

OUR LADY IMMACULATE & ST. CUTHBERT'S CROOK

PARISH COUNCIL

Annual report to Parish 2016 – 2017

Current members of the Parish Pastoral Council

Reverend Gordon Ryan, Reverend Michael Rowell, Sister Joy, Sister Mary-Jane, Eugene Brady, Ann Callan, Anne Berry, Tanya Devereux, David Instone, Maeve Mooney, Simon Carson, Anne Smith, Mary McEldon, Patrick Timothy (Secretary) and Maria Crawford (Chair).

In line with our constitution, some members are in the process of standing down which are Mary, Tanya, Maeve and Patrick.

We thank them wholeheartedly for their time, effort and contribution to the Council and to Parish life.

Following a request for volunteers, five parishioners put their names forward and they will now join as new members of the Council;

John Harnett – representing SVP

Roger Kelly – representing St Cuthbert's Centre & Social

Seana Coulthard – representing Schools, Youth and Children's Liturgy

MariaLuisa – representing Flower Arrangers and Church Cleaning Groups

Duncan Reed – representing Liturgy, Readers, Altar servers, Organist/Choir & Welcomers

The Parish Council have met 5 times since the last annual report and all our meetings are held in the context of prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit, or at least we certainly try our best to do this! The aim is to assist the Parish Priest and help co-ordinate and support the various groups within the Parish. As well as the continued maintenance of the land and various buildings, the following work and tasks have been carried out:

A bench was installed outside the main entrance to church to commemorate the unbaptised babies buried within the church grounds.

A paving stone was put in place engraved with a dove to mark our Peace Garden.

The installation of a new inner door at the side porch entrance – a lot of work went into this and after a number of amendments the door was finished and is a great addition to our beautiful church.

The installation of a new sound system.

The parish finances continue to be managed to a very high standard which is a lot of hard work for a very small number of people.

Fund raising by the Parish also continues with great input from many people and the result of this fund raising impacts greatly on so many areas within our Parish, community and the wider world.

Links between our parish and school are going from strength to strength and we strive to ensure this continues as without the youth in our Parish we have no future. The school recently received outstanding in their RE inspection and it was clear in the report that the school value the support from the Parish. The Parish Council are continuing to look for ways to engage with our youth and consideration to a school chaplain or youth leader are among the ideas being discussed. The youth group continues to meet at the Centre and have supported their chosen causes by various fundraising ideas. Eight children made their First Holy Communion this year in comparison to 17 children last year. We are considering the idea of forming a younger youth group to include Key Stage 2 children who are our main age group at mass.

The Centre is a great asset to our Parish with many other Parishes commenting on how they would love a centre like ours and our thanks go to all those who help to keep it running smoothly and effectively. Groups and activities such as the SVP, Churches Together, Fairtrade, Justice and Peace, the food bank, and Fr, Ejaz's fund continue in their bid to make the world a better place for everyone and our Parish continue to support these great causes but without the individuals who diligently work to keep these groups alive we wouldn't be able to reach out to so many.

Forward Together in Hope continued to be a major focus throughout the year, with us being presented with the final outcome that we are now part of a partnership called The Escomb Group. There was a vast amount of behind the scenes work and paperwork which went into this and thanks is given to those from our Parish who went to the various meetings and related all the information back to us.

There is a lot of change coming, not the least of which will see Father Ryan moving to a different Parish in the coming months. We haven't to be down hearted or worried at this change as we are a very active parish with many talents to share to our now wider partnership group and who knows what our wider family will bring to us. Our Lord said He will always be with us and we must always remember this.

The Parish Council would to thank all of you who take part in, contribute to, or support our parish community in any way and if you have any suggestions or ideas to help our Parish grow in strength please speak to any member of the council.