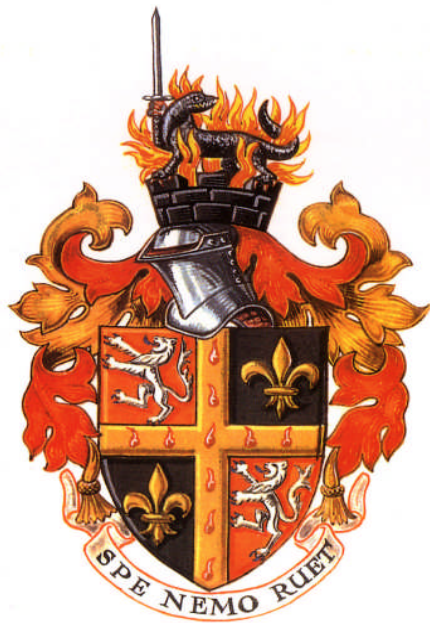


SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

2008

Town Mayor's Annual Report

**Councillor Ian Harrington
Town Mayor 2008/09**



I am delighted to serve the Township of Spennymoor as Mayor and would like to begin by taking the opportunity to thank all of my fellow Councillors for affording me the opportunity to serve as Mayor for 2008/09. Last year, I had a very enjoyable and fulfilling year as Deputy Town Mayor to Councillor Mrs. Joan Wood. I now look forward to building on the relationships that I have formed and the experience I have gained to ensure that I act as a worthy ambassador for this my town.

My chosen Charities for the forthcoming year in equal shares are "MGA (Myasthenia Gravis Association) and Step Together a division of The Child Care Action Trust providing Conductive Education to help disabled children" which I believe are both very worthy cause, I am looking forward to working in partnership with my family, friends, colleagues and sponsors to make my Charity Appeal a success.

Councillor Mrs. Joan Wood, will I know be a hard act to follow as Mayor, she raised a staggering £12,672 for the Great North Air Ambulance and she attended over 150 Civic engagements as the representative of Spennymoor Township.

I have various fundraising ventures planned for my Charity Appeal this year and I would like to take this opportunity to extend a personal invitation to all of you to come and support me. I would be genuinely and absolutely thrilled to meet as many of you as possible at any of my publicly advertised Charity events details of which are advertised via the Town Hall website, "Spennynews" and the Town Hall "Flashing Sign".

Like everyone else involved with the Town Council, I was delighted when we were awarded Quality Council Status, this being the only quality measure available for our sector of local government to be one of only nine out of the total of one hundred and eight Town and Parish Council's within County Durham to have achieved Quality Status means a great deal to us. The abolition of the existing District Council's within the County of Durham and the creation of a single County Unitary Authority with effect from 1st April 2009, will I am sure, present new challenges and responsibilities for us, however I am confident that we are equipped to embrace the

change agenda and look forward to a reduction in centralisation of services and the devolution of services to a local level.

I am particularly proud to be hosting a Civic Reception in July 2008 for the nationwide Members of the National Association of Local Council's Larger Council's Committee and it will be with great pride that I show our visitors all that we have to be proud of in our Township, our wonderful, refurbished Town Hall, our award winning Victoria Jubilee Park and our two nationally award winning cemeteries.

During the forthcoming year the Town Council will continue to improve its services investing in our fixed play equipment, allotment self management and continuing to engage with our public by completing our Parish Plan. This document sets out our achievements during the 07/08 Municipal Year and our objectives for the 08/09 year.

HOW TO CONTACT US

The Town Council through the Town Clerk are always pleased to receive your views and ideas on this plan together with your suggestions on any matter to benefit the community. You may contact the Town Clerk

Mrs Pauline Wilson LLB (Hons) DMS MBA CiLCA Solicitor

Spennymoor Town Council, Town Hall, Spennymoor, Co. Durham. DL16 6DG.

