

Town Council News

Stanley Town Council

Issue 7: Spring 2012



It's Up 2 U

Participatory budgeting is back and the funding pot has grown!

- £120,000 for community projects
- Town Council funds environmental clean ups
- National success for local athletes
- Training times for young athletes
- FREE dog-waste bags for residents
- Care and Repair service in Stanley
- Outdoors 'odd jobs' in Stanley
- Digital switchover (the end of analogue TV)
- Registered Traders Scheme (tackling bogus traders)
- Neighbourhood Watch
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Stanley Town Council's Priorities: Leisure, Culture and Heritage Participatory Budgeting 2012

Participatory Budgeting or PB as it is often known empowers local people to play a key role in deciding how public money is spent on projects and services in their neighbourhoods. In practice, this can range from funding community and voluntary groups to deliver projects of local value to allow residents to shape what and how mainstream services are delivered in their area. In essence PB is about empowering local residents in decisions about shaping their local area through allocating part of a public budget.

Stanley Town Council and the Stanley Area Action Partnership have decided to put £60,000 each into the funding pot for the 2012 version of It's Up 2 U making £120,000 available in total.

Projects eligible for support under the PB project will need to show that there is a clear link to one or

more of the combined priorities of Stanley Town Council and the AAP concerning: Regeneration of Town and Village Centres; Housing and the Environment; Shopping, Leisure and Heritage; Transport, Traffic and the Environment; Opportunities and Activities for Young People; Crime and Community Safety; Information and Communication, and; Employment, Training and Education.

The £120,000 of the joint fund will be used exclusively as a grant pot and the allocation of this resource will be in the hands of local residents. Decisions about the projects that will be funded will be taken at a special PB event using a voting mechanism. During this event members of the public will pick the projects they believe will best address the above priorities. Such projects or activities must have a minimum value of £2,000 and a maximum of £12,000.

By building on the AAP's highly acclaimed PB exercise in 2011, where 800 residents participated in the voting day, this year's exercise is being overseen by a joint Steering Group made of 50% Town Council and 50% AAP representatives, four of whom are pictured on the front cover at the recent press launch.

Beneficiaries of the scheme must reside in the coterminous Stanley Town Council and AAP area which covers: Annfield Plain, Catchgate, Causey, Craghead, Clough Dene, Coppy, East Kyo, East Stanley, Greencroft, Harelaw, Harperley, Kip Hill, The Middles, New Kyo, No Place / Co-operative Villas, Ox Hill, Quaking Houses, Shield Row, Sleepy Valley, South Moor, South Stanley, Stanley, Tanfield, Tanfield Lea, Tantobie, West Kyo and part of White-le-Head.

Chair of the Town Council (2011-12),

Councillor Tina-Marie Parry (pictured 2nd from the right on the front page), said "when we consulted the community in all seven of the Town Council's wards the public told us that we needed to address the issues of a lack of: community events; recreational activities for young people; activities for elderly people; funding support for community groups, projects and activities and; the need to capitalise on the area's heritage and re-build the sense of community spirit. By teaming up with the AAP to fund It's Up 2 U, we aim to do just that by supporting and promoting existing groups in the delivery of much needed community projects".

Chair of the Town Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee (2011-12), Councillor David Walker (pictured left on the front cover) added that "Participatory Budgeting is an ideal delivery vehicle in that

Success for local athletes

on the National Stage

As announced to the press by Derwentside Athletic Club, delighted coaches and officials were celebrating the success of their young athletes in a national cross country championship held over a weekend in January 2012. The team of three exceeded all expectations by taking a first, second and fourth place in the National Clubs for Young People (CYP) Cross Country Championships held at the Stubbers Adventure Centre in Essex.

The championship was run over a course of 3.8km which was twice as far as the local athletes had run in competition before. In the Under 13 Boys category Luke Taylor won with ease in a time of 15 minutes 18 seconds and helped Durham to finish first in the team competition in that age group.

