

# Ouston Parish Council Annual Newsletter 2026



Your Ouston Parish Councillors are:

Chairperson – Councillor Alan Wake

Vice Chairperson – Glenn Batey Councillor Annemarie Bell

Councillor Margaret Duncan

Councillor Trevor Fenwick

Councillor Paul Pringle

Councillor Danny Wood

## Hands Off Our Green Belt!

### Parish Battles Council's Housing Plans

Ouston Parish Council has formally objected to Durham County Council's proposed housing developments on Green Belt land around Ouston. The plans were revealed following Durham County Council's recent scoping exercise, with further details expected to be published next year.

Chair of Ouston Parish Council, Councillor Alan Wake, said:

*"We have serious concerns about these plans to build on the Green Belt and are very worried about Durham County Council's lack of engagement with local communities and residents."*

*"We want to protect the nature and character of our village and are extremely disappointed that Durham County Council is even considering removing Green Belt protections."*

The Parish Council is urging all local residents to back the campaign to save the local Green Belt and oppose these developments by emailing their objections to [planningpolicy@durham.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@durham.gov.uk).

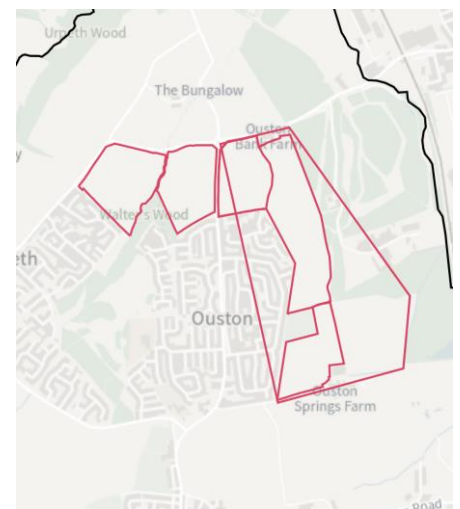


Figure 1

<https://placemaker.durham.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/10/>

Support our village. Email your comments to Durham County Council at [planningpolicy@durham.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@durham.gov.uk). The formal consultation closes on **17 August** – but the next phase of the County Council are not due to be published until next year.  
**HAVE YOUR SAY!**

### Ouston Parish Council Events - Autumn and Winter 2026

Our Annual Remembrance Sunday Service will take place on **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> 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 28<sup>th</sup> 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 Budgets.

### Ouston Allotments

If you are interested in an Ouston Allotment, please contact Lisa Blondrage – Parish Clerk by email: [clerk@oustonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto: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**

### **Ouston Parish Council - Annual Report - Spring 2025 to Spring 2026**

Last year, April 2025/ March 26 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 holiday events for children, Easter, Halloween and Christmas events.  
Worked with the other Parishes on a Poppy Project to install Poppies on Lamp posts throughout the Pelton Division.  
Employ a Parish Litter picker  
Pay a Service Level Agreement for DCC to maintain the flowerbeds 12 months of the year  
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 OAA.  
Organised an Easter egg hunt in the Parish on Easter Sunday with Cook's Corner. Thank you to Cook's Corner for donations.  
Bought a Bleed Trauma kit for Ouston Community Centre, stored in the Defib cabinet for residents to access if needed.

### **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 2025 was a garden in Cromarty and the runner up was also a garden in Cromarty.  
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.

### **This year April 2026/ March 2027 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.  
Work with Heritage 100 to organise and fund a walking trail in our Parish and Urpeth Parish.  
Employ a Parish Litter picker  
Pay a Service Level Agreement for DCC to maintain the flowerbeds 12 months of the year  
Pay for the replacement battery in the village Defibrillator and replacement pads as and when required.  
Look at refurbishing the Memorial Garden  
Supporting with financial contributions, future OCA events.  
Continue working with the other Parishes on our Poppy Project to install Poppies on Lamp posts throughout the Pelton Division.  
Christmas Tree lighting Event where we will light living trees and temporary trees.  
Residents Christmas Lights Competition.  
Residents Best Garden Competition  
Maintain Flower tubs and Memorial Garden.  
Produce and deliver the Annual Newsletter.  
Organise and fund an Easter egg hunt in the Parish on Easter Sunday.

### **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 2025 was a property in Milbanke and the runner up was a property in Byron Close. Again, no need to enter, Parish Councillors will be judging Christmas lights as they walk round our village. Good luck!

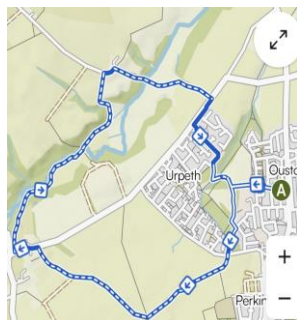
Polite reminder - Please keep footpaths clear by not parking on them and keep bushes and hedges trimmed back.