Telephone (01388) 815276 (answering machine after office hours)

Fax (01388) 815263

Email: TownClerk@spennymoortowncouncil.gov.uk

Web Site: - www.spennymoortowncouncil.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF 2007/08 ACHIEVEMENTS

Parks and Open Spaces

1. Secured continued grant funding from Durham County Council to assist in the maintenance of pathways.
2. Bronze certificate of Merit awarded to Spennymoor in the Large Town category by Northumbria in Bloom Judges
3. Ralph Curry presented the Bob Woolley Award for Outstanding Contribution by a Salaried Individual by the Northumbria in Bloom Judges.
4. Working in partnership with Sedgefield Borough Council Grounds maintenance Team to provide them with storage and welfare facilities for their grounds maintenance equipment and staff.
5. Completion of Brewery Field Lease.

Cemeteries & Crematoria

1. Continued provision of two recognised first class cemeteries and Memorial Gardens. Tudhoe Cemetery being Runner Up in the National Cemetery of the Year competition.
2. Approval of capital expenditure to create a road and exit out on to South View to address difficulties experienced by the funeral cortege when exiting Spennymoor Cemetery.
3. Two employees successfully completed the Federation of Burial and Crematorium Authority Certificate of Proficiency in the Practical & Ethical Operation of Crematorium Equipment.

Allotments

- 1 Provision of Best Kept Allotment Competition
- 2 Maintenance of Competitive rent to include water rates; skip hire for refuse removal and boundary fence, pathway maintenance.
- 3 Spennymoor Town Council was awarded "Runner Up" in the National Society of allotment and Leisure Gardeners Competition aimed at Local Authorities with a population of under 30,000.
- 4 Hosted "self management" workshop to promote interest in devolved Management of allotments cur

Financial Assistance

- 1 Grants to individuals and organisations for the benefit of the Community. (A full list of all s137 Grants paid by the Council for the benefit of the Community is available from the Town Council website)
- 2 Provision of grants for pre-school facilities.
- 3 Training of two members of Staff in Road Closure procedures to assist in Community parades and carnivals.

Town Hall and Community Properties

- 1 Increased use of the Town Hall facilities.
- 2 Continued Success of the Town Hall Catering Franchise as demonstrated by the high level of letters and cards of Compliment and Thanks regularly received.
- 3 Installation of new stage curtains, lighting system, public address system banquet style chairs and new carpet throughout.
4. Re-decoration of the Town Hall by in-house personnel at reduced cost to the taxpayer.
5. Continued support to Middlestone Moor, Byers Green, Tudhoe and Kirk Merrington Community Centres.
6. Recycling of former Town Hall Chairs to enhance the facilities in Jubilee Park Bowls Pavilion and Tudhoe Community Centre.

General

- 1 Provision of Annual Santa's Grotto receiving over 2000 children
- 2 Provision of Annual Firework Display
- 3 Improvements to Christmas Lighting, including more animated displays Children's Christmas light design competition and provision of fully illuminated Christmas Trees in Festival Walk, Byers Green, Kirk Merrington and Tudhoe Village.
- 4 Town council's Quarterly Newsletter.
- 5 Continuous improvements to the Council's website.

Corporate Governance

- 1 Embedding within the council organisation and culture of the Member/Officer Protocol
- 2 Increases publicity of the procedure allowing Public Questions.
- 3 Continued investment in Member and officer training
4. Less than inflationary only increase in the precept.
5. Achievement of Quality Status.
6. Unqualified Audit Opinion on our accounts.

THE TOWN COUNCILS MISSION IS TO:-

- Ensure that the Community of Spennymoor can democratically voice its opinion;
- Contribute towards the economy of the Community;
- Contribute towards the regeneration of the Community;
- Contribute towards the well being of the Community; and
- Provide quality services at an economic cost.

NOTE: All service users are actively encouraged to complete the Feedback Questionnaires provided – copied at Appendix I and every edition of the Town Council's Newsletter invites Feedback on Council Services.

PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION GROUNDS

The Town Council provides:-

Jubilee Park comprising 4.64 acres of recreation grounds, 2 bowling greens, 3 tennis courts, 2 all weather pitches, bowling pavilion, changing rooms, showers, public toilets, crazy golf, band stand, picnic areas, flower beds, swings, roundabouts, play areas, CCTV, mother and toddler facility and open spaces.

3 village greens at Byers Green, Kirk Merrington and Tudhoe Village; 8 football pitches; Spennymoor and Tudhoe Cemetery; Cow Plantation Nature Reserve; Bus Shelters; Public Seating; Litter, poop scoop bins and dog toilet; Northumbria in Bloom Competition; Playing of Cricket at Spennymoor and Tudhoe; Provision of an FA approved football field at Spennymoor Town United A.F.C.

