

Annual Parish Meetings Chairman's Report 2016

General Comment

Before I mention any specific areas in which the Parish Council has been involved I would like to start by thanking all the councillors for the time and work they have given voluntarily. During the last year there have been 13 parish council meetings, 195 articles of correspondence to consider, sub-committee meetings to attend, external meetings, planning site visits and financial reports that take up a great deal of time and effort to fulfil. Well done to you all, the work you do is often unseen and essential to the communities we represent.

On behalf of myself and all the councillors I would like to express our appreciation for the work carried out by our Clerk Ann Pyle in providing the Council with a very professional and efficient service again during the year. I would also like to thank our District and County Councillors who regularly attend our meetings. They provide us with a vital link to the next level of local government.

Parish Council Committees

As in previous years the Parish Council used a number of sub-committees to support the work of the council:

The **Financial Committee** reviewed the budget set by the council against the anticipated spend and recommended retaining the precept at £43,000. This was approved by the full Parish Council and covered the predicted expenses including, the loan repayments to the Public Works Loan Board and a fund for a new burial ground.

Negotiations over the last 2 years have led to the opportunity to buy an appropriate piece of land for the new burial site for £35,000 and we expect the sale to be completed shortly subject to the relevant planning permissions. The treasurer's help and guidance through this process has been a major asset to the PC and I commend Councillor Jones for his excellent work.

During the year the Treasurer has produced quarterly accounts which were reviewed and accepted by the Council.

The Parish Council has reviewed and commented to the **Planning** Authority on 75 planning applications varying from minor tree work, traveller sites, house extensions and recently a large housing development.

There has been a major change in Government Policy towards planning with the introduction of the 2015/16 Housing Bill. This puts pressure on District Councils to make new Development Plans and promote the building of new starter homes. Hambleton DC started the process of updating their Plan in September 2015 with a 'Call for Sites.' RPC will be consulted throughout the process and keep interested parties informed.

The village has now seen the 16 affordable houses on Garbutts Lane being built over the last 12 months. These were quickly allocated to local people as per the planning rules. The HDC Rural Housing Enabler has assessed the demand for affordable housing in the area. Their records show that there are another 52 people requiring affordable housing. This is a concern but may be helpful to developers with large development applications in the future that include affordable houses. A planning application for 56 houses off Belbrough Lane is currently being considered by HDC and would provide 28 affordable houses as well as a mix of other dwellings. This application created large public interest and was recommended for refusal by RPC. However this could well be a precursor of larger applications to follow across the parish.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council have been watching how other towns and villages are managing their Neighbourhood Plan. In June 2015 we discussed the potential benefits of developing our own plan and envisaged problems getting enough interest in the plan to reach the high percentage of people in

agreement required. Following recent planning developments there is now a great deal of interest in the village for a plan and no doubt the PC will be instrumental in seeing this develop.

The **Footpath Committee** report on any problems they become aware of relating to footpaths within the parish. In the last year we have repaired the damage to Crow Bank steps and the Hutton bank railings have been repaired. We have also been working hard to get the riverside footpath (upstream from the bridge) repaired.

Dog waste is still a problem needing regular campaigns.

The **Event Committees** are responsible for organising the village event (music evening) and bonfire night. Last year's fete was very well attended and received lots of positive feedback providing villagers with an ideal opportunity to get together in a relaxed environment. The bonfire night was better than ever thanks to Councillor Parry and his team raised enough funds to cover over 60% of the event costs. The PC also organised a celebration for the Queen's 90th birthday in April by lighting a beacon on the green and setting off fireworks. This was a memorable evening appreciated by many villagers. Our thanks go to Councillor Readman for providing the beacon.

The **Tour de Yorkshire** came through the parish for the first time on the 1st May creating a great deal of local interest. The village looked excellent and I commend our District Councillor and local groups for all their efforts. I'm sure this will be good for the village and will encourage people to visit the area in the future.

The Parish Council kept the **Sports Area** well maintained throughout the year. We have used Section 106 funding to provide a Trim Trail Circuit in materials sympathetic to the environment. This has created an excellent facility for the parish and I extend our thanks to Councillor Bennington for his management skills with this project.

The BMX track has been re-surfaced and continues to be very popular.

The **Village Green** has been maintained throughout the year with regular grass