In the under 11 girls category Suki Blythe finished second in a time of 21 minutes 33 seconds and Katrina Chatton 4th in 23 minutes 35 seconds. Both finished feeling very tired but felt great pride in that they did not stop or walk at all. They also helped Durham County win the first prize for their age group. Russell Morgan, the Town Clerk, commended all of the young athletes and the Athletics Club for "putting the area on the national map for positive reasons".

Derwentside Athletics Club was formed in 1981 after the closure of the Steelworks in Consett. The club was originally set up to cater for athletes of all abilities in the Stanley and surrounding area. It has grown ever since and now has members from the North East region.

Junior Training Times: 8 to 15 year olds meet at the Louisa Sports Centre Stanley on Monday and Thursday evenings at 5.30pm to 6.30pm. During the summer months sessions are held outdoors at the Stanley School of Technology sports field.

For more information contact Mark Davinson Publicity and Marketing Officer of Derwentside Athletic Club on 07787 535 770, e-mail markdavinson@teeslearn.ac.uk or visit www.derwentside-ac.co.uk

the process concludes with a large scale community event where the public get the chance to communicate with public bodies and service providers about what they think ought to be a spending priority within the heart of their local town or village. The community Voting Day took place at the Louisa Centre, Stanley on Saturday the 26th May 2012 and the exhibitors were there from 10am to 2pm. Anyone voting resided within the area covered by Stanley Town Council and Area Action Partnership and was required to register to vote at the Louisa

Centre between 9.45am and 1.30am on the day of the event. Staff were available to assist with registration and a voting slip was given to anyone who successfully registered. On the voting slip each person cast a vote for their five top projects in order of preference. There were 60 application forms given out by the deadline date and around 40 of those were successfully completed and exhibited on the day. Along with the voting slip, everyone that registered got a brochure which gave a brief outline of each project to assist with the choice".

2011 Miners' Gala

As part of its commitment to supporting local heritage activities and community events, Stanley Town Council was delighted to be able to make a financial contribution of £600 to the traffic management and associated technical costs needed to parade the magnificent Craghead Colliery Banner through the village and £200 towards the cost of Craghead Colliery Band's participation in the main (Durham) Gala alongside colleagues from elsewhere such as the Durham Police Band.



Stanley Town Council's Priorities: The Environment



Civic Pride: "Hi, I'm James Harper the Civic Pride Officer funded by Stanley Town Council to deliver 'Pride in Stanley' across the Town Council's area".

Pride in Stanley is a long term initiative to promote Cleaner, Greener, Safer neighbourhoods for all. The aim is to encourage local

people to get involved in helping to address some of the Environmental and Community Safety issues that affect their local neighbourhoods.

'So what has Civic Pride been doing in Stanley?' Here is a quick taster of some of the recent campaigns and projects that contribute to this long term aim: Golden Ticket Campaign (Bin it to win it); Working with schools; Dog Foul initiatives; Spring into Action; Eco-Schools; Tidy Business scheme; Open Your Eyes (educational package); Stanley in Bloom; Fix You; The 'Stanley Heart – Loving where you live' project, and; Community Litter Picks (see opposite).

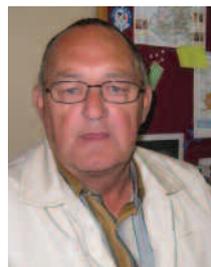
Keep an eye out in the coming months for 'Weeks in Action' in several local areas involving key Partners coming together, such as the Police, Schools, Youth Groups, Neighbourhood Wardens, Clean and Green Teams and various Local Businesses etc.

Whilst the combination of activities changes to meet local circumstances, typically this may include: Skip days; Environmental Education in Schools; Dog Micro-chipping; Partnership and Community Walkabouts; Increased Environmental Enforcement; Community Speed Watch; Green Dog-walkers; Neighbourhood clean-ups; Possible Amnesty days; Tidy Business awards and so on.