OUR AIMS 2007/2008- Parks, Open Spaces & Recreation Grounds

To demonstrate continuous improvement in our service by building on this year's achieved targets and delivering on those targets that have not yet been achieved.

In addition the following three specific targets.

1. To look to improve our land usage for recreational purposes
2. To begin a three year rolling programme to replace and renew all play equipment as necessary
3. To attempt to secure Sports lottery grant funding to improve our changing facilities.

Where these achieved?

YES OUR aims were partly achieved; we worked in partnership with Sedgefield Borough Council to facilitate the creation of a MUGA (Multi-Use Games area) on Town Council owned land to the rear of Tudhoe Community Centre.

A three year rolling programme has begun with works to improve our Play Areas in Tudhoe Moor and Jubilee Park, in the first year. A capital budget is in place to support these schemes with successful grant funding from Durham County Urban Renaissance fund and potential LIP funding.

It is hoped that the Town Council's long term plans for the development of the aerodrome field will come to fruition with the assistance of the Football Foundation and Neighbourhood Enhancement Monies from the Borough Council.

ALLOTMENTS

The Town Council provides:-

- Number of Allotment Estates – 11;
- Administration support and help to Allotment Associations;
- Maintenance of perimeter fencing and roadways;
- Security;
- Water;
- Allotment Competition;
- Membership of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners;
- Provision of Community Garden site.

OUR AIMS 2007/08- Allotments

Our aims were to address the outstanding items that have not been addressed and to see the progression of Self Management on those sites that have expressed a firm interest.

Where these achieved?

YES These were partly achieved, some stewards refused to collect rents, resulting in greater central control and more gardeners signed up to the Council's existing tenancy agreement. Two sites have expressed a serious interest in Self management and the Council aims to appoint a temporary allotment officer to address the longstanding issues.

SECTION 137 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 ALLOCATION AND GRANTS OF THIS EXPENDITURE

The Town Council provides:-

- Grants to individuals and/or Organisations that are of benefit to the Community.

AIMS 2007/08-Section 137 Grant Allocation

To improve on previous year's performance and take-up.

Were these achieved?

NO grants were paid out to 27 local organisations as opposed to 40 in the previous financial year. The grant scheme will be publicised in our Town Council Newsletter during the 08/09 Financial Year.

TOWN HALL CATERING AND BAR

The Town Council provides a good quality building providing many multi uses, shops, offices and administrative services in a central position with a high quality catering and bar service at reasonable prices.

OUR AIMS 2007/08 Bar and Catering

- To continue to receive and promote positive customer feedback and to respond to changing customer needs and trends

Was this Achieved?

Yes we received consistently high feedback and the Town Hall Booking Diary is full for two years ahead for weekend dates. .

COMMUNITY HALLS

The Town Council provides Community Halls at Byers Green, Kirk Merrington, Middlestone Moor and Tudhoe.

OUR AIMS 2007/08...

- To provide the Community Building for community activities and events to take place in a given locality;
- To provide such buildings at low cost to the local residents.

Where these achieved?

YES, the Town Council continues to support Community Halls both financially and practically.

DEMOCRATIC AND CORE SERVICES

The Town Council provides:-

- A full administration service representing the needs of the people of Spennymoor, representing the community on a number of Public Bodies, consulting on behalf of the community i.e. planning matters, licensing matters and parks and open space matters;
- Ensures that the Councils democratic decision making process is fully supported by the Staff in full compliance with all legal requirements
- Representation to you as a member of the community, by ensuring that any matter that affects your life is considered to ensure that your needs and the needs of the community are best served.
- Information to let you know what the Council is doing when the meetings take place and what the decisions are.

OUR AIMS 2007/08- Democratic & Core Performance Indicators

To demonstrate continuous improvement and to facilitate a Junior Mayor Competition to complement our existing work on promoting Local democracy

Where These Achieved?

YES, demonstrated by our Quality Status accreditation. The junior Mayor competition did not proceed.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

As can be seen from the following financial summary of the Council's budget out-turn position at the end of the 2007/08 financial year, the Council made a net surplus of £292,676. Of this surplus, £290,500 related to income received from the Central Durham Crematorium. The Council has decided to ringfence (hold back) £250,000 to contribute towards the future replacement of the crematorium capital equipment.

