

Chris McEwan – Councillor for Haughton East

Philosophy

I take the view that I'm a councillor 24/7 and 7 – 11pm. I make myself available to residents during this period and usually receive contact via a home visit.

I also visit people at their own homes usually about twice per week. This is usually elderly people who have difficulty using email.

I also use email and electronic media for contacting residents, although despite encouragement including rewards I've had limited success in developing an email database for the distribution of information and newsletters.

About 50%- 60% , although they have access to the telephone, will contact me face to face, this is a trust issue they want to see the person who they are giving their problem to, and feel that they trust you.

Role

I see my role as promoting, supporting and encouraging local groups, church organisations, residents associations and individuals to get involved in their community.

The Haughton Residents Association has recently been successful in creating a Community Garden this has been very successful in galvanising individuals around a project which has a real community benefit.

The residents association is now working on a new project to create a Community Website to provide up to date local information about groups, businesses, offers, public services etc run by the local community. I am working with the Chair of the residents association and officers from the Council's web team to support the local community in taking this project forward.

School Liaison

A key part of the Councillor's role is to work with the local school. In Haughton we created the Education Village which brought together three schools in the area with a PFI. It plays a significant part in the local community. I have a role a local Councillor in attending meetings and talking to people involved, local residents, parents etc in relation to the school and any issues for the local community.

Haughton Networking

Another important part of my role is helping people and businesses in the local community to network with each other. Putting different people in touch with each other to start a dialogue about what's working well and what needs improvement.

We haven't got all the answers but we have to have engagement before we can get things moving. This is particularly important now in the context of the austerity measures.

Walking Surgeries

In partnerships with other organisations eg Police and Citizens Advice Bureau I have held a series of walking surgeries.

We distribute signs the week before and if they would like us to call in and speak to them they can put the signs up in the Window and we will call in as we walk around the ward. The presence on the street can also attract interest. This recognises that in some cases people want to speak to their local councillor but don't always know how to approach them.

Newsletters

Another key part of the role is the production of the Newsletter. This is a useful communication vehicle which makes it easy to spread information in the local community. We have used our newsletter to provide information about more than just Council news and business, for example we used it to promote the Historical Society when they wanted to promote their heritage agenda.

COUNCILLOR DORIS JONES - MIDDLETON ST GEORGE WARD

Middleton St George has grown dramatically over the past 10 years, to the extent that the ward councillors represent almost 20% more residents than the ward average across the borough. This has created problems for me not only as a ward councillor but also as chairwoman of the parish council in terms of the responsibilities we carry with regard to land ownership and the facilities we need to provide. I firmly believe that by wearing both borough and parish hats I have a much clearer picture of the village requirements and am able to raise the parish profile with the main authority which also makes for clearer lines of communication. This makes for busy but interesting days because every day is different and the experience gained over 30 years as a ward councillor and 17 years as a parish councillor is immeasurable.

I would like to briefly touch on the work of the parish council which has ten members who are all democratically elected in the same manner as borough councillors. We meet monthly to a set agenda with a clerk who is also the Responsible Financial Officer and who is responsible for advising members and for dealing with correspondence, minutes etc. I have regular meetings with the clerk to oversee issues and we are currently looking at our budget setting for 2013/2014 which will be discussed at the December meeting. The withdrawal of the parish grant from the borough council will influence our precept and is likely to result in a large increase. Many people do not realise that the parish owns a water park with three reservoirs, the village playground and the banks at Middleton One Row. Over the years I have personally project managed development of the water park to provide facilities such as a MUGA, a nature trail, an upgrade of the parish meeting room, the conversion of a disused basement in the community centre into a youth club and a rubbing trail designed in partnership with pupils from the village school. I arranged to lease the fishing rights of the reservoirs to an angling club and the income pays for the Christmas tree and lights for the village. As a parish we have financed lighting and CCTV to provide a safe and secure environment in the water park for residents.

Now that Christmas is approaching I have been spending time arranging for the Christmas tree to be purchased, delivered, erected and decorated in time for the annual lighting ceremony in December. I have also arranged the brass band for the carols, the Punch and Judy show and Santa's sleigh. We re-introduced a Christmas tree into the village four years ago and it has proved to be tremendously popular and the crowd grows every year. The tree lighting event will be advertised on the front of *The Middleton Messenger*, a 12 page quarterly newsletter which I edit as a member of the community partnership. I receive a great deal of help with contributions from many organisations in the village because the *Messenger* is delivered to every home. We finance the printing by advertising local businesses.

The Messenger includes articles from virtually every organisation in the village including the History Group, Women's Institute, Police, youth activities such as football, neighbourhood watch, community association etc.

