

Report by the Chairman of North Rigton Parish Council

Electors a meeting on Thursday 16th May 2013

Jo Williams resigned as Parish Clerk effective from 31st October 2012. The council thanked Jo for her 15 years of service to the council and the Parish of North Rigton.

We welcomed Mike Richards to the council at our November meeting.

I can report that the council decided to hold the precept, that is the amount of money you pay toward the Community Sum collected by Harrogate Borough Council, for the 2nd year running. This is despite some of our fixed costs, for example insurance and financial audits, continuing to rise.

A large part of our income, approximately 50% is spent on the village environment and garden. So if we are to keep our precept requests down, we need to continue with our fund raising activities.

Community:

The feeling of community spirit has continued to develop throughout the year, with the re-opening of the Square and Compass in September as a focal point in the village.

Jubilee Event was a great success, bringing together our community and also many of the village school's community from Huby and Weeton.

The BBQ was enjoyed by 153 adults and 60 children

At the Beacon an additional 81 adults and 6 children booked, but there is only an estimate of those who arrived for the spectacle, and that is more than another 150 people.

Together with the purchase of the beacon, and gifts for all the children in the parish under the age of 11, the event made a profit of £641.33. The Parish Council have decided to purchase a new seat to be located on the village green, and to spend some money on creating a bank of shrubs, behind the village signs at the three entrances to the village on, Church Hill, Hall Green Lane and High Moor Road.

With the Jubilee event at the beginning of June the Party in the Garden was to be our only fund raising event for the maintenance of the garden and other areas of the village. The weather was so poor, and the garden and adjacent field were so wet we decided to postpone the event until September. We probably had the only dry, sunny weekend day in September and we were able to host a highly successful event. Although the numbers attending were down on previous years we were able to put £719.66 into the funds.

Well done everyone who made these events so successful.

Plans are well under way for the 2013 events. Saturday 8th June the BBQ in the Village Garden, this is a ticket event and Sunday 9th June the Party in the Garden.

The annual litter pick was held in March with 15 residents helping over the two days. As I have reported in the Parish News, there was less to collect this year, perhaps because we have carried out the task over several years, however the worrying finding was the number of "dog poo" bags dumped at two locations. One, on Church Hill, approximately 40 bags in the ditch near to the footpath to Huby, and a further 60 bags in the ditch next to the footpath entrance off Crag Lane to Huby!

We have approached Harrogate Borough Council about the provision of further litter bins in these locations and other locations in the village, and we await the outcome of this request. We are however, prepared to pay for some bins ourselves, but this is an expensive option with our limited finances.

When the council received the communication from Harrogate Borough Council that we were to have a fortnightly rubbish collection and wheelie bins, our Borough Councillor, Christine Ryder, arranged a meeting in the village with two representatives of the refuse collection department. We walked the village looking at problem areas. The exercise was very useful and we are now in a position to give some guidance to residents on the matter. We were able to direct these representatives to locations out of the village to enable them to look at solutions to the problems of accessing properties along private roads.

In December the Almscliffe Villages Community Association extended the electricity supply, and purchased and erected a Christmas Tree and lights in the garden. They held an impromptu switch-on event on perhaps the coldest evening of the year when a special visitor arrived. He distributed sweets to the children present and we were warmly welcomed by Paul Stephenson at the Square & Compass with warm mince pies and mulled cider! The organisation are looking to holding an event around the Christmas Tree in December 2013

PC Mark Ayre had visited the council meetings on several occasions to share the crime figures with the council. He reports no crimes in the area during the last two months.

Some of the Neighbourhood Watch signs have been damaged and there was a request last year for further signs. I have been able to get the replacement signs and some small gate signs, free of charge.

(If anyone would like to have further signs in their area will they please contact me after the meeting)

Visual & Physical Amenities:

We continue to have works carried out on our verges, on the village green, in the village garden, and I would like to thank Sue and Andy Keane for all their hard work in these areas. Hill Top Common continues to be cut on a voluntary basis.

We were allocated a sum of money from commuted sums last year and were able to use this money to provide an electricity supply for the village garden. Thanks must go to Stuart Thornton for this as he has allowed us to take a spur off his electricity supply for this.

We also applied and received funding to provide lighting for the footpath approach to the Parish Church.

Our latest request for Commuted sum payments has provided us with a pair of goal posts and a Basket Ball net which will be installed in the Church Hill playing field sometime in June.

Highways matters:

The damage to the verges through the village and throughout the parish have been a continuing concern recently. The increasingly large vehicles using our lanes, travelling at great speeds, is not helping matters.

There is a 7.5 tonne weight limit through our village. PC Ayre suggested that if a resident suspects that a vehicle which is passing through the village is overweight, and is not accessing a property within the village, they could note the date, time and location along with the registration mark and report this information to Trading Standards at NYCC.

The council has agreed to spend money on protection for the verges within the village, and will trail this on the verge outside the village school and school house in the first instance, and extend it to other areas if we feel it has been successful.

We continue to send information to Highways about the various pot holes and crumbling roads in the parish and are pleased to report that some work has been carried out on Crag Lane.

We have made repeated requests to renew the line markings in the village, particularly near to the village school and at the mini roundabout, but with no success yet.

The volume of traffic and speeds through the village continue to concern the council, and, according to the questionnaire survey carried out last year, to concern the residents. Things will not be improved, in fact will become a lot worse with the building of 3 areas of housing, totalling 2,000 new homes on the western side of Harrogate. With a speed monitor test on Rigton Hill in April 2012, we are told that the speed of traffic is not a problem about which anything can be done, and that we are not a "rat run" In fact the people who will be resident in these new housing developments will be travelling into Harrogate to work, and so that there will not be any increase in traffic for us!

The council continue to dispute these statements, and with 1,793 vehicles though our village in a week, we believe we have a good case. What we need now is a proper survey to show where all these vehicles come from and where they go.

Planning:

We now receive all planning applications on-line from Harrogate Borough Council, which does make it difficult for councillors without a computer & with our slow broadband.

The council still find many of the decisions inconsistent.

Communications:

We would encourage you to continue to use the Parish Council web site and plan too update certain features soon.

Go to www.northrigton.org

The Parish Clerk has a new dedicated e-mail address: northrigtonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Parish Plan:

Presentation:

Mary Hopkins

16/05/2013