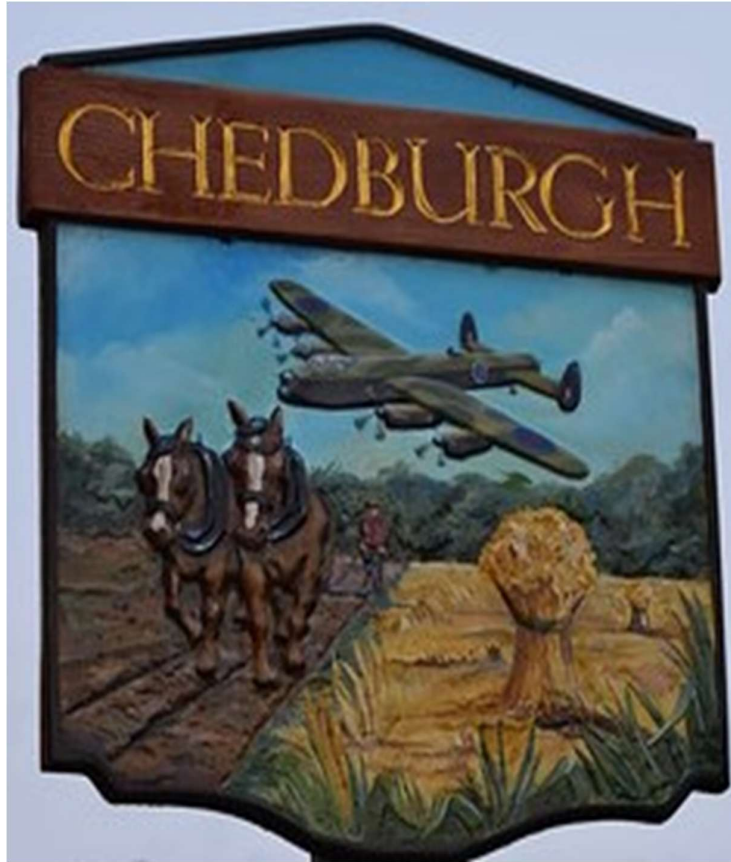


Chedburgh Parish Council



Chair's Annual Report 2025/26

Introduction

Chedburgh Parish Council has continued to work on behalf of residents throughout the past year, supporting community initiatives, assisting those in need, and setting the strategic direction for the Parish to ensure the best possible outcomes for our village.

Parish councils play a vital role in representing their communities, delivering services that meet local needs, and striving to improve quality of life and community wellbeing. Our Council remains fully committed to these responsibilities and to maintaining the strong community spirit that makes Chedburgh such a special place to live.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Parish Councillors for their dedication and hard work over the past year. Much of their effort takes place behind the scenes to ensure that the Council complies with the many regulations that govern local authorities. Their diligence, professionalism, and commitment continue to create a positive and supportive environment for the village.

The Council

The Parish Council currently has six members out of a possible seven positions, as follows:

- Cllr Andrew Smith — Chair
- Cllr Shaun Sellars — Vice Chair
- Cllr Margaret Rickard
- Cllr Stuart McGhee
- Cllr Charlotte Pettit
- Cllr JoJo Jones
- Vacancy

Changes During the Year

Councillor who left:

- Cllr Hazel Simmons

Councillor who joined:

- Cllr JoJo Jones

Meetings

During the year, the Parish Council held:

- 10 scheduled Parish Council meetings
- 1 extraordinary meeting
- 1 Budget Working Group meeting

In addition, the Council supported the establishment of the first Parish Youth Council meeting, demonstrating our commitment to encouraging younger residents to participate in community life. All Parish Council meetings remain open to the public, and residents are encouraged to attend and contribute to discussions on matters affecting the village.

Community Events

The Parish Council was pleased to support and deliver a number of community events during the year, including:

- The VE Day 80 commemorative celebration held at the Erskine Centre

- A VJ Day 80 remembrance service and flag-raising ceremony at the RAF Chedburgh Memorial
- The first Youth Council Christmas community event

These events provided opportunities for residents to come together, reflect on our shared history, and strengthen community connections.

Key Actions and Activities

Supporting Residents

The Parish Council continues to support local residents by responding to enquiries, addressing concerns, and working collaboratively with partner organisations where necessary.

The Marquis of Cornwallis Public House

The ongoing situation regarding the Marquis of Cornwallis public house continues to evolve. At one stage, it was believed that the property had been sold; however, this proved not to be the case. The building was subsequently listed for auction but appears not to have been sold and is currently being marketed at a reduced price.

The Council recognises the importance of this building to the community and will continue to monitor developments.

Children's Play Area

The village play area remains well used and continues to be maintained by our village handyman. Regular monthly safety inspections are now identifying areas that will require attention and potential replacement of equipment to ensure the facility remains safe and fit for purpose.

Flooding

Flooding affecting the Erskine Centre car park, the playing field, and the surrounding areas during periods of heavy rainfall remains a significant concern.

Initial work to clear a section of the drainage ditch along Chevington Road has resulted in a modest improvement. However, this remains a larger infrastructure issue that will require further coordinated action.

Updates on Ongoing Projects

Community Defibrillator

The village defibrillator remains operational and continues to be inspected regularly. Replacement pads were installed in April 2026 and are expected to remain serviceable until 2030 unless used.

Village Pantry

The Village Pantry continues to provide valuable support to residents experiencing hardship. However, funding for this important service has reduced significantly.

The Parish Council would like to express sincere thanks to:

- The Parish Church
- The local Women's Institute

for their generous donations of food and ongoing support.

Youth Council

The first Chedburgh Youth Council was successfully established during 2025 and organised a Christmas craft community event.

We hope this initiative will continue to grow and provide young people with opportunities to contribute to village life. Continued support from volunteers will be essential to sustain this initiative.

Future Projects and Priorities

Return of the Village Fete

The Parish Council is pleased to confirm the return of the Chedburgh Village Fete in 2026. A dedicated working group has been formed to plan and deliver this important community event.

Flood Mitigation

Addressing flooding around the Erskine Centre and playing fields remains a priority.

The Council is currently:

- Seeking quotations for further ditch clearance work
- Planning additional drainage improvements
- Working with relevant authorities where necessary

This issue can no longer be deferred and will remain a key focus for the coming year.

Play Area Improvements

The children's play area requires replacement of several items to maintain safety standards and ensure continued enjoyment by local families.

This work is planned to take place in the coming months so that the facility is ready for the summer season.

Invitation to Residents to Get Involved

A thriving community depends on the time, commitment, and goodwill of volunteers.

I would like to thank all Councillors, volunteers, and community members who continue to give their time and energy to support village life. Your contribution makes a real difference.

Chedburgh is our village. With continued community involvement, we can protect its heritage, strengthen community life, and ensure that it remains a vibrant and welcoming place for future generations.

The Parish Council warmly welcomes:

- New volunteers
- Community ideas
- Expressions of interest from residents who may wish to serve as a Parish Councillor

We currently have one councillor vacancy, and we encourage anyone interested in helping shape the future of our village to come forward.

Andrew Smith

Chair

Chedburgh Parish Council