

Corsenside Parish Council – Annual Meeting 8 May 2017

Personal comments relating to the Parochial Church Council during the year just ended

1. We are very grateful to the community for generous support of recent building-repairs, in particular in the replacement of All Saints' roof, completed in 2016.
2. We want to thank everyone who helped with events and services last year, including the teaching staff of West Woodburn First School, performers and organisers of the 'Cross the Wannies' concert, those who read lessons at the Christmas Eve Carol Service and many more who helped in other ways.
3. We are most thankful for the long and devoted service of Col. Richard Cross O.B.E. to the community and to the Church before his sudden death at home on February 25th 2017.
4. We hope that there will be opportunities for volunteers from the community to take responsibility for managing a small area of meadow in St Cuthbert's churchyard, including training and continuing participation in annual scything. This will depend on the success of a grant application proposed by 'Revitalising Redesdale' to prepare the ground and establish the wild-flower meadow area.
5. We are challenged by changes made by the Church of England in the way it supports parishes, changes that bear heavily on the relatively deprived Diocese of Newcastle. Parishes can expect less support, except where they are well-managed and large enough to make credible bids for funding of projects aimed at church growth. The Corsenside congregation is drawn largely from people who have opted to join the electoral roll, now diminished to only 16 people. Very few are able and available to maintain the week-by-week work of the church, or to organise special services and events. Our current annual revenue budget, approximately £10,000, will be insufficient by about the same amount to fulfil what is expected of us, which includes a contribution to diocesan costs of paying clergy stipends and pensions as well as the obligation of meeting the running costs of two church buildings and an open churchyard. There are hopes that projects at Deanery level will enable this parish to participate in and benefit from diocesan funded projects aimed at growth but, in the meantime, the message for our local community is that a commitment to further regular giving will be needed from the current 16 members of the electoral roll and from others for our survival in anything approaching the present form. Application forms for joining the electoral roll are available in All Saints' church.

Richard Virden