

WestLife

Newsletter Autumn 2025

A Small Tribute To A Great Man: Councillor George Smith



Successful, well established local business owner, County Councillor and worked alongside Rob Yorke. Rob says "George was a great colleague and the best friend anyone could wish for, he will be missed by many". George was Parish Council Chairman for 12 years, Copeland Road School Governor for 11 years, West Auckland Memorial Hall Chairman for the past 3 years, previous member of the Gaunless Gateway Big Local, supporter of many local organisations including Big Chef, Little Chef, both Bishop Auckland and West Auckland football clubs.....and a good friend.

George was one of life's unsung heroes who gave so much to so many and expected nothing but friendship in return. Copeland Road Headteacher, praised him for providing LED lights to all classrooms free of charge and quickly sending someone to the school to help with any electrical problems. He often made personal donations to local schools, churches and organisations he felt needed help. All of which tells only half a story.

George was proud of the area in and around where he lived. He was determined to maintain what was good and improve when required. He would listen and tirelessly support organisations, helping people whenever he could. George wouldn't give up when action was needed, working with energy to find a solution or establish a new initiative. A driving force behind much of what has been done to improve West Auckland as the Parish Council Chairman and the wider area as a County Councillor. Over the past 3 years he has been dedicated to saving and full renovation of the Memorial Hall.

Alongside this determination to get things done, he was approachable, friendly and fair-minded with a notable sense of humour. Well known in the area, liked and highly regarded by so many, George cared about people and would do anything he could to help.

George died early Monday, 1st September 2025; he will be sorely missed by everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him – colleagues, friends and of course family.



Help Stamp Out ASB & Racial Abuse

There has recently been a spate of mindless vandalism and anti-social behaviour (ASB) by a minority of youths around the village and the Parish Council urge residents to report every incident to the police either by ringing 101 or emailing Scott.Dobinson@durham.police.uk or Marcus.Robinson@durham.police.uk. These two police team members hold a Police & Community Together (PACT) meeting on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6.00 pm in Monteith Close Parish Room; they are committed to stamping out these recent problems and welcome any information from residents which will lead to the apprehension of offenders. It was sadly reported that a visitor to the village, a lady sitting alone at the picnic tables, was racially abused and had water bombs thrown directly at her. This appalling behaviour cannot continue.

A miner sculpture recently relocated to Staindrop Road has been wilfully damaged by 3 youths. The incident was witnessed by residents who thankfully reported it to the police; the police have since questioned the 3 youths and will follow-up accordingly. Thanks are given to resident Steven Robinson and Cllr Billy Robinson for their efforts to repair the damaged sculpture which will be reinstalled in due course.

Another mindless incident occurred with village picnic tables being damaged by youths. The tables are in the process of being repaired with thanks to local volunteer Joe Robinson and Cllr Billy Robinson.

Village in Bloom volunteer group wish to thank residents for their support in replanting bedding plants that had been planted one day and pulled out, again by a minority of youths, the next. The volunteers also gave thanks to TI Mowers for repairing the water bowser they use to water village plants free of charge.

The Parish Council are also all volunteers who only want the best for West Auckland; please support them by helping the police to deal with ASB and racial abuse.

Remembrance Sunday



A service will be held on Sunday, 9th November 2025, 3.00 pm at the Pant to reflect on those who were killed during past wars. Anyone attending is welcome at Monteith Close Parish Rooms for refreshments after the service.

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Parish Council Meetings are held at Monteith Close Community Parish Room, DL14 9UB at 7.00pm on the 2nd Monday of each month (except August). Visit our website: <http://www.westaucklandparishcouncil.org.uk/>
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