



Annual Report 2023/24



MAYOR'S REPORT

On behalf of the Town Council may I welcome each and every one of you to tonight's Annual Assembly. The Town Council welcomes and values your interest and support.

May I thank my fellow Town Councillors for their support during my year as Mayor for the 23/24 Civic Year and particularly Cllr Stuart Sutherland as Deputy Mayor and Cllr Elizabeth Bruce who has taken time to share her many years of experience with me.

I am pleased to present this Annual Report on behalf of the Town Council, a Council which prides itself on the services provides to support members of all ages in the local community.

Once again it has been a very busy year for the Council with our Town and facilities continuing to be improved and developed for future generations. My particular focus had been to work in the community to support wellbeing, and I am proud of the initiatives and activities that have brought groups of residents together. This has included the



Women's Craft Group who have stated: *"this is not only a learning experience, but a chance to meet new people and make new friends ...fabulous."* The Thursday Menopause Group, Men's Group, Chair Exercise Group initiated by Cllr Pam Herbert, all help to promote a healthier community.

Raising funds with local residents for the 'Letterbox to Heaven' has particular meaning to myself and my family and I know that many people in Chilton feel the same.

Being Mayor had also given me the opportunity to meet so many remarkable people including Evan, one of our young historians, fanatical about mining history, when we jointly led the Chilton Banner Parade on Durham Miners' Gala Day.



I have taken great pride in my role as ambassador of Chilton and further information on the role and achievements of the Council are included within this report.

This of course could not have happened without the continuing hard work from our staff team. I especially wish to thank our Town Clerk John Robinson and our

Finance and Admin Officer Anne Hall, Admin Support Officer Joanne Jones and Support Officer Alison Smith for the service they have given to Chilton.

2023 also saw the stepping down of two of our long standing Councillors Alan Bruce (a former Chair and Mayor) and Peter Davies. On behalf of the Council I would like to thank them for their many years of service to Chilton and their many achievements.

We also have the opportunity to welcome three new co-opted members. Cllr Chelsea Kipling, Cllr David English and Cllr Sue Reece, welcome additions to the team.

...and finally can I thank everyone who has supported me and helped to make my time as Mayor one of my most memorable years.

Cllr. Pearl Malpas

Mayor of Chilton



NEW COUNCILLORS

I have been a resident of the Chilton all of my life and joined the council in 2023.



I have a professional background working with children and young people of all abilities and backgrounds, and am passionate about promoting positive experiences for children. This prompted me to apply for the role as councillor, so I could

explore potential recreational activities for the youth of Chilton.

Cllr Chelsea Kipling

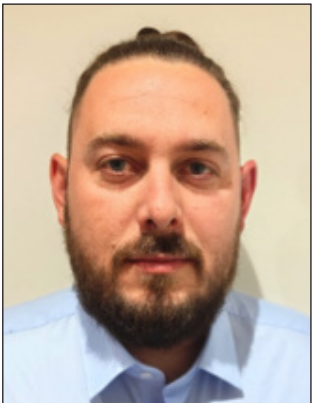
I was delighted to be co-opted to the Town Council in March 2024 as I have always valued the role the Council has in ensuring that all residents and businesses are listened to and their needs and aspirations are fairly represented.



I will be leading on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2035 and look forward to working with members of the community to shape Chilton's future.

Cllr Sue Reece

Hi, my name is David English, I am a 35-year-old full time electrical engineer by trade. I joined Chilton Council with the aim to help and give back to our local community that I enjoy being a part of.



Cllr David English

VISION STATEMENT

A Town that seeks opportunity and choice for future generations, while retaining a pride in its local heritage.

MISSION STATEMENT

To conserve and enhance Chilton as an attractive and sustainable place in which to live, visit and do business.

The five core values of Chilton Town Council are:

- Community Safety
- Develop a prosperous business community
- Protect and enhance the environment
- Support Residents, Community & Voluntary Groups
- Continue to improve the services the Council provides

COUNCIL INTRODUCTION

This is the Annual Report for Chilton Town Council for the Civic Year Ending 31st March 2024.

During the year the Council has continued to be actively involved in the management of the areas in its control, especially the areas of public open space.

Investment is continuing in the parks and play areas, and this is supported by grant funding applications to ensure that our Town provides a wide range of facilities that help our residents, both young and old, to develop to their maximum potential, keep fit and active and make new friends at the same time.

