road and Sunderland Road communities. The parish council considers this number should not reduce given the substantial and increasing workloads facing councillors, the complexity of partnership working involving community organisations and an increasing population given the Benthouse Lane development. It is also important there are opportunities for local residents to stand for election and be accountable for public services. The parish council has also stated the ward boundaries of the present Belmont electoral division should remain the same. The division is coterminous with the designated Neighbourhood Plan area, catchment areas for primary schools and reflects the integrated nature of social, retail and community life.

### **PLANNING**

The parish council monitors weekly planning lists affecting the area. Following discussions with residents and local organisations an objection has been submitted to an application for a 20-metre communications mast adjacent to the former Kepier clinic. The proposal is considered to be visually intrusive and research suggests these masts can have a detrimental effect on children's health.

### **SHETLAND ISLANDS' VISIT**

Fifty students from Year 7 to Year 10 at Belmont Community School are set to embark on a once in a lifetime trip to the Shetland Islands in July 2023. They will be representing the school and experiencing many wonderful things, such as exploring the environmental issues and wildlife there. Belmont Parish Council has agreed to support with funding towards binoculars and equipment, following an excellent presentation to the Parish Council from some of the pupils. We wish them well in their adventure and look forward to reporting their feedback of the visit in the next newsletter.

### **CEMETERY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

Following consultation, the Cemetery Rules and Regulations will be amended to allow grave owners the choice whether they want their graves turfed after a year of internment, on the proviso graves are maintained to an acceptable standard, otherwise the decision will be reviewed.

### **SCRAMBLES WOODLAND REPORT AND ASH DIE-BACK**

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An "Area" Tree Preservation Order (TPO) was put in place for a stretch of the Scrambles Woodland bordering on Cheveley Walk and Birkdale Gardens in 2020 (during the Covid period). All trees planted and in full growth before that are covered by this Order. The Order does not cover subsequent plantings of trees.

This means we must operate with a Woodland Management Plan in the TPO area in future. We are also not allowed to top or crown trees or do much of what would be termed "parkland" maintenance. There are guidelines for removal of intrusive branches and growth near pathways and boundary fencing. We also need to ensure that we should have access for inspection of trees and if urgent maintenance is required.

Belmont Parish Council has commissioned a Woodland Management Plan and is now in the process of implementing it. Two key features have come from this.

- First, the presence of Ash tree die-back in our woodland areas, but particularly in the Cheveley Walk part of the Area TPO. During the remaining winter months, we will begin to clear brambles and undergrowth close to larger Ash trees to facilitate inspection next year. Ivy will be severed at the base of large trees particularly near neighbouring properties.
- Next year we will identify trees with loss of 25%-50% foliage for removal in the Cheveley Walk area. The plan will be to replace with smaller native trees nearer properties and larger species further into the Woodland.

We will use this work to inform what we need to do elsewhere on the Scrambles.

Ash die-back is a slow process. The risk is much greater of falling branches than anything else, so please avoid walking in the Scrambles during high winds, as already mentioned. A letter is planned for Cheveley Walk houses with gardens bordering onto the Scrambles. Please contact the Parish Office if you have not seen this letter (or missed it).

**Important:** Please avoid walking through the Woodland areas of the Scrambles during high winds. Sadly, even healthy trees can come down in high winds, as we discovered in the storms last year.

### **COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSISTANT NEEDED**

We are looking to recruit a new member to assist in the day to day running of Belmont Community Association.

Duties to include: Opening and closing the community buildings on two sites, general housekeeping and ensuring site users' needs are met.

Please contact Jacquie (Centre Manager) by email:

[j.miller@belmontcommunityassociation.org.uk](mailto:j.miller@belmontcommunityassociation.org.uk) or contact the Centre on 0191 3866659 for further details and to express interest in the post.

Salary: National wage.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Belmont Community Association is a busy and successful centre. It's led by local people, and they need some more volunteers to join as trustees to oversee its work. Meetings are held bi-monthly to monitor finances, staffing and hiring arrangements.

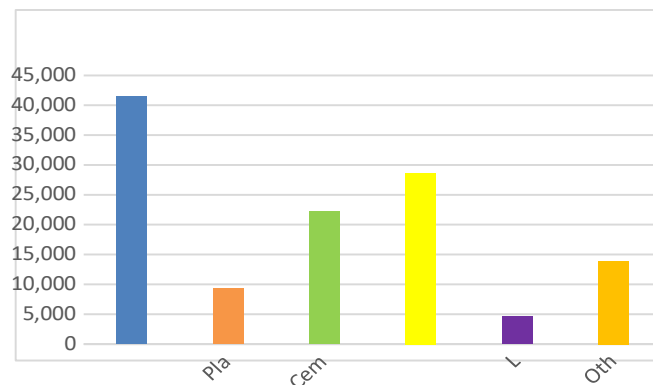
Why not get involved? If you can help, please contact Peter Corbett at

[belmontca@outlook.com](mailto:belmontca@outlook.com) or 0191 386 1072

### **FINANCE 2023/24**

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Belmont Parish Council has set its budget for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. We expect to spend £120,152 and receive income of £18,736. The difference of £101,416 will be collected through Council Tax. This year households will be charged an annual sum of £34.58 (£2.88 per month), based on a Band D property.



Expenditure Analysis 2023 2024

## BELMONT BOWLING CLUB SUNDERLAND ROAD, MOORFIELD, GILESGATE MOOR

As the days get longer and the weather warmer members of Belmont Bowling Club will be cleaning their bowling shoes ready for the start of the 2023 bowling season. Do you now have "time on your hands" and want to try something new but which is not too strenuous? Why not try your hand at lawn green bowling. New players who have joined recently have found they enjoy bowling and the social gathering and are now ardent members of the club.

Bowling normally starts in mid-April, as set by the council. The main practice days are Monday and Thursday afternoons but we also compete in leagues every week against other clubs. So, if you are prepared to shake off the winter blues and want to try a positive outdoor exercise open to all, then come along and enjoy an afternoon of bowling in pleasant surroundings. Own equipment not necessary as the use of club equipment on the day is available, with friendly advice always available from members.

Even if you are only slightly interested why not come along at the start of the season.

**Look out for the notices/posters giving the dates and times which will be displayed in the Community Centre, Belmont Library and, if possible, the Parish Notice Boards and local shops.**

Please contact Mrs S. Overton (details below) or Club Members Tom Dixon 0191/3862845 or Mike & Jean Duffitt 0191/3864221.

<p><b>Dates for Parish Council Meetings</b> held in Belmont Community Centre at 6.30 p.m. (second Thursday of the month, excluding August) Next meetings on 9th March 2023 /13<sup>th</sup> April 2023/ 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023 Members of the public are welcome to attend.</p>	<p><b>USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS</b></p> <p>Durham County Council General enquiries                    03000 260 000 Highways, Lighting and Streetscene                    03000 261 000 County Council Help Desk        03000 123 7070</p> <p>Community Police Officer can be contacted on the police non-emergency number    0345 606 0365</p>
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Parish Clerk    Mrs S. Overton    0191 386 0664