### **The Ouston and Urpeth Heritage 100 walk is part of the Heritage 100 series of 100 circular, collectable walks across County Durham.**

The Ouston and Urpeth H100 is the 24th walk to be installed with the support of both respective Parish Councils.  
The Heritage 100 aims to create 100 distinctive circular community walks, each with their own story showcasing the rich environmental heritage of each area. This is a beautiful walk straddling the border with Gateshead. We look forward to walking it with the local community and hope you all enjoy some of the lovely scenery and wildlife that attracted us to the area. This walk begins and ends at Ouston Community Centre. Please find the Komoot link attached below:

[https://www.komoot.com/tour/2906797712?ref=aso&share\\_token=aEufu517jaRgrxBU7RgLFlyXH82LFJvzBE2217yQis3VUbs2zM](https://www.komoot.com/tour/2906797712?ref=aso&share_token=aEufu517jaRgrxBU7RgLFlyXH82LFJvzBE2217yQis3VUbs2zM)

Furthermore, by collecting the walks we are opening up the stunning but often overlooked County Durham landscapes whilst linking communities together through the walks. Our aims include generating commerce for local businesses, increasing visitor numbers to County Durham whilst inspiring families and friends from County Durham and beyond to reap the physical and emotional benefits of green exercise. We want to preserve our footpaths and encourage people to connect with the landscape and the fantastic wildlife within it.



# Ouston Community Centre & Police And Communities Together



**Ouston  
Community  
Centre**  
Our Caring Community

**TEL: 0191 4105183**  
**EMAIL: [info@oustoncc.co.uk](mailto:info@oustoncc.co.uk)**

Our community centre is far more than the activities and events that people when they walk through the doors. Staff and Trustees spend countless hours organising room bookings, coordinating events and responding to the needs of community groups. With so much happening both in public-facing areas and behind the scenes, the community centre remains a vibrant and well-used facility that requires continuous attention, dedication and teamwork. If you would like to be part of our team contact us on the above email.

| SUN                          | MON                                 | TUES                                       | WED                                  | THURS                                  | FRI                                   | SAT                            |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 9.30-10am<br><b>HIITSTEP</b> | 8.30-14.30<br><b>NEUROACTIVE UK</b> | 10AM-12<br><b>PATCHWORK &amp; QUILTING</b> | 8.30-14.30<br><b>NEUROACTIVE</b>     | 8.30-14.30<br><b>NEUROACTIVE</b>       | 10.30-12<br><b>OCF COFFEE MORNING</b> | 9AM-12.45<br><b>DIDDIKICKS</b> |
| 10-11.30AM<br><b>OCF</b>     | 17.15-18.00<br><b>DMX</b>           | 10-11<br><b>PILATES</b>                    | 16.00-20.30<br><b>SLIMMING WORLD</b> | 17.30-18.00<br><b>HIITSTEP</b>         | 10.45-11.30<br><b>CHAIR EXERCISES</b> |                                |
|                              | 18.00-18.45<br><b>DMX</b>           | 13.00-15.00<br><b>LADIES BADMINTON</b>     | 8:30 am<br><b>JUDO</b>               | 18.00-19.30<br><b>DRAMA TREE</b>       | 18.30-20.00<br><b>Yoga</b>            |                                |
|                              | 19.00-21.30<br><b>TABLE TENNIS</b>  | 18.00-20.00<br><b>JUJITSU</b>              |                                      | 19.30-21.30<br><b>YOUTH CONNECTION</b> |                                       |                                |

**Ladies Club – Every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday – 14.00-16.00**

**Women's Institute – Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday 19.00-21.00**

**Ouston Parish Council – Every 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday – 19.00 Residents welcome**

\*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 Crescent,  
Ouston  
DH2 1RJ  
Tel: 0191 4105183  
Email:  
[info@oustoncc.co.uk](mailto:info@oustoncc.co.uk) or  
via Facebook

## Police And Communities Together Information – Neighbourhood Policing

The PACT meetings in Ouston will take place in Ouston Community Centre. The proposed date and time are 17<sup>th</sup> September at 6.30pm. The dates and times for all PACT meetings are listed on <https://www.durham.police.uk/> under "What's happening in your area?" Information regarding Police Community events such as Activity week and Santa in a Van will be listed on their website and Facebook page Chester Le Street Police. You can also report crime under the "Report" section.

Our local Police Station address is Chester-le-Street Police Station, Newcastle Road, Chester le Street, DH3 3TY - Police Station opening times - Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm

The Neighbourhood Police Team attended the Ouston Parish Assembly in May. The Police Officers asked residents to report all crimes and where there are hot spots they will carry out regular patrols. They added, if residents don't report crime. they aren't aware.

### \*\*\*\*\*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

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](mailto:parkingservices@durham.gov.uk)

## 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/](http://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](https://111.nhs.uk/) 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 Gas Emergency Service 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](mailto:steve.biggs@durham.gov.uk)

Councillor Ian Cross [ian.cross@durham.gov.uk](mailto:ian.cross@durham.gov.uk)

Councillor Brian Quirey

[brian.quirey@durham.gov.uk](mailto:brian.quirey@durham.gov.uk)

Our Local MP for Durham is Luke Akehurst – Tel: 0191 371 8834 email: [luke.akehurst.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:luke.akehurst.mp@parliament.uk)

### Durham County Council

During normal office hours, contact us on **03000 260 000** or visit

[www.doitonline.durham.gov.uk](http://www.doitonline.durham.gov.uk)

To report Anti-Social Behaviour visit

[www.durham-pcc.gov.uk/asb](http://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](http://durham.gov.uk/doitonline)

## Ouston Parish Council

**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 our 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](http://www.oustonparishcouncil.gov.uk) To give your views you can email the Clerk at [clerk@oustonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto: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 2026/27

24<sup>th</sup> September  
25<sup>th</sup> February

22<sup>nd</sup> October  
25<sup>th</sup> March

26<sup>th</sup> November  
22<sup>nd</sup> April

17<sup>th</sup> December

14<sup>th</sup> January – Precept tbc  
27<sup>th</sup> May - PA & AGM tbc