We will continue to do all that is possible to maintain our facilities and are open to all new ideas and suggestions from residents that will help to further improve our Town for our residents and visitors. We are about to embark on the production of our Neighbourhood Plan which will give us a strategy for the development of Chilton 2025-2035 and look forward to working with you to ensure that our community will continue to thrive.

The Council Offices are open to the public at the following times:

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 2.00pm as core hours, and additional hours when required.

The Town Council's offices are located at:
Council Offices Hutton House, Durham Road, Chilton County Durham
DL17 0HE

Tel: 01388 721788

Email enquiries: info@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk or town-clerk@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk

Statement of Responsibility

Chilton Town Council is responsible for the preparation of this Annual Report and for the information and assessments set out in it and the assumptions and estimates on which it is based. Any member of the public may examine Council documents by appointment at the address below: -

Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, Chilton Town Council, Hutton House, Chilton County Durham, DL17 0HE

Tel: 01388 721788

Email: townclerk@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk

Equality & Diversity

We aim to ensure that everyone using our services is treated fairly and without prejudice or discrimination. All our customers are different with different aspirations and needs in an ever-changing community. We are committed to ensuring that no one is excluded from using our services and that all our residents have the same opportunities to improve the qualities of their lives and secure new life experiences. All residents should have equal access to our services, and we recognise this and will do all that is possible to meet these.

The Council in early 2023 signed up and supported NALC Civility and Respect Project along with many other Councils across the Country.

Councillors

Chilton Town Council comprises 12 elected members who also act as Trustees to our Miners' Welfare Charity.

The Councillors decided not to accept the allowance available for their role and all their time is given voluntarily to help run an efficient, effective and successful Council. The Council do have the opportunity to have a remuneration allowance but voted not to adopt.

Each year the Council elects a Chair (Mayor) who acts as a Civic Leader and Chairs Council Meetings and Deputy Chair (Deputy Mayor) who deputises in his/her absence.

The Town Mayor is elected annually by Members of Chilton Town Council at its Annual Town Council meeting which is held in May. The Town Mayor holds office until immediately after the election of the Town Mayor at the next annual meeting of the Council even though he/she may not have been re-elected as a Councillor. The Town Mayor is supported by a Deputy Mayor who deputises him/her. Cllr. P Malpas was elected as Mayor and Cllr. S Sutherland Deputy Mayor.

The Town Mayor has two roles:

- Chairman of the Town Council
- Civic Ambassador for the Town.

As Chairman the Mayor's duties are prescribed by the relevant local government legislation:

- He/she may convene a meeting of the Council at any time, and he may also be required to call a meeting at the request of councillors.
- He/she has a casting vote at meetings. The Mayor votes like any other councillor but if there is an equality of votes, he/she can use a second casting vote. Apart from this the Mayor does not make decisions for the Council, which is a corporate body with collective responsibility.
- If the Town Mayor is present at a full meeting of the Town Council, he/she must preside and is responsible for ensuring that meetings are properly conducted. This includes involving all councillor's, ensuring discussion is kept to the point, summarising debates and facilitating the resolving of clear decisions.

Ambassador for Chilton:

In the role as Civic Ambassador, the Town Mayor is the public face of the Council and Civic Head and representative of the Town of Chilton. He/she attends many community events especially those organised by local charity and volunteer groups such as fundraising events, AGMs and special meetings. The Mayor also attends some Civic functions as well as events organised by other Councils in the area.

The charities that a Mayor may elect to raise funds for are chosen by the Mayor at the commencement of the municipal year. In 2023/24 the Mayor has chosen Great North Ambulance as her charity.



The Mayor represents the Town at various functions throughout the County and has also undertaken a number of local engagements, including attending many events organised by clubs and by organisations based within Chilton. Several special presentations have been made to residents celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries and birthdays. The Mayor leads the community's Remembrance Service and laying of the wreath each November.



