

Ouston Parish Council Annual Newsletter 2025



Your Ouston Parish Councillors are:

Chairperson – Councillor Alan Wake

Vice Chairperson – Glenn Batey

Councillor Annemarie Bell

Councillor Margaret Duncan

Councillor Trevor Fenwick

Councillor Danny Wood

Ouston Parish Council – About Us

The role of a Parish Council is to represent the interests of the local community as a whole and promote a harmonious local environment.

We are committed to:

- Listening and responding to the views and needs of local residents
- Working in partnership with people who are committed to our village
- Proactively working to improve our village and the wellbeing of our residents

Parish councils are the first tier of local governance and are the initial point of contact for anyone concerned with a community issue. Ouston Parish Council have a website. Why not visit and you can keep up to date with the dates and agenda items of our monthly Parish meetings plus all the minutes from our previous meetings, allotment information, emergency /resilience information and Durham County Council consultations.

Our new website address is www.oustonparishcouncil.gov.uk To give your views you can email the Clerk at clerk@oustonparishcouncil.gov.uk Alternatively, attend a meeting every fourth Thursday at Ouston Community Centre commencing at 7pm. Please come along and share your views, ideas or concerns.

Monthly Meeting Dates 2025/26

25th September

18th December

26th March

23rd October

15th January – Precept

23rd April

27th November

26th February

28th May - PA & AGM TBC

Ouston Parish Council Events - Autumn and Winter 2025

Our Annual Remembrance Sunday Service will take place on **Sunday 9th November at 10.55am**. It will be held in our Memorial Garden on St Benet's Way. All are welcome.

Our annual Christmas tree lights switch on is scheduled for **Saturday 29th November at 4pm**. It will take place at the Ouston Community Centre tree to coincide with the OCA Christmas event which will take place 2-4pm. We look forward to seeing you there!

Our Parish Poppy Project will return this year, and we will display Poppys through our village leading up to Remembrance Sunday. They will link up with Poppys from the other Parishes in Pelton Division. Each Parish funded the Poppys from the Royal British Legion with the help of match funding from the previous County Councillors Neighbourhood Budget.

Ouston Allotments

If you are interested in an Ouston Allotment, please contact Lisa Blondrage – Parish Clerk by email:

clerk@oustonparishcouncil.gov.uk or in writing by handing a brief letter with your contact details to: Ouston Parish Council, Ouston Community Centre, DH2 1RJ.

Ouston Parish Council – What We Do For Our Village

Annual Report - Spring 2024 to Spring 2025

Last year, April 2024/ March 25 Ouston Parish Council has:

- Produced and delivered the Annual Newsletter.
- Worked with the Ouston Community Association to provide a Christmas event for the community to enjoy.
- Provided OCA with financial donations to contribute to running costs for half term and holiday events for children, including Easter, VE Day 80, Halloween and Christmas events. Also events for adults.
- Bought OCA two new ovens.
- Worked with Pelton Youth Project to provide sessions for young people near our BMX track.
- Worked with the former County Councillors and other Parishes on a Poppy Project to install Poppies on Lamp posts throughout the Pelton Division.
- Christmas Tree lighting Event where we lit 3 living trees and two temporary trees.
- Residents Christmas Lights Competition.
- Residents Best Garden Competition
- Maintained Flower tubs and Memorial Garden with the help of Ouston Allotment Association.

April 2025/ March 2026 we plan to:

- Hold monies in reserve to keep Ouston Bank and Station Lane lit – 10 year Invoice due 2028.
- Hold monies in reserve to refurbish the Brooms Park in the future.
- Working with the other Parishes in Pelton Division to form a traffic calming scheme.
- Supporting with financial contributions, future Ouston Community Association events.
- Continue working with the other Parishes on our Poppy Project to install Poppies on Lamp posts throughout the Pelton Division.
- Continue working with Pelton Youth Project to provide sessions for young people near our BMX track.
- Christmas Tree lighting Event where we will light 3 living trees and two temporary trees.
- As requested by residents, we have paid DCC to install a handrail behind the petrol station – awaiting installation.
- Residents Christmas Lights Competition.
- Residents Best Garden Competition
- Maintain Flower tubs and Memorial Garden.

Ouston Parish Best Garden Competition

During Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter our Parish Councillors, walk round the village looking at resident's gardens. The winner of Ouston Parish Best Garden 2024 was a garden in Argyll and the runner up was a garden in Callender.

Residents will get the opportunity to be awarded Ouston Parish Best Garden 2025. This year's winner will be awarded later this year, and the competition will be running again next year. Cllr Duncan will be looking for Wildlife, Butterfly & Bee friendly features when judging.

No need to enter, Parish Councillors will be judging gardens as they walk round our village. The Parish Council will be awarding a £50.00 voucher to the winner. A £25.00 voucher goes to the runner up.



Pelton Youth Project

With match funding from the previous County Councillors, we funded sessions at the BMX bike track in late October / early November 2024. The youth workers from Pelton Community Centre carried out the sessions with young people using the BMX track leading up to Bonfire night. The sessions were held to reduce Antisocial Behaviour in the area. We hope to hold more sessions this Autumn with Pelton Youth Project as we have held money in reserve to cover costs.