Free dog-waste bags for residents of the Stanley town council area

As part of the commitment to maintaining and improving the local environment, Stanley Town Council is supporting responsible dog owners by making dog-waste bags available from the following outlets: Craghead Village Hall; St. Stephen's Centre (Sth Stanley); Quaking Houses Village Hall; Catchgate Library; Joan's Florist (Catchgate); The Angling Shop (Annfield Plain); Stanley Community Centre (Tyne Road); Tantobie Community Centre; Tanfield Lea Community Centre; Shield Row Community Centre, and; Pet Parlour and Pet Shop (South Moor).

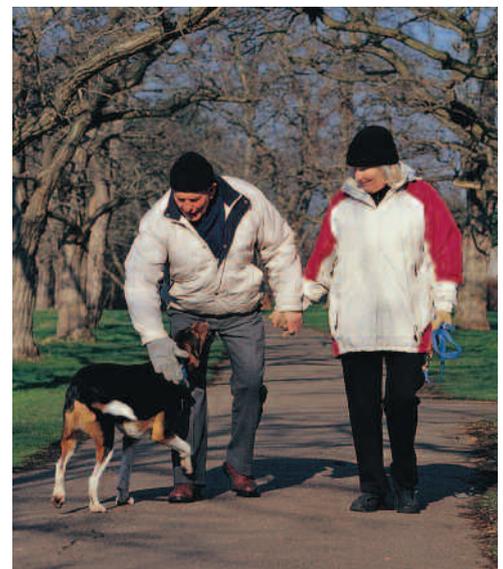
As a member of the Crime and



Community Safety Committee, Councillor Jim Lockie said "from the outset the Town Council

said it will take enforcement action against the small minority who won't play by the rules. This often takes the form of Town Council funded Neighbourhood Wardens issuing 'Fixed Penalty Notices' for dog-fouling. However, as well the 'stick', the Town Council believes in using the 'carrot approach' so to speak. In other words, by providing free dog-waste bags throughout the area at no cost to local residents, the need for

enforcement action is reduced but there is still less dog-waste around which poses a lower risk to health, particularly to children, and makes the general environment more pleasant".



Clean up at Tanfield Lea Community Centre and Leigh Gardens

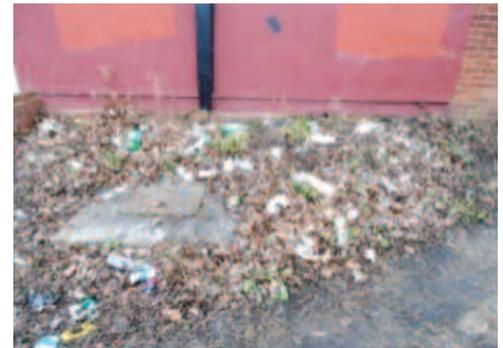
To 'join up' with civic pride Stanley Town Council also funds extra Neighbourhood Wardens to more than double the level of service in the Town Council area compared to similar sized places elsewhere in the county.

As Neighbourhood Warden for the patch, on her patrols around the village Andrea Hodgson received regular complaints about the amount of litter generated by youths congregating behind the community centre in Tanfield Lea.

In response, along with fellow Wardens, Chris Brown, Stuart Champion and Martin Fawcett, Andrea: arranged and participated in a litter pick of the whole area; ensured the removal of offensive graffiti from garage doors; contacted partners at Derwentside Homes who kindly agreed to erect

a fence to stop cars speeding through the open space and using it as a cut through, causing several near misses with pedestrians; issued relevant letters to nearby residents; held regular question and answer sessions in the community centre for concerned residents, and; increased local patrols leading to positive feedback from the public.

Councillor Christine Bell said that "as can be seen by the before and after photographs the Neighbourhood Wardens' positive response to local peoples' genuine concerns are to be commended and demonstrate why the Town Council provides the funds needed to more than double the number of Wardens covering our area. I was delighted to be able to recently award the Tanfield



Before ↗ After ↘



Junior Neighbourhood Watch scheme some funding to purchase litter-pickers so that all generations can play their part in keeping our communities clean and green".

