

Acomb Parish Council – District Councillor’s Report July 2008

Why do local residents contact their district councillor? If I’m honest, it’s usually because they are concerned about a local issue or problem, but just occasionally they get in touch because they are pleased that something has happened, or they have a suggestion about how things can be improved.

Residents may want to discuss a local planning application. Planning applications are sometimes contentious. I aim to look at all planning applications in Acomb ward, even if they are just for a porch or an extension, and copies of all applications are sent to Acomb Parish Council for their comments. Most applications are determined under delegated powers (i.e. by officers, sometimes in consultation with elected members), but district councillors can request that any application is considered by the full Development Control Committee, as long as there is a good reason. The ward councillor may also speak at the committee, to give his or her views and those of local residents. This is in addition to the right of the general public to speak, by prior arrangement, either in support of an application or against it.

There may be an instance of illegal fly-tipping. Tynedale Council has joined forces with Northumberland County Council, the 5 other district councils and the Environment Agency to appoint a dedicated Fly-Tipping Enforcement Officer. Robert Smith, 54 and from Ashington, has been working throughout Northumberland. From April 2007 to March 2008 he has issued a total of 67 official warnings, 6 formal cautions and taken 15 cases to court. So hopefully fly-tippers will think twice in future.

People may be facing eviction, or wishing to move to a different type of accommodation e.g. an elderly person living alone may want to transfer from a large family house to a bungalow. Although Milecastle Housing has now taken over Tynedale Council’s housing stock, Tynedale Council’s housing department still operates the housing register and nominates individuals and families for vacant properties owned by Milecastle and other registered social landlords.

Sometimes people want to complain about excessive noise or anti-social behaviour (not always by young people!) The council’s environmental health department can help with the former, the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer with the latter.

While I am always happy to help where I can, all these services and many more can also be accessed through Tynedale Council’s Customer Service Centre, either in person at Hadrian House, by calling 01434 652121 or by emailing customer.services@tynedale.gov.uk.

If you would like to discuss any of these matters further or if you have suggestions or concerns, please contact me on 01434 681487, e-mail jane.wrigley@tynedale.gov.uk.

Jane Wrigley
June 23rd 2008