Ouston Parish Christmas Lights Competition

Don't forget our Christmas Lights Competition will be running again this year and the Parish Council will be awarding a £50.00 voucher to the winner. A £25.00 voucher goes to the runner up.

The winner of Ouston Parish Christmas Lights Competition 2024 was a property in Turnberry and the runner up was a property in Milbanke. Again, no need to enter, Parish Councillors will be judging Christmas lights as they walk round our village. Good luck!



Ouston Community Centre is now officially YOURS! 🎉

Thanks to the successful **Asset Transfer**, **Ouston Community Centre** is now a community asset ran *by* a Board of Trustees.

It's been a busy year so far, with successful events such as the Asset Transfer celebration, Easter events for both children and adults, VE Day event, weekly coffee morning (term-time only), numerous children's events during holiday periods, including our summer events, as well as all of the activities ran by external providers.

Recent refurbishments include:

Resurfacing our private car park, refurbishing the small kitchen, and full roof replacement,

Forthcoming events include Autumn Flower arranging, a Children's Halloween event, Remembrance Day Service, Christmas light switch on and Christmas Wreath making, to name but a few. Information can be viewed on social media and in the community centre's notice board on Iris Crescent, by picking up an event flyer in reception, or contacting us directly. We also attend **Ouston Parish Council** meetings and provide a monthly update, details of which can be found in their minutes and notice boards.

*Don't forget we offer spaces to **hire** for community events or private functions, including a Conference Room that can be used for meetings *

We are always looking for Volunteers. You can pay to become a member, make regular direct debit contributions, or one-off donations, as the centre is a registered charity.

Visit us at Ouston Community Centre

Iris Crecent,

Ouston

DH2 1RJ

Tel: 0191 4105183 Mon – Fri 8 am-12 pm

Email: info@oustoncc.co.uk or via Facebook

USEFUL CONTACTS

Local Police

Contact Durham Constabulary to report anti-social behaviour, or other incidents not classed as an emergency, and get advice about crime prevention and household security by calling 101.

If there is something you want to contact the police about, but it is not an emergency please call the 24-hour non-emergency number **101** or visit www.durham.police.uk/ Call Crime Stoppers to report anonymously 0800 555 111

NHS Non-Emergency

If you are feeling unwell but it is not a life-threatening emergency, visit [NHS 111](http://NHS111) or contact your GP, pharmacy or urgent care centre.

Non-Emergency Fire Safety Advice

Contact County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service to get advice about household fire safety, including the installation of smoke alarms, by calling 0845 305 8383.

Household Emergencies

- Electricity - If your power supply is interrupted call 105 or 0800 011 3332.
- Gas - if you smell gas contact the National Grid on 0800 111 999.
- Water - call 0800 393 084 for burst water mains or sewer issues call 0345 717 1100.

Fraud and Bogus Communication

Never give out your personal bank details over the phone or by email. If you have concerns regarding this or have received a similar call, text or email, please contact us on 101 or Action Fraud 0300 123 2040.

CALL 999 IN AN EMERGENCY!

Our Pelton Division County Councillors are:

Councillor Steve Biggs steve.biggs@durham.gov.uk

Councillor Ian Cross ian.cross@durham.gov.uk

Councillor Brian Quirey brian.quirey@durham.gov.uk

Polite reminder - Please keep footpaths clear by not parking on them and keep bushes and hedges trimmed back.

Durham County Council

During normal office hours, contact us on **03000 260 000** or visit www.doitonline.durham.gov.uk

To report Anti-Social Behaviour visit www.durham-pcc.gov.uk/asb, call 101 or in an emergency call 999.

Alternatively, contact DCC's Neighbourhood Wardens on 03000 260 0000 or durham.gov.uk/doitonline

Parking Near Schools

When you drop your children off at school, do not park around the school gates. Safer parking around schools improves the safety of your children and you.

How to park safely - You can help by doing the following:

- park away from school gates to reduce congestion
- keep clear of zig zags, school entrances, dropped kerbs, junctions and residents' driveways
- stop for a school crossing patrol when asked
- don't park on pavements in a way which stops pedestrians, disabled users or parents with prams/pushchairs from using the pavement
- don't park on corners - this will make sure our children can see cars and drivers can see our children
- don't stop on school 'keep clear' markings or safer crossing place
- don't block a road which could prevent emergency vehicle access
- don't stop in the middle of the road to drop your child off - this makes it dangerous for children

Travel to school a different way, why don't you try walking or cycling to school? It is beneficial for you and your children as it helps to keep them healthy, develops their road safety skills and reduces traffic outside of school at the beginning and end of the school day, which creates a safer and better environment for us all.

You could also consider parking away from school and walking the rest of the way, setting up a walking bus with other parents/carers and the school, car-sharing and using public transport

The start and end of the school day can be hectic with the school run, but safety around schools must come first.

Civil Enforcement Officers can issue to vehicles parking on the school keeps clears and yellow lines in the vicinity of the school. The police deal with obstruction issues such as pavement parking and parking close to junctions.

To report issues the contact details for Parking Services are 03000 263 985 or parkingservices@durham.gov.uk