Most of the above activities came about as the result of a traumatic incident in 2003 when the village school was totally destroyed by an arson attack carried out by two village youths. My ward colleague Steve York and I were aware of anti-social behaviour in the village but never dreamt it would reach such massive proportions. That was when we decided it was time to roll our sleeves up and get things moving.

The increase in the village population had begun with the sale of brownfield sites to housing developers and we soon learned we were unable to prevent more homes being built. So we adopted a more pragmatic attitude and insisted on strict S. 106 agreements to provide finance for additional facilities. As ward and parish councillors we were able to go out to tender and project manage the work.

I am currently working with The Friends of the Conservation Area to reinvigorate the river banks at Middleton One Row. We are seeking grants to carry out work to re-instate this beauty spot to its former glory.

I've not yet mentioned the day to day queries Steve and I deal with about planning applications, dog dirt, public footpaths and all the usual issues that most councillors attend to.

I also attend the monthly PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meetings that I set up with the police to give residents direct contact with police officers. The MSG meeting is one of the best attended in the borough.

Steve and I both have excellent relationships with the village businesses. Affinity Health Care revamped our community centre with a new fitted kitchen, new ceiling and decoration. Middleton Hall Retirement Village often help with donations and we managed to collect over three thousand pounds from the various businesses for the celebration day for the Queens Diamond Jubilee. This took us three months of meetings and planning but the village had a very memorable day, particularly the children.

**COUNCILLOR ALAN MACNAB, NORTH ROAD WARD, DARLINGTON.
DIARY OF CASES AND MEETINGS ATTENDED 2ND SEPTEMBER TO 17TH NOVEMBER, 2012.**

1. CASES TAKEN UP IN THE PERIOD 2ND SEPTEMBER TO SATURDAY 17TH NOVEMBER, 2012.

Sunday 2nd September Monday 3rd to Sunday 9th September.

53 e mails written on:

Email response to a resident with a query about wheelie bins. Acceptance of an invitation to a meeting of the Health and Partnerships Committee.

Entry to the Civic Amenity Site by a resident in his van.

Requests for dates of next Partnership meetings.

Council Tax banding query.

Reporting moss on pavements.

Request for a review of the decision on the Council Tax banding of a property in the Ward.

Closure of the railway bridge and request for a bus service for residents in part of the ward.

Request for financial information.

PACT Meeting.

Pedestrian crossing on Pendleton Road in the ward.

Members training and development.

Arranging for the Mayor to visit a primary school in the ward.

Information to the press on unemployment in the ward.

Acceptance of a meeting at Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau.

Comments on the Economic Strategy.

Closure of the railway bridge.

The Mayor's visit to the primary school in the ward.

Civic Amenities Site opening hours.

3 invitations to meetings were accepted.

Monday 10th to Sunday 16th September.

31 e mails written on:

Graffiti on street boxes in the ward.

Economic Strategy for the ward.

Request for new bus shelters in two locations in the ward.

Declaration of interest in a planning application.

Ragwort.

Closure of the railway bridge in the ward.

Payment for decorating a council property.

The introduction of low floor buses on a service which is used by residents.

Giving the press release on the low floor buses.

E mails on the introduction of the low floor buses.

4 invitations to a meeting were accepted.

Monday 17th to Friday 21st September.

29 e mails written on:

Comments on bus services in the ward.

Closure of the railway bridge.

Civic Amenities Site.

Dumped refuse in back alley in the ward.

Citizenship Ceremony.

Comments on a Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee submission.

Letter to residents about the closure of the railway bridge and the temporary bus service.

Private cars for sale on North Road.
Closure of the railway bridge.
Wheelie bins.
Letter to residents about the closure of the railway bridge and the temporary bus service.

2 invitations to meetings were accepted.

Monday 24th to Sunday 30th September.

17 e mails written on:

Pedestrian crossing on Pendleton Road in the ward.
Street lighting in a street in the ward.
Estate inspection in the ward.
Waiting restrictions on North Road in the ward.
Removal of graffiti from street boxes.
Revised funding formulae for schools.
Closure of the railway bridge and temporary bus services.
Members training and development.
Special meeting of the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Monday 1st October to Sunday 7th October.