Members of the Town Council (2023/24):

Elected in May 2021 and elected into post at Annual Town Council meeting May 2021

Cllr. P. Malpas Mayor of Chilton (Vice Chair of Community Committee, Chair Policy and Resources)

Cllr. S. Sutherland Deputy Mayor (Chair Allotments Committee, Chair Cemetery Committee, Vice Chair Policy and Resources)

Cllr. A. Bruce -retired after 25 year's service, November 2023

Cllr. E. Bruce

Cllr. J. Cairns (Chair Miner's Welfare Trust and Development Committee)

Cllr. V. Collinson (Vice Chair Allotments Committee)

Cllr. J. Houlihan

Cllr. K. Hornsby (Chair of Community Committee)

Cllr. M. Young

Cllr. L. Rundle – stepped down December 2023

Co-opted Members

Cllr. P. Herbert (Vice Chair Cemetery Committee)

Cllr C. Kipling

Cllr D. English

Cllr S. Reece (Chair of HR Committee)

Police & Crime Commissioner:

Mrs. J. Allen

County Councillor:

Cllr. J. Cairns

Member of Parliament:

Mr. P. Howell

Meetings:

The Council meets on a monthly basis (August in recess). Meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Hutton House, Chilton. There is a 20-minute public representation session on Agenda items only at all meetings. This enables members of the public to ask questions of the Council and raise awareness on various matters of interest. A Public Participation Policy is in place that clearly shows what and how the sessions should be managed.

In addition to the full Council Meetings, the Council has five standing Committees to ensure the effective management of its business.

- Policy and Resources
- Allotments and Open Spaces
- Community
- Cemetery
- HR

All Council and committees including sub-committee meetings are advertised on the website www.chil-tondurham-tc.gov.uk and on noticeboards located throughout the Town.

Your Council - What we do

As a tier of local government, they are elected bodies, with discretionary powers and rights laid down by Parliament to represent their communities and provide services for them. Policy has centred on the fact that they act as a focus for local opinion and provide a way to get things done in a way that is best suited to their local community.

There are certain obligations which, by law, a Town Council must fulfil. For example:

- It must hold an annual meeting;
- It must hold at least three other meetings a year;
- It must appoint such officers as it believes necessary for the proper discharge of its functions. This must include an officer responsible for the proper administration of its financial affairs;
- It must make Standing Orders for the supply of goods and services to the Council.

The arrangements for meetings and proceedings of local councils are set out in Part II of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972, as supplemented by any standing orders adopted by a Council.

The Council is also responsible for maintaining/providing:

- Council offices, gardens and memorials
- Five allotment sites (225 plots)
- Five public parks and play areas
- Various open spaces throughout the town
- Various advertising signs and notice boards
- Various bus shelters and street furniture
- Cemetery
- Street Lighting (section of by-pass and old Cemetery road)
- Christmas Lighting
- Flower beds and hanging baskets

Through their role as trustees

- Two football pitches
- A Pavilion for bowls and community use
- Football changing facilities

Town Council Staff

The Council employs four staff as well as an accountant and an internal auditor for three days per year.

- Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (Mr. J. Robinson)
- Finance and Administration Officer (Mrs. A. Hall)

- Administrative Support Officer (Mrs. J. Jones)
- Support Worker (Mrs. A. Smith)

The Council is continually developing the best way forward to reflect the changing needs and aspirations of the local community. A rolling four-year Medium-Term Financial Plan covering the 4-year Term of Office is in place. It will be reviewed and update annually.

Ground Maintenance Contract:

The Town Council's ground maintenance is contracted out, so all its ground's maintenance is carried out by a professional ground's maintenance company, S.E. Landscaping Limited of Shildon. This was open for tender during the year and S.E.landscape awarded the contract up to 31st March 2025.

All of the Town Council's hanging baskets are supplied and maintained (watered & fertilized) by Thinford Nurseries, Thinford, Spennymoor.

We also every year undertake bulb planting in September across the Town, so enhancing our Spring Show.

Finance:

Account Report:

The audited accounts for the 2022/2023 period were finalised and submitted to Chilton Town Council on 12th September 2023. You can access these accounts and related documentation either through our website or by scheduling an appointment at the Council offices.

Budget & Report 2023/24:

The budget-setting process began in Autumn 2022, involving all Councillors. Each Committee reviewed their budget areas to ensure adequate resourcing for core functions.

On 10th January 2023, the Council agreed the budget and a precept of £270, 780 for the year ending 31st March 2024. A precept of We are pleased to report that the Council's continuing work in reviewing all cost centres and seeking best value for money meant that the Council was able to set a budget that resulted in no annual increase on the Chilton Town Council aspect of the Council Tax. Despite uncontrollable cost increases, the Council managed to reduce spending, compared to the previous year. Implementation of a new of a new telephone system and a new photocopier have reduced the costs in these areas. The Council have managed, through fixed-term contracts, to keep energy costs low until 2027.

Key budget growth areas included wages, national insurance, pension contributions and mandatory agreements. The Council prioritises providing value and cost-effectiveness through continuous service provider and contract reviews.