Stanley Town Council's Priorities: Services and, Information and Communication

Care and repair: Handypersons offer help to residents

Sometimes there are jobs around the house that need doing that some people might need a little help with. So it's good to know the 'handyperson' service can do just that. Vulnerable homeowners and tenants who are older, disabled or on a low income can all get help to repair, improve, maintain or adapt their homes.

The type of jobs the 'handypersons' can help with

regularly include changing light bulbs, re-hanging curtains, re-fixing carpets, dealing with dripping taps and putting up shelves. The rule of thumb for tenants when requesting handyperson services is that if the job is your responsibility, and not the responsibility of your landlord, then the handyperson is likely to be able to do it for you.

Where do handyperson services come

from? Handyperson services are usually provided by local "Home Improvement Agencies" (HIAs). There are around 230 HIAs in England, and over 90% of the population has access to a local service. They are sometimes known as 'Care and Repair' or 'Staying Put' schemes and generally help with larger scale works through contractors while the associated handypersons deal with smaller scale jobs directly.

Care and repair: Handypersons offer help to residents continued...

The agencies are contracted by different individual local authorities, so the way services are provided, the menu of options offered, eligibility criteria and charging arrangements can vary. In the past, home improvement agencies were of little interest to tenants, as landlords are responsible for looking after peoples' homes and their main role was to support owner-occupiers. More recently, tenants have been able to benefit from the newly introduced handyperson services.

Three Rivers Housing Association's (part of Four Housing Group) holds contracts to provide both home improvement agency and handyperson services to residents in four local authority areas of the North East including the northern area of County Durham comprising the former District Council areas of Derwentside, Chester-le-Street, Easington, and; (City of) Durham. In other words, all of the Stanley Town

Council area.

Who can use handyperson services? Owner-occupiers and tenants who are 60 or over, disabled or who for other reasons are unable to do jobs for themselves, can all use handyperson services.

Although the services are funded by the local authorities, sometimes you may need to pay a contribution towards the work. Across County Durham, the charge is £10 per visit but waived if the householder is in receipt of a means tested benefit or the visit takes less than 30 minutes.

Very often, customers are genuinely surprised and delighted that they are able to get help with jobs that they may otherwise have struggled with. The friendly 'man with a van' is often a very welcome visitor!

If you would like a handyperson to call, or have questions about a particular job, please contact the

handyperson service on 0191 375 3705.

Councillor Peter McLaughlin who as well as being Vice-chair of the Town Council (2011-12) is also a member of the



Communications Committee said "when the Council was formed a few years ago the public told us there was a need for better information about services that might be of benefit to the community. The Town Council often provides information about services such as care and repair to individual residents who contact our Elected Members or small team of employees, but, as part of our public information obligation, we are delighted to bring Care and Repair to the attention of all of our residents".

Police non-emergency telephone number



In December 2011 an easy to remember non-emergency police number was launched in our region.

The public are now able to call **101** for non-emergency issues such as minor traffic collisions, criminal damage or to speak to a local neighbourhood officer about an issue affecting their community.

The new number is being introduced

in the Cleveland, Cumbria, Durham, Northumbria and North Yorkshire force areas as part of a national roll-out designed to make it easier for people to contact police.

The new number will replace current non-emergency numbers but calls will still be answered in the same police communications centres by the same police personnel.

When calling **101**, the system will determine the caller's location and play a recorded message announcing the police force they're being connected to. If they are on a boundary between two or more forces, the recorded message will

give them a choice of which force to be connected to.

Calls to **101** will cost 15p per call, no matter what time of day it is, or how long the call lasts. This means everyone calling the police will know exactly how much a call will cost them, whether they're calling from a landline or a mobile phone. Calls are free from public phone boxes.

