

NORTHALLERTON TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021/2022





MAYOR'S STATEMENT

It has been a busy year for Northallerton Town Council, we have a new and stable organisation in place and, with councillors working effectively together, are starting to make real progress. I hope that this is generating increased trust in the Council on the part of residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders in Northallerton's future.

Over the last year the Town's most-used play park in Applegarth has been upgraded, the basement of the Town Hall has been renovated and is now being used by Northallerton Amateur Boxing Club, the car parking at Dene Road has been resurfaced and designated for residents, the Applegarth Community Garden has been established and a fruit orchard planted in commemoration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Further improvements were made to Christmas Lights in Applegarth and Zetland Street with more planned.

All of these activities have involved residents or community groups and we are also working with members of the community in the planning of Christmas Festivities in 2022 and in encouraging development of green spaces across the Town.

We have made significant efforts over the last year to engage more effectively with other stakeholder groups such as the BID - #lovenorthallerton, Hambleton Community Action, Hambleton Foodshare and the Yorkshire Regiment. In the case of the Yorkshire Regiment we have helped to establish a new Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club which is successfully underway. We have also made financial contributions to a number of community groups.

Regular press coverage has been generated throughout the year and we have lobbied successfully for improvements in the management of the Post Office and the cancellation of the proposed timetable for the East Coast Main Line.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT

Increased social media presence has been important in generating and sustaining contact with our community and has been particularly valuable in collecting feedback on the events that we have held. Councillors are keen to learn from our events and improve for the future. November's Bonfire and Fireworks was the most successful ever, Festive Friday saw gifts distributed to over 500 children and the Remembrance Day Service was very well attended.

A five-year strategic plan for 2022-2027 was published in late 2021, built on three themes: Community Facilities, Engagement and Events plus Environment and Open Spaces.

Looking to the future, provision of a new public toilet facility is our key priority for the coming year. We are also establishing a committee for each of the three components of our strategic plan, to enable detailed plans to be drawn up and implemented efficiently. Organisational improvements, which are now in place, will give us confidence that we will be able to do this and continue to help make Northallerton a better place to live, work and visit.



Cllr Phil Eames

Northallerton Town Mayor



ABOUT THE COUNCIL

Northallerton Town Council consists of twelve elected councillors, who give their time and share their skills as unpaid volunteers. They are from a variety of backgrounds and all serve on a variety of council committees to ensure projects are delivered successfully.

The Town Council represents the people of the town and assists residents and businesses to deal with local issues that affect them. We work in partnership with principal authorities and other local councils, Northallerton BID, the Police and other bodies to strive towards Northallerton being a vibrant and sustainable town and to encourage tourism to the area.

Our employees comprise a Town Clerk and a team of seven staff who look after Administration, Finance, Amenities Areas and the Town Hall.

Our offices are based in the centre of Northallerton and our responsibilities include the management and maintenance of the open spaces and recreational parks.

We also own and manage the facilities of the Town Hall building which is available for hire and used by Charities, businesses and local residents for a variety of activities and events.

Council Meetings take place monthly and members of the public are welcome to attend.

2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Our Strategic Plan has given focus to the key areas in which the Town Council intends to make a positive impact over the next five years, based on the three themes: Community Facilities, Engagement and Events plus Environment and Open Spaces.

During the last year further improvements to the governance and operation of the Town Council have progressed, focussed on implementing a structure and engagement strategy to ensure delivery of Council's objectives. The following outlines just some of the achievements during 2020/21:

Community Facilities

Providing the best possible facilities for residents and visitors to use and enjoy both within the council's control and by influencing other organisations to do the same.

- A complete overhaul of the Town Hall Basement was undertaken to provide a new home for Northallerton Amateur Boxing Club
- New equipment was installed in Applegarth play area, including accessible and sensory items, opened by children from Applegarth Primary School
- Redecoration took place in parts of the Town Hall, adding improved broadband provision and greater CCTV coverage, with more to come
- Hall Hire charges were simplified to attract new hirers
- Dene Road car park was resurfaced and parking allocation provided

2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Engagement and Events

Working more closely with the community, businesses and local stakeholders is a key objective of the Town Council, listening and jointly seeking ways to improve facilities and events within the town using social media, the website and improved face-to-face contact.

- Honorary Citizen awards were presented to the Town's Olympians, Marc Scott and Scott Lincoln
- A successful Bonfire and Fireworks event and Remembrance Service were held
- Hambleton Foodshare was chosen as the Mayor's Charity with both financial donations and a foodshare box at Northallerton Town Hall
- We collaborated with Yorwaste to offer a collection point for Ukraine
- Free use of the Town Hall was given to a new support group for people affected by abuse
- Via our website and social media, we supported Leah's Law campaign involving MP, K Hollinrake
- Joining other councils in the 20's Plenty campaign
- Celebrating the involvement of four councillors at the COVID Vaccination centre, who are all Hambleton Heroes
- Forging better links with Applegarth School with a councillor joining the governing body
- Seeing improvements to Friarage Street crossing further to requests to our County Councillors
- Opposing 2022 rail timetable for the East Coast Main Line, with success

2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Engagement and Events cont'd

- Lobbying for improved post office performance via the MP and press
- Developing closer working relationships with police, district and county councils
- Asking for and responding to feedback from the community about our events and plans

Environment and Open Spaces

Identifying opportunities to provide new or enhanced green spaces in the town, including Council-owned parks and gateways to the High Street, with the participation of local community groups.

- An avenue of community fruit trees was planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy
- Space, support and practical help was given in the development of Applegarth Community Garden
- Northallerton College former playing fields was registered as an Asset of Community Value, as part of a longer term campaign
- Development of the new Willow Beck path was supported
- Our involvement with Knotto Bottom Way allotments was increased
- Clarified bike access to Castlegate-Cemetery Public Right Of Way
- Proactively requested land transfers to the Town Council, in advance of formation of Unitary Authority

2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Finance

During this financial year donations were made to Men's Shed, Northallerton School & Sixth Form College, Scouts, Northallerton Juniors and the DalesBus, along with contributing to the Town Twinning group and Tourist Information Centre.

Some other key points include appointing a new internal auditor, with a positive audit being undertaken, adopting updated Financial Regulations and establishing a modern, electronic banking facility. Details of all the council's income and expenditure is available to view on the website.

Raising the precept by 6%, alongside a grant secured from Hambleton District Council, will enable a much needed increased toilet provision to be delivered in 2022/2023.

A recent public survey has been very well received with almost 2000 people taking part. The key responses below give us the information needed to ensure this project meets the needs of our residents and visitors.

84% would like improved toilet provision in the town

40% want improved provision for those with disabilities

47% wish we had easier access toilets

57% would like to see better signage

2021-2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Staffing

Our team are key to the success of delivering the Council's objectives and this year we have:

- Recruited team members with a positive, professional and flexible approach to their work
- Celebrated a well deserved Hambleton Hero award for our Caretaker, Malcolm Rowell
- Updated our policies and procedures to ensure they support our councillors and staff
- Implemented a new organisational structure and salary realignment

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

With a dedicated team of councillors, elected for a 5 year term, we are committed to continuing to work with residents, business and other organisations for the benefit of Northallerton.

We welcome all feedback so please do get in touch with us if you would like to know more about our work.

You can keep up to date with our progress on social media and via our website, northallertontowncouncil.gov.uk.

We look forward to hearing from you!



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