Community Grants:

In the 2023/24 financial year, the Council approved community grants totalling £2,400 for various worthwhile organisations and community groups. These groups play a crucial role in serving the Chilton community. Grants were awarded to:

Chilton Junior Football Club	Line Marking	£500
Age Concern Chilton	Outings for Members	£500
Chilton Academy	Eco Champions	£500
Chilton Community Sports & Social Club	Christmas OAP Party	£500
Chilton Academy Friends	Pantomime	£500

Policies:

Chilton Town Council regularly reviews and updates its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements. Our accounts undergo semi-annual review by an internal, independent auditor. Additionally, we annually assess our internal controls and present a report to the Town Council in March. Furthermore, we diligently review and update our financial risk register to ensure comprehensive coverage for any potential scenarios.

Planning:

The Town Council is a consultee on planning issues – decisions are made by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) Durham County Council.

When objections are raised to the granting of planning permission, Councillors must give reasons based on material planning considerations, issues that may be relevant to the decision. Details of these are provided on the Council website.

The Town Council may, if they have adequate planning reasons, call in applications for determination by elected members. 90% plus of applications are dealt with under delegated power.

Our local County Councillor, Cllr. J. Cairns is a member of the Durham Planning Committee for, South & West.

Planning Aid England provides free, confidential and independent planning advice. Call: 0330 123 9244 or Email: advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

THE CIVIC FUNCTION

Activities for Young People:

There are five play areas that are owned by the Town Council that young people are encouraged to use with an additional play area, active areas, including tennis courts, croquet, bowling green, MUGA, skate park under the management of the Miner's Welfare Trust.

This is supplemented by external organisations who provide activities for young people, for example, Scouts, dancing, etc. We have recently repaired play equipment across the Town.

The Junior Council (year 5 & 6 pupils) mirrors the Town Council, with 12 elected members, a Mayor and Deputy. This year they have chosen to spend their funding on supporting the environment

An Annual Christmas Card Competition is organised by the Council involving all the school children, the winning design being printed and distributed by the Mayor. The Gala, Christmas lights Switch on, Fun in the Park, Easter Egg Hunt, are all events that are to be enjoyed by the young people in the Town.

A Funday was held in August with support from local businesses and in particular The Wheatsheaf Public House.

Promoting Chilton:

Chilton is a Town with a great sense of community and is fortunate to have some residents who give willingly of their time and energy. The Council is now looking at ways to promote the town to the wider communities.

We are proud of our Town Litter picking group who venture out the first Saturday of the month, thank you to them all.

Our Community Champions 2023 are the Coffin Dodgers.

The Town Council provide a newsletter and release numerous press releases to inform the public and other organisations on developments/achievements within the Town. Officers also attend networking meetings and seminars to promote the Council and also to obtain updates on changes that may affect the Town Council or the Town of Chilton. We are updating our Website and now have our own Facebook page.

We were able once more to celebrate Remembrance Day and Sunday supported by the whole Community.

The Town Council has noticeboards around the Town. The noticeboards are to be updated regularly and provide a valuable source of information about forthcoming events and activities. The noticeboards are located at:

- Outside of Hutton House
- The Pentlands Play Area

The Town Council have a dedicated website, residents are encouraged to visit regularly for news and updates. www.chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk

Christmas sees the Civic Carol Service where we all come together to celebrate this wonderful time of year, and we held it once again supported by the school and Ferryhill Town Band. The Christmas Light Switch on Event was a wonderful night enjoyed by all. Over the Christmas period we arranged sessions for tea with Santa, Santa in his Grotto and hugely successful Toy Appeal. Cllr. Elizabeth Bruce ran our Christmas Wreath making Day, again enjoyed by all.



The Annual Firework night was again supported by over 1000 residents and has become a fixture in the Chilton calendar.

External Representation:

The Council appoints Members as representatives on various outside bodies. This ensures good working relationships with local groups and organisations. During the year the Council has been represented on the following outside bodies:

- County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC)
- Smaller Local Councils' Forum
- Larger Local Council Forum
- Residents Association
- Miners Welfare Recreation Grounds
- P.A.C.T
- SLCC (Clerk)

Chilton Town Council owns and maintains a number of play areas and open spaces, including several of local landscape importance, which contribute to the visual quality and amenities provided within the Town.