People should continue to call 999 in an emergency - when a crime is in progress, there is danger to life or violence is being used or threatened.

Local councils should still be contacted on their existing phone numbers for issues such as dog fouling or litter.

Environmental caretaking

As seen opposite, other partners provide some excellent services in and immediately surrounding residential premises. However, what about outside peoples' homes or gardens?

To complement existing services, and; to some extent to off-set the likely adverse impact of future austerity measures, the Town Council is extending the scope of its Community Environmental Caretaking service which it currently operates solely in the Town Council area in partnership with the County Council, by piloting two further partnership arrangements.

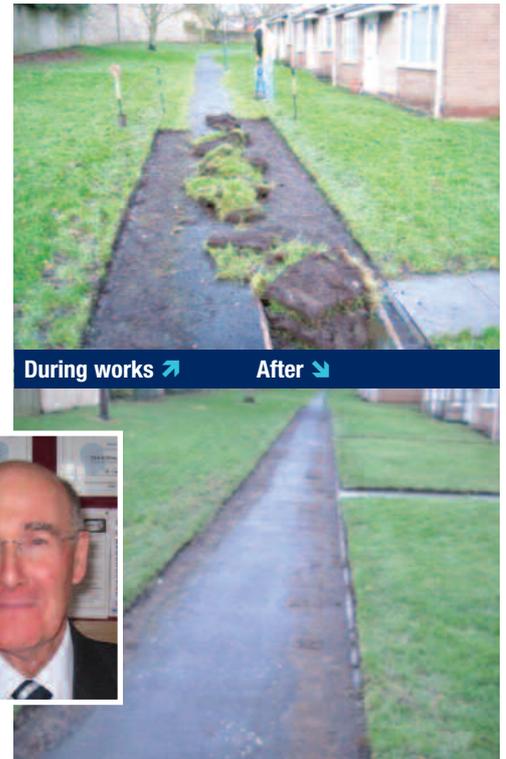
One with the County Council will see ten local young people gain environmental, caretaking / cleaning apprenticeships involving classroom-based qualifications to help gain employment, and; practical work on the ground 'out and about' across the local area. Watch out for the launch of the related Urban Blitz programme in the local media.

The second scheme is already fully operational and involves a

partnership agreement with Groundwork North East regarding the provision of two full-time Environmental Wardens who attend to all manner of outdoors repairs and maintenance on a responsive basis.

As Chair of the Planning Committee (2011-12) and a member of the Town Council team that oversees the Environmental Wardens on a weekly basis, Councillor Tom Pattinson (pictured) said, "with spring in the air it's an ideal time for all of the above workers to get stuck in to the numerous jobs that the public want to see get done but are not necessarily the official responsibility of mainstream public service providers. That's where the Town Council can 'add value' as they call it these days. In other words, the jobs that seem to slip through the net to peoples' annoyance can and will get done provided the public let us know about them.

Anyone with such an outdoors job in mind is therefore welcome to contact their local ward councillors



via the contact details on the back page. The councillor concerned will then submit a brief job summary sheet to assess the cost and feasibility which sounds time-consuming, but, in many cases, the actual works are 'done and dusted' within a few days".

Watch out for an in-depth article on the environmental and apprenticeship schemes in the next edition.

Digital switchover



In County Durham BBC2 analogue will be switched off on the 12th September 2012 followed by all other analogue on the 26th. For more information contact:

- Tel 0844 88 15072
- Email tynetees@digitaluk.co.uk
- Write to: Digital UK, c/o ITV plc, The Watermark, Gateshead, NE11 9SZ



Neighbourhood Watch

Needs You!