44 e mails written on:

Pedestrian crossing on Pendleton Road in the ward.
Wheelie bins.
Accepting an invitation to a residents association meeting in the ward.
Street light not working in a street in the ward.
Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau business planning.
Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group.
Complaint about shrubs and road sweeping in a road in the ward.
Bus services in the ward.
Complaint about a telephone cable and a tree in the garden in two council properties.
Closure of the railway bridge and bus services.
Information on recycling.
Derelict property in the ward.
Stone throwing incident and harassment of a resident.
Bus service changes.
Special meeting of the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.
Response to a Freedom of Information Act request from a resident in the ward.
Litter and dumping in the ward.
Obstructed rear entrance to a property in the ward.
Members survey.

4 invitations to meetings accepted.

Monday 8th to Sunday 14th October.

57 e mails written on:

Railway Heritage Group.
Council Tax banding of a property in the ward.
Special Board meeting and AGM of Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau.
Litter and dumping in the ward.
Derelict property in the ward.
Ward surgeries.
Possible joining together of two council flats.

Anti social behaviour.
Pendleton Road pedestrian crossing in the ward.
Private car for sale on North Road in the ward.
Next Citizenship Ceremony.
Abandoned car.
Use of first class post and duplicate letters by the Council.
Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Social Policy issues.
North Road/Albert Road new road junction in the ward.
Obstructed rear entrance to a property in the ward.
Anti social behaviour in a street in the ward.
Ragwort.
Response to a Freedom of Information Act request by a resident in the ward.
Cars for sale on North Road in the ward.
End of loan sharking.
Graffiti in the ward.

2 invitations to meetings accepted.

Monday 15th October to Sunday 21st October.

45 e mails written on:

Private cars for sale on North Road in the ward.
North Road/Albert Road new road junction in the ward.
Litter hot spots.
Neighbourhood planning.
Abandoned car.
Darlington Partnership Community Workshop.
Effects on business of the closure of the railway bridge.
Residents association meeting.
New barriers at the entrance to Pendleton Road in the ward.
Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Social Policy issues.
Obstructed rear entrance to a property in the ward.
LA Governor appointment.
Speeding in Pendleton Road in the ward.
Local Government Boundary Review.
Bulb planting.
Serious incident in the ward.

1 invitation to a meeting accepted.

Monday 22nd October to Sunday 28th October.

50 emails written on:

Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Social Policy issues.
Effects on business of the closure of the railway bridge.
LA Governor appointment.
Car for sale on North Road in the ward.
Hedge to the rear of a property in the ward.
Ragwort.
Serious incident in the ward.
New building development.
Bus shelter outside a supermarket in the ward.
Amalgamation of two golf clubs.
Halloween party in the ward.
Employment Support Allowance appeal by a resident in the ward.
Streetscene issues.

Worklessness in the ward report.

1 invitation to a meeting accepted.

Monday 29th October to Sunday 4th November.

39 e mails written on:

Worklessness in the ward report.

Development of the health centre in the ward.

Disability Living Allowance.

Car parking over drop kerbs in the ward.

Letter to residents in a street and adjoining street about progress with developing a derelict property and new building development.

Letter to a resident about inconvenient parking obstructing the rear entrance to their property.

Cars for sale on North Road in the ward.

Ragwort

Hedge to the rear of a property in the ward.

Sale of poppies on High Row in Darlington.

LA Governor appointment

Finance Committee meeting of Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau.

Effects on business of the closure of a railway bridge.

Ward wheelie bins survey schedule of streets to be visited.

Monday 5th to Sunday 11th November.

23 e mails written on:

Primary School in the ward singing competition.

Dumped mattress in a back lane in the ward.

Amalgamation of two golf clubs.

Car parking over dropped kerbs.

Wheelie bins survey results from an area of the ward surveyed.

Report of a street light in another ward not working.

Best of Darlington Awards.

Bus stop outside a supermarket in the ward.

Problems with the new road in the ward.

Parking restrictions on North Road in the ward.

Monday 12th to Sunday 18th November.

20 e mails written on:

Local Government Boundary Review.

Problems with the new road in the ward.

Ward wheelie bins survey.

Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Business Planning.

Worklessness in the Ward Report.

Estate inspection in the ward.

Survey leaflets for meadow land in the ward.

Crisis loan vouchers.

2. MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Note: I visit North Road ward every other day, but set aside Saturday morning for a visit.