Chilton Cemetery:

Report from Cllr Stuart Sutherland



Several upgrades to the cemetery have taken place in the 2023/24 year. The most recognisable is the expansion of the central circular area paving than now extends the full width to all larger more modern vehicles to attend the site without damaging the area.

The committee has through the year been seeking to improve grounds maintenance through regular visits. Volunteers and committee members have cared for the site for which I would like to thank them.

Thanks to Cllr P.Malpas' efforts while mayor the cemetery now features a "letters to heaven" post box to support those in grief and who wish to remember loved ones. This stands proudly near the centre of the cemetery.



Part of the committee's work has been the ongoing process of establishing an extension to the Cemetery. Land is secured to the south of the established site to ensure Chilton will have a protected place to remember loved ones.

Care remains the core tenant of all efforts and would like to thank those involved in this year's work.

Allotments:

Report from Cllr Stuart Sutherland

Chilton Town Council currently provides over 225 allotments on five different sites around Town, these are located at West Chilton Terrace (site 1 and 2), Prospect Terrace and Hambleton Way (site 1 and 2)

As Chair of the committee, I'm pleased to say the Council have installed 200 meters of new fencing across 3 allotment sites. While this is a sizeable amount the Committee has already committed to replace a further 100 meters at West Chilton Terrace South in the 2024/25 year.

Two drone inspections have been conducted through the 2023/24 year which has offered considerable time saving and highlighted a number of areas for the council's attention. With the support of images and gardeners a full boundary review was conducted. This information is now fully digitised and is used to support further development decisions and day to day operations.

I was also pleased to be able to hold a public allotment holder meeting at Chilton Sports and Social club to discuss ongoing works and to identify areas for service improvement. Alongside this work volunteers have conducted men's health session within the allotment garden setting. This important work to support those facing difficulties and isolation is of significant value to Chilton and I thank everyone involved.

Community Safety:

The Town Council works with the police to support community safety and crime detection efforts in Chilton.

The Town Council also monitor around Hutton House using its own CCTV system. This system records images and stores them for 31 days before being erased and new recordings begin.

The local P.A.C.T. (Police and Communities Together) meeting is held in the Chilton Social Club on Durham Road on a monthly basis and new members are always welcome. Councillors and officers are able to attend this meeting as and when required.

The Town Council also maintain a confidential Police reporting book for concerned residents to record their concerns and for the Police to follow up were necessary. The Police also hold a weekly surgery in Hutton House on Thursdays.

MINERS' WELFARE TRUST

Chilton Town Council is the sole trustee of the Miner's Welfare Charity and as such discharges its duty through the establishment of the Miners Welfare Trust.

All members of the Council by De facto are Trustees for the Miners' Welfare Charity.

Under the regulation of Charity Law and the Charity Commission the management of the charity should be kept separate from the business of the Town Council. Equally the finances of the trust must be kept separate from those of the council.

All charities must produce annual statements of accounts under charity law.

Cllr. J. Cairns is Chairman and Cllr. S. Sutherland Vice Chairman. The posts are elected, and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are not automatically appointed to any post.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

No report received

COUNCILLOR CONTACT

You are able to contact our members via their e-mails listed below:

Cllr. E. Bruce – cllrebruce@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. P. Malpas – cllrpmalpas@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. K. Hornsby – cllrkhornsby@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. S. Sutherland – cllrssutherland@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. J. Houlihan – cllrjhoulihan@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. M. Young – cllrmyoung@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. J. Cairns – cllrjcairns@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. V. Collinson – cllrvcollinson@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr.P. Herbert- cllrpherbert@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr Chelsea Kipling <cllrckipling@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk>
 Cllr David English cllrdenGLISH@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk
 Cllr. Sue Reece cllrsreece@chiltondurham-tc.gov.uk

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE

	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Number for the year
Cllr E Bruce	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	12 / 12
Cllr J Cairns	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	12 / 12
Cllr V Collinson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	12 / 12
Cllr D English										✓	✓	✓	3 / 3
Cllr P Herbet	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	10 / 12
Cllr K Hornsby	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	9 / 12
Cllr J Houlihan	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10 / 12
Cllr C Kipling						✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	4 / 7
Cllr P Malpas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	12 / 12
Cllr S Reece										x	✓	✓	2 / 3
Cllr S Sutherland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	11 / 12
Cllr M Young	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	6 / 12

A central record is maintained of attendances at all meetings and is available for inspection at the Town Council offices in Hutton House. Members are in place till the next elections in May 2025.