County Durham and Darlington Neighbourhood Challenge:

The County Durham and Darlington Neighbourhood Challenge is to recruit 1000 new homes to the Neighbourhood Watch network. For more information please contact Vikki Ord, Community Liaison Officer, Safer Neighbourhoods Unit, Consett Police Office, Parliament Street, Consett, DH8 5DL. Telephone 0191 375 2455 or email victoria.ord@durham.pnn.police.uk



Registered Trader Scheme

Operated by Durham County Council

Want to Help Stamp out Bogus Workmen and Cold Callers? – Use the Registered Trader Scheme which is operated by Durham County Council.

The Registered Trader Scheme was set up in an attempt to reduce incidents of bogus traders which often target vulnerable members of our communities.

The County Council's Trading Standards Service has over 100 local businesses, including plumbers, decorators, gardeners and personal care services, signing up. The Registered Trader Scheme is an excellent way to help protect people from unscrupulous traders, and will promote confidence when choosing a trader to employ.

We often hear about so called trade's people who have no real trade skills and charge exorbitant prices for sub-standard work. Often cold calling on consumers, they will also insist on cash upfront and leave no details such as receipt or invoice. If things go wrong there is no form of redress as the 'trader' can rarely be traced.

Claire Brown from Durham County Council Trading Standards Service said: "Many people don't know where to start looking for a reputable trader and are frightened that they are going to be over-charged or receive a shoddy service. All our traders have been vetted and follow a strict code of practice."



As Chair of the Town Council's Crime and Community Safety Committee and also an elected member of the County Council, Councillor Michele Hodgson echoed Claire's comments and was keen that Stanley Town Council publicised the Registered Trader

Scheme which is contactable by telephoning 03000 261 016, email rts@durham.gov.uk or visit www.durham.gov.uk/registeredtraders



How are you celebrating this Diamond Jubilee year?

With HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games drawing ever closer, how is your local community planning to celebrate this momentous year?

The Town Council was recently contacted by "Fields in Trust" (FiT) which is a national charity working to protect and improve outdoor space for sport, play and recreation.

FiT have asked us to draw peoples' attention to its 2012 programme The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge – which they describe as "a fantastic low-cost way to commemorate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and in doing so create a tangible legacy for this and future generations".

The QEII Fields Challenge was the first Diamond Jubilee programme to receive official endorsement from Her Majesty and under the patronage of The Duke of Cambridge (HRH Prince William), it is creating a nationwide network of protected recreation spaces which, at The Queen's request, will be dedicated as Queen Elizabeth II Fields and marked as such with a specially designed commemorative plaque to be provided by FiT.

FiT's Chief Executive, Alison Moore-Glyn, said "The Challenge, which is capturing the imagination and interest of communities across the country, is a fantastic, cost-effective way of celebrating 2012 and creating a local legacy with numerous additional benefits including community celebrations and access to improvement funding up to £25,000 to improve local facilities".

For more information visit: www.qe2fields.com/funding

Local bus services.....



Councillor Joyce Charlton and several of her fellow elected members are aware of public concern about the seeming decline of local bus services. Cllr Charlton said, "we appreciate that ever since the deregulation of bus services over 20 years

ago, the increasing reality has been that services are provided by bus 'companies' rather than public authorities. In the circumstances, a company must first and foremost look at the financial viability of any given bus route rather than, for example, its usefulness or convenience to the local community.

Also, in this business like environment, the bus company concerned must be able to run the route at a sustainable profit. Many people have recently expressed their concern to local Councillors that the reduction or cessation of public subsidies to bus companies, arising from national or local austerity measures, mean that the picture is likely to get worse before it gets any better. The Town Council is keen to engage local bus companies in dialogue about the future of local services, or perhaps to consider innovative alternative measures.

However, to have such discussions with what are in effect private businesses, we need to be armed with useful information which may help persuade the key decision makers that a particular service is indeed commercially viable. To do this we need your help to complete the survey form which is included in this newsletter.

Have your say on community transport



Please take 5 minutes to fill in our Community Transport Survey below,

and return it to Stanley Town Council, 57-61 Lenin Terrace, South Stanley, County Durham, DH9 6LW.

