

Circular 7 from Ulgham Parish Council and the UVA July 2020

The Parish Council will provide monthly updates during the period of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

It is not possible to meet at this time, but work is still being carried out. The Clerk has full delegated authority to act on behalf of the Council at this time. The Parish Council eventually accepted a quote for a new speed sign for the east end of the village and this is being delivered between 3rd and 6th July. As everyone will be aware, the Government is easing lockdown restrictions further from Saturday 4th July. As part of this the Government has said that play areas and outdoor fitness areas can be reopened. However, there are certain measures that must be taken before re-opening. Once open, users and parents/carers are asked to observe the new 1 metre social distancing regulations (from 4th July), carry hand sanitiser and wipes with them and use regularly. The equipment will be wiped down and disinfected before reopening but it would be advisable to wipe down high usage items with wipes before each child uses it.

A pre-application planning item has been received from NCC in relation to the haul road. The Parish Council is currently examining the information provided with a view to submitting a reply by the deadline date. The application does not appear to be available to view on the portal which we understand is usual in the case of pre-applications.

In relation to meetings, current Government regulations prevent Parish Councils having indoor meetings of more than 2 people. They can meet outdoors but with a maximum of 6 people (including any members of the public and the Clerk). This would be impossible to achieve in Ulgham with the numbers of residents who usually attend meetings. There is the ability to meet remotely and if the guidance does not change soon, a meeting will need to be arranged before the end of August to agree the audit return for 2019-20. Information will appear on the website and notice board if this is found to be necessary.

Finally, as a reminder, anyone who wishes to report potholes or fly tipping etc. can use the link to the County Council's website

www.northumberland.gov.uk. All of the relevant information is on their home page.

There is a wealth of information on the County Council's website re help and queries during the Coronavirus pandemic – this is updated daily and there is a link on the village website -

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/coronavirus.aspx>

Contact details for all Parish Councillors are included in this circular.

Once again, the Parish Council would like to thank everyone who has rallied round and helped those in need of assistance during this crisis. It is pleasing that everyone is pulling together at such a difficult time.

ULGHAM PARISH COUNCIL **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019-20**

This has been a busy year for the Parish council with several major issues to deal with.

Firstly, we made aware that the Ulgham Meadows land was included in a plot of land being sold by Harworth estates, previously U.K. Coal. With a deadline of only several weeks until the sale the council arranged a meeting with a representative of Harworth estates who agreed to remove the Meadows from the sale and offered the village first chance to buy. A figure was agreed and we, in conjunction with the UVA, put in a bid for funding from the Windfarm Community Benefit Fund. As the asking price exceeded the maximum amount that could be bid for, the Parish Council agreed to make up the shortfall if the bid was successful. The bid was agreed by the Windfarm committee and the purchase of the meadows was concluded in the autumn. A meadows management committee was to be set up, but this is on hold due to present circumstances.

Many residents throughout the year had raised concerns about the continued closure of the Forge pub and whether it would be sold for development. The Parish Council took advice from the County Council on this matter and the advice given was that we should register the pub as a community asset as this would prevent development for five years. With the County Council's help on the legal matters we went ahead with the application which was successful. This was not a decision taken lightly as we were aware of the illness of the present owner.

The new owner of the field to the North East of the village applied for permission for a caravan site. Due to the small size of the site he did not need planning permission. However, the Parish Council raised serious concerns about the safety of the access. This concern was also raised by the Caravan Club who have put restrictions on the type of vehicles allowed on the site i.e. no caravans only camper vans and tents before they will grant a licence. This is an ongoing issue and discussions are continuing with the owner. Lastly, but certainly not least, on the day after the March Parish council meeting the whole country went into lockdown. The Parish Council and the UVA then immediately asked for volunteers to help in any way possible for any vulnerable residents. The response was fantastic with a resident setting up a Facebook group, Ulgham Village Together and a weekly newsletter circulated giving details of local business willing to deliver goods to the village and giving updates from N. C. C. on matters such as waste collections, grass cutting and playground closures. Even though the Parish Council cannot hold open meetings at present, rest assured we continue to work via email on many issues. We have recently installed a new litter bin in the lay-by at the ford at Ulgham Grange and are presently looking at quotes to replace the speed sign at east end of the village.

I would also like to thank everyone who helped decorate the village for our VE Day celebrations. The village looked wonderful and the numerous street parties helped cheer everyone up.

Normally at this point I would name individuals for their work but this year I would like to thank everyone who has pulled together to help the village in this difficult time.

Keep safe and stay well.

Councillor Jim Scott

Chairman – UPC

From the Village Association

Use of Air Rifles in Ulgham Meadows and Wood – there have been reports of two people shooting wildlife in the Meadows. This is private land and these acts are classed as Armed Trespass. Please contact the police on 101 if you see anything suspicious

- We are still hoping to celebrate VJ day on August 15th which is a Saturday, with a village picnic on the playing field in the afternoon (Government guidelines permitting). Residents can bring their own food and rugs/tables/chairs. Hot drinks will be provided by the UVA and there will be live music from 'Shaken not Stirred'. As the feast was cancelled this year, this event will also be continuing the practice of a summer get together as a village. There will not be stalls or a pet show but we will possibly provide some activities for children and perhaps a boules competition, again depending on official guidelines at the time. The village will be decorated with new red, white and blue bunting, and ribbon where it isn't possible to hang bunting. If we are not allowed to do this, then we are thinking of a similar day to VE Day with tea parties in individual gardens throughout the village. We will provide an update when we know what restrictions are still in place nearer the time.
- We have not included all of the previous information on local goods and services but if anyone needs them please get in touch with any of the contact numbers included in this circular and they will send/deliver a copy to you.
- Thank you to everyone who offered help when lockdown was first put into place. Some volunteers have not been needed but a huge thank you for coming forward and offering your time and services to our village residents. To those who have done shopping, picked up prescriptions and helped in any other way, thank you so much. Thank you also to members of our Facebook Site '**Ulgham Village Together**' which has provided social contact, information and support to many of us over the past weeks. This was set up by a village resident Becci Corns Jobson and has proved to be very popular, thank you Becci.
- **We are not out of lockdown** yet and therefore will continue to give any help and support that may be needed so please still get in touch if you require any assistance.
- **Reminder of Contact Details: Parish Councillors - Jim Scott 790636, Helen Shaw 790170, George Brown 790465, Lesley Newman-07717841474. Chair of the UVA Helen Dunn 791849, Paul and Pauline Martin 790721.**
- These contacts cover all of the village and Ulgham Grange. If anyone feels able to help in any way please contact one of the above. Sometimes just a phone call to check that all is well can make such a difference to someone.