September 2012.	
Sunday 2 nd September	Afternoon. Ward casework and writing the Ward Worklessness Report.
Monday 3 rd September	Morning and afternoon . Ward casework and visiting areas in the ward
Tuesday 4 th September	9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Whole school training at Harrowgate Hill Primary School in the ward. 5 p.m. North Riverside Residents Association in the ward.
Wednesday 5 th September	Morning and afternoon. Ward casework. 6.p.m Group Meeting
Thursday 6 th September	9.30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Place Scrutiny Committee Afternoon. Ward casework.
Friday 7 th September	9.30 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. North Road Ward Job Club Evening. Ward casework
Saturday 8 ^h September	10 a.m to 11.30 p.m. Visiting ward. Afternoon. Ward case work. Reading papers for the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Sunday 9 th September	Evening. Ward casework and commenting on the Council's draft Economic Strategy.
Monday 10 th September	10 a.m. Ward casework. Attending the Bus User's Event. Afternoon. Reading and preparing for the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.
Tuesday 11 th September	9.30 a.m. to 11.45 a.m. Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. Afternoon. Ward casework. 6 p.m. Ward PACT meeting
Wednesday 12 th September.	10 a.m. Attending the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment meeting. 12 Noon Attending Darlington Partnership meeting. Evening . Ward case work.
Thursday 13 th September	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Estate inspection in the ward. Afternoon . Visiting resident at her home. Evening. Ward casework.
Friday 14 th September	9.30 am to 11.30 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club Evening. Ward casework.
Saturday 15 th September	10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Visiting the ward. Afternoon. Ward casework.
Monday 17 th September	9.30 a.m. Meeting the Chief Executive of Darlington Borough Council. 10 a.m. Gypsies and travellers sites meeting. Afternoon and evening. Ward Case work. Reading papers for Planning Applications Committee.
Tuesday 18 th September.	Morning. Reading papers for Planning Applications Committee and preparing for a meeting of the Citizens Advice Bureau and ward case work. 5.30 p.m. Attending the First Stop AGM. 7.30 p.m. Party Members Meeting.
Wednesday 19 th September	10 a.m. Meeting at Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau. 1.30 p.m. Planning Applications Committee. 3.35 p.m. Ward Surgery. Evening. Ward casework.
Thursday 20 th September	10a.m. Attended Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Darzai Task and Finish Group. 12 p.m. Meeting with North Road Ward Councillors 2 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. Distributing letters to residents about the closure of the railway bridge.

Thursday 20 th September	5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Meeting about the temporary bus service following the closure of the railway bridge.
Friday 21 st September	9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club 1.30 p.m. Railway Summit 5.15 p.m. Council Group meeting
Saturday 22 nd September	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Distributing letters to residents in part of the ward about temporary bus services as a result of the railway bridge closure. Reporting on cars for sale in the ward which have been observed. Afternoon. Reading papers for Council meeting.
Sunday 23 rd September	3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Distributing letters to residents in part of the ward about temporary bus services as a result of the railway bridge closure. Evening ward case work and reading papers for the Council meeting.
Monday 24 th September	11.30 p.m. One Darlington Perfectly Placed. Afternoon Ward casework.
Tuesday 25 th September	9 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Police and Crime Commissioners briefing. 5 p.m. Attended the meeting about the closure of the railway bridge. Evening. Reading papers for Council meeting.
Wednesday 26 th September	Morning and afternoon. Reading papers for Council meeting and preparing questions for Council meeting.
Thursday 27 th September	Morning . Ward casework. .5 p.m. Policy Briefing. 6 p.m. Council meeting.
Friday 28 th September	9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club. Afternoon. Ward casework.
Saturday 29 th September	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. visiting the ward. Afternoon. Ward casework.

October 2012	
Monday 1 st October	10.30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Securing Best Value for NHS Patients meeting. Evening. Ward casework.
Tuesday 2 nd October	10 a.m. Estate Inspection in the Ward. 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Older People's/End of Life Task and Finish Group meeting. 4 p.m. Finance Committee of Longfield Academy 5p.m. North Riverside Residents Association meeting
Wednesday 3 rd October.	Morning and evening. Ward casework.
Thursday 4 th October	10 a.m. Meeting at the Havelock Community Centre in the Ward. Afternoon. Ward Casework. 4.30 p.m. Attended the Governing Body meeting of Harrowgate Hill Primary School in the ward.
Friday 5 th October.	9.30 a.m to 11.30 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club. Afternoon and evening Ward casework.
Saturday 6 th October	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Visiting the ward and ward casework.
Monday 8 th October.	Morning and afternoon. Ward casework
Tuesday 9 th October.	10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Special Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee at the Stroke Unit, University Hospital of North Durham. Afternoon and evening. Ward casework 6 p.m. Ward PACT meeting.
Wednesday 10 th October.	Morning. Ward casework. 2 p.m. Attended the Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Operations Committee. Afternoon Ward case work. 5. 30 p.m. Attended Public Health Training. Evening. Ward Casework.