Budget Comparison for the Year

The following table provides a comparison between the budget for the year and actual net expenditure incurred and income received, broken down into the major service areas provided by the Council.

Service	Budget	Actual £
Allotments	3,960	-14,571
Parks and Open Spaces	335,450	333,934
Cemeteries	44,160	44,745
Village Halls, Community Centres etc	9,610	6,812
Planning and Highways	27,150	34,109
Town Hall	125,740	161,582
General Administration	381,620	398,053
Civic Services	16,750	21,644
Capital Programme	121,310	125,935
Best Value	-25,190	-30,000
Other Expenditure	93,370	74,171
Other Income	-28,310	-343,470
	1,105,620	812,944
Precept on Borough Council	1,105,620	1,105,620
Surplus	0	292,676

Further information about the accounts is available from the Town Clerk, Town Hall, High Street, Spennymoor, Co. Durham DL16 6DG. This is part of the Council's policy of providing full information about its affairs. Interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed. The availability of the accounts for inspection is advertised in the local press.

SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL**List of Councillors****2007 – 2011**

NAME	ADDRESS	TEL NO.
ARMSTRONG, Miss Sarah L. <i>Deputy Town Mayor</i>	Stone House, 5 Green Lane, Spennymoor	814228
BAINBRIDGE, Mrs. Catherine	6 Eden Terrace, Kirk Merrington	814585
CULINE, John C.	Culine's Amusements, Cliff's Way, Tudhoe, Spennymoor	813856
GRAHAM, James V. <i>Leader of the Council</i>	7 St.David's Close, Spennymoor	817873
GRAHAM, Ms. Treena	47 York Villas, Spennymoor	420738
HARRINGTON, Ian <i>Town Mayor</i>	18 Winchester Court, Spennymoor	813537
HESLOP, Garry	5 Primrose Close, Middlestone Moor, Spennymoor.	420308
JONES, Martin T.B.	17 Dickens Street, Spennymoor	827229
MADDISON, Clive	49 Parkside, Spennymoor	816297
MADDISON, Mrs. Elizabeth	49 Parkside, Spennymoor	816297
MARR, John M. <i>Deputy Leader of the Council</i>	13 Gerard Street, Spennymoor	817304
PARKIN, John	38 South Court, Middlestone Moor, Spennymoor	815343
PLEWS, John E.	17 Ash Grove, Spennymoor	816113
RYDER, Frederick E.	6 Carr Street, Spennymoor	817498
SMITH, James W.	90 St. David's Close, Spennymoor	819907
SPROAT, Mrs. Christine	Field View, Vyners Close, Merrington Lane, Spennymoor	810386
THOMPSON, Kevin	109 Mayfields, Spennymoor	817797
TOLLEY, George	1 Parkdale, Spennymoor	819856
WALKER, Fred	177 Durham Road, Spennymoor	812708
WATERS, William	7 Vine Street, Byers Green, Spennymoor	602841
WOOD, Mrs. Elizabeth M.	36 Heath Road, Middlestone Moor, Spennymoor	815683
WOOD, Mrs. Joan L.	112 Wood Vue, Spennymoor	818151

**APPENDIX I
Spennymoor Town Council**

**Service and Amenities
Feedback Slip**

	Please Tick		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied
Activity					
All Weather Surface	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crazy Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Football	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reasons for lack of satisfaction:

Your suggestions as to other services we could provide for the future:

Optional
Name: Signature: Date:.....
(Block Capitals)

Address:
.....
.....

**Spennymoor Town Council
Best Value Policy**

To be assured that we are affording you the hirer, a quality service, please be as kind as to complete this questionnaire

Date of Function:	
Name of Hirer:	

Please Tick

	Good	Average	Poor
STAFF			
Assistance given to make your booking			
Set up of the room for your function			
Assistance if requested from staff during your function			

FACILITIES			
Room décor			
Furniture			
Toilets			
Overall cleanliness			

BAR			
Standard of Goods Purchased			
Service performance			
Degree of pleasantness			

CATERING			
Standard of Meal			
Table layout			
Speed of Service			

Any other Comments