

Report by the Chairman of North Rigton Parish Council

Electors a meeting on Wednesday 6th May 2015

I can report that the council decided, for the third year running not to increase the precept. We have managed to do this despite increases in various costs, by reducing some fixed costs, insurances and accountants fees, and by the tremendous fund raising efforts of councillors, residents and friends at our annual Party in the Garden weekend..

A large part of our income, approximately 50% is spent on the village environment and garden. These costs are likely to increase over the following years as HBC will no longer cut the sections of grass in the village and on the village approaches.

Community:

Defibrillator: Following a presentation by David Jones of the Yorkshire Ambulance Service to the council and residents who attended to open meeting on 7th January 2015, the council has purchased a defibrillator and it is now installed and active, on the wall of the Square & Compass on Rigton Hill. It is hoped that demonstration sessions will be held on Sunday 14th June at the Party in the Garden event, when residents will be able to see the equipment and talk to a representative of the ambulance service about it's uses.

Village Garden: The village Garden continues to be well used. Parents meeting, with their children who are then able to play in a safe environment. Walkers calling in to read the display board, admire the plants and eat their lunch on the seating provided. We even have visitors driving to the village to enjoy this very special place we, as a community have provided.

Events: The Party in the Garden and BBQ were once more very successful. We somehow managed to hold both events between the very heavy rain showers, and we must once more thank those who got involved for their generosity both in time, effort and giving, enabling us to raise £1660.00

The introduction of the "Decorate a Bicycle" event certainly added a new dimension to the weekend, with visitors to the village taking part in the competition, and visiting the Party in the Garden too. Well done and thank you to everyone who made these events so successful.

Plans are well under way for the 2014 events.

Saturday 13th June the BBQ in the Village Garden, this is a ticket event.

Sunday 14th June the Party in the Garden

Litter: The annual litter pick was held on 21st & 22nd March with 17 residents helping over the two days. We received calls from three residents who were unable to attend, but had gone out earlier to clear a dedicated area. Several other members of the community are active in collecting litter at other times of the year too, and I would like to record our thanks to all those residents who attempt to look after the area make our community a pleasant place to live.

The new litter bins which were fitted around the village are being used and we have added the emptying of these to our environmental budget.

Community Donations:

This year we have been able to assist organisations within the village with small donations towards their projects:

Village School: £100 in lieu of room rental charges and £250 towards a sound system which is available for use by village organisations and we will be using it at The Party in the Garden event in June.

St John's Church: £150 towards the upkeep of the graveyard/

Huby Playgroup: £50

Royal British Legion: £100 donation for poppy wreathes for the parish and church

Parish Plan:

There have been several actions resulting from the Parish Plan:

1. Christmas Carolling appears to now be well established as the second event, held on Monday 15th December. The event this year had so many carol singers walking around the village, it left very few people at home to hear them! Father Christmas greeted the children at the Christmas Tree in the Village Garden and gave each of them a small gift. Everyone retired to the Square & Compass where the Rigtonics entertained us all. With the collections around the village and in the S&C £220 was raised and shared between St Gemma's and St Michael's Hospices.
2. The Community Teas, on the first Thursday of the month have continued with a break over the summer and Christmas periods. The event is open to all ages and although attendances vary, those who do attend are eager that it continues. Dates for the rest of 2015 are: 7th May, June 4th, July 2nd, September 3rd, October 1st, November 5th
3. The Parish Walks had varying numbers of people attending, with the September walk probably being the one which was best attended. It has been decided to hold only two each year, one in the May and the other in September.
4. The possibility of creating a community room or space within St John's church took a small step forward with a meeting of representatives of various community groups, the church, school, parish council & Almscliffe Villages Association. No further progress has been made with this project.
5. Superfast Broadband has arrived in North Rigton! The Parish Plan provided a community minded resident, Robert Le Mare to represent the parish at meetings throughout 2013 and 2014 with representatives of other parishes in Lower Wharfedale to secure a superfast broadband connection through the government roll out scheme with BT. When it became clear that this was not going to be successful they engaged with a private company in an attempt to establish the service. With 30 residents of North Rigton Parish showing an interest the company have now established a host for the signal and have begun installations. Our thanks to Robert for all his hard work and Oliver Connelly who has supported him in the later stages through communications with residents via the parish web site.

The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme continues to inform and alert residents through a system of e-mails. A stock of Information packs and signs are being held by the Parish Council for new residents of enquiries

Visual & Physical Amenities:

We continue to have works carried out on our verges, on the village green, in the village garden, and I would once more 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.

The damage we believe, was caused by a vehicle sliding down Rigton Hill in icy weather and crashing into the stocks. No-one has been able to identify the driver or the vehicle. Our insurance will cover the cost of repair in excess of £100.

Highways matters:

We have once more attempted to have the old sign poles in the village removed. There are 3 of them and as there has been no action by Highways we will be removing them ourselves in the near future.

We continue to send information to Highways about the various pot holes and crumbling roads in the parish with some success at last. Some major works have eventually been carried out over the past year.

A658: The Highways department, following discussions with the police, decided that the new lighting system at the automatic railway crossing on Dunkeswick Lane had aggravated the danger at the road crossing of the A658 and were eager for Network Rail to make a contribution to the costs involved in lighting the junction. Unfortunately Network Rail refused to accept any responsibility. North Yorkshire Highways have now funded the work and the lighting has been installed. We will not see the benefit of this work until the Autumn when it is dark at heavy traffic

times. However the problem of crashes happening during daylight hours has not been solved. All the signage proposals we have suggested have been ruled out because of Highway regulations.

Planning:

Harrogate Borough Council are preparing a new Development Plan Document. The Parish Council continue to be active in attempting to get HBC to look at the wider traffic implications of the developments to the west of Harrogate and are taking every opportunity to be involved with the development of the plan. Unfortunately, although we constantly respond and raise objections, the rush by developers to get planning before the new plan is submitted will inevitably mean that many of the proposed developments may get permission to go ahead, despite our concerns.

Communications:

The Parish web site continues to develop, and provide a useful communication tool. However we still need residents to sign up to the notification system to ensure that ALL residents are aware of activities within the parish.

If you have not already done so we would encourage you to continue to use the Parish Council web site and sign up to automatic messages, which will greatly improve communication in the parish. www.northrigton.org

May I remind you of the the dedicated e-mail address for the Parish Clerk, Mr Mike Richards: northrigtonparishcouncil@gmail.com

Mary Hopkins

07/05/15