Thursday 11 th October.	Morning Worklessness in North Road report. Afternoon and evening. Ward casework.
Friday 12 th October.	9.30 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club. 11 a.m. Visiting a resident in the ward at home. Afternoon and evening. Ward casework.
Saturday 13 th October	Morning and afternoon. Attending a conference. Evening. Ward casework.
Monday 15 th October.	Morning. Visiting a resident in the ward. Afternoon Ward casework. Evening. Reading papers for Planning Applications Committee
Tuesday 16 th October.	Morning and afternoon Ward casework. Reading papers for Planning Applications Committee. 7.30 p.m. Party Members Meeting.
Wednesday 17 th October.	1.30 p.m. Planning Applications Committee.
Thursday 18 th October.	10 a.m. Health and Partnerships Darzai Task and Finish Group. Afternoon ward casework. 7 p.m. Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau AGM.
Friday 19 th October	10 a.m. Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Work Programme. 12 p.m. Meeting with North Road Ward Councillors.
Saturday 20 th October	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Ward visit. Afternoon. Ward casework and reading papers for Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.
Sunday 21 st October	Afternoon and evening. Ward casework and reading papers for Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and Planning Applications Committee
Monday 22 nd October.	10 a.m. Visiting at resident in the ward at home. Morning, afternoon and evening ward casework. Reading papers for Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and Planning Applications Committee.
Tuesday 23 rd October.	9.30 a.m. to 11.45 a.m. Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. 1.30 p.m. Governing Body of Longfield Academy. Evening. Ward casework.
Wednesday 24 th October	10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Planning Site Visit. 2.30 p.m. Planning Applications Committee. Evening ward casework.
Thursday 25 th October.	11.30 a.m. Accompanying a resident in the ward to Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau. 1.30 p.m. Governors Pay Review Committee, Longfield Academy. Afternoon ward case work.
Friday 26 th October.	9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club. 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Business Planning Development meeting.
Saturday 27 th October	Morning ward casework. 2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. North Riverside Residents Association in the ward Halloween Party.
Sunday 28 th October.	Evening Ward casework and completing the Worklessness in the Ward Report.
Monday 29 th October.	10 a.m. Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee Suicide Prevention Task and Finish Group. Afternoon ward casework.
Tuesday 30 th October	Morning Ward casework. Evening Ward casework.
Wednesday 31 st October.	Morning Ward casework. 6 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. Ward Surgery.

November 2012	
Thursday 1 st November	10.30 a.m. North Road Ward Councillors Meeting. Afternoon. Ward casework.
Friday 2 nd November.	9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club. 1.30 p.m. Railway Summit. Evening. Ward casework.
Saturday 3 rd November.	10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Distributing wheelie bin questionnaires in the ward.
Monday 5 th November.	Afternoon and evening Collecting completed wheelie bin questionnaires in the ward. Evening. Ward casework.
Tuesday 6 th November.	1 p.m. Harrowgate Hill Primary School. Meeting with the Deputy Headteacher concerning the Single Equality Policy. 6pm. North Riverside Residents Association meeting.
Wednesday 7 th November.	Morning. Distributing wheelie bin questionnaires in the ward. 12.30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Finance Committee. 2 p.m. to 4.15 p.m. Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau Board meeting. Evening. Writing Wheelie bin questionnaire collection times on the form.
Thursday 8 th November.	Morning. Distributing wheelie bin questionnaires in the ward. Afternoon Started the revision of the Worklessness Report.
Friday 9 th November.	9.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. North Road Ward Job Club. 3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Railway Summit.
Saturday 10 th November.	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Collecting completed wheelie bin questionnaires in the ward. 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Selling poppies on the High Row in Darlington.
Sunday 11 th November	10 a.m. Attended the Civic Remembrance Day Service and Wreath Laying Evening. Reading papers for Planning Applications Committee.
Monday 12 th November	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Collecting completed wheelie bin questionnaire forms in the ward. Evening. Ward casework.
Tuesday 13 th November	Morning. Writing collection date and time on the wheelie bin questionnaire forms. 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Attended the Harrowgate Hill Primary School Singing Competition in the ward. 6 p.m. Ward PACT Meeting.
Wednesday 14 th November	10 a.m. to 11.40 a.m. Distributing wheelie bin questionnaires in the ward. 1.30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Planning Applications Committee. 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Council Group meeting.
Thursday 15 th November	10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Estate inspection in the ward. Afternoon. Ward casework.
Friday 16 th November	10 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. Accompanying a resident to Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau. Evening. Ward casework.
Saturday 17 th November	10 a.m. to 11.15 a.m. Collecting wheelie bin questionnaires in the ward.
Sunday 18 th November	Morning and Afternoon. Completing the diary of cases and meetings.