Alternatively you could complete our online Survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/X6H6Z6R

1. Please state which village/estate you live in.

2. Please state how many people in your household fall under the following age ranges?

0 – 10 years 11 – 18 years

19 – 59 years 60 or over

3. Does anyone in your household need public transport for work or school?

Yes

No

4. How often, on average, would public transport be used by anyone in your household? And which service is used most regularly?

Daily

Evening

Weekly

Weekend

Service

Continued on following page...



5. Does anyone in your household have a disability?

Yes No

Prefer not to say

6. What route would be beneficial to your household for regular use (i.e. daily)

Direct to Stanley To Durham

To Metro Centre / Newcastle

Other (please specify)

7. If a fee has to be charged, what would you see as fair that you would be prepared to pay? (e.g. to Stanley)

50p £1.00

£2.00

Other (please specify)

8. What impact has the reduced service, currently in place, had on your household?

None Some A lot

Comments

.....

.....

.....

9. Is your household impacted by times of no service?

Yes No

If yes, what times/days?

.....

10. If a weekend and bank holiday service would be reinstated, would you see your household using it?

Yes No

New appointments

Stanley Town Council held its Annual General Meeting on 8th May 2012 and made the following appointments for 2012-13.

Chair – Councillor Peter McLaughlin

Vice Chair – Councillor Christine Weightman

Chair of the Communications and Events

Committee - Councillor Mark Boyd

Vice Chair - Councillor Christine Bell

Chair of the Crime and Community Safety

Committee - Councillor Michele Hodgson

Vice Chair - Councillor Tina Parry

Chair of the Finance and General Purposes

Committee - Councillor Tina Parry

Vice Chair - Councillor Gareth Andrews.

Chair of the Planning Committee - Councillor

Ron Harrison

Vice Chair - Councillor Peter McLaughlin



**Councillor
Peter McLaughlin**



**Councillor
Christine Weightman**



Councillor Mark Boyd



Councillor Christine Bell



**Councillor
Michele Hodgson**



Councillor Tina Parry



**Councillor
Gareth Andrews**



**Councillor
Ron Harrison**



Stanley Town Council's Priorities: Employment and, Training and Education

Meet Stanley Town Council's Newest Staff and Volunteers



Nicola James:

Hi, my name is Nicola James and I joined Stanley Town Council as Clerical Assistant on 21 February, 2012.

I look forward to getting involved with all aspects of the Council and providing assistance wherever possible.

My background is primarily within Durham County Council where I have undertaken various temporary roles including Administration, Reception and Call Centre. However, I have previously worked in the

car industry, providing Sales Administration support, and also for Her Majesty's Prison Service at Durham Prison as an Administration Assistant and Officer. I believe my experience is ideal.

If you have any queries, please email them to info@stanley-tc.gov.uk and I will try to help where I can.



Cameron McGhee:

My name is Cameron McGhee and I joined Stanley Town Council as Executive Assistant (Finance and Administration) on 27 February, 2012. I will be undertaking work on behalf of both the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk, being involved in financial management and in providing executive level support to the running of the Council.

My background is within Financial Audit, and I have worked with national audit institutions within the public sector. I gained the CIPFA qualification in 2010. I

have experience of financial and risk management, administration and providing training. I gained a 2.1 honours degree in Software Engineering and AI from Edinburgh University in 2003.

I look forward to being involved in many varied projects within the council and working to provide an effective service for members, to benefit the local area.



Clair McMahon:

Volunteer Administrative Assistant, January to March 2012. The Town Council would also like to record its thanks to Clair who helped out for up to three days per week during the winter months on an entirely voluntary basis.

Russell Morgan, the Town Clerk, said "although Clair's placement ended recently, we benefitted from her commitment and positive attitude, not to mention the workload she undertook on our behalf, whilst on the other hand Clair, who lives nearby in South Stanley, gained experience of local government administration which we hope will serve her well in the search for longer term and paid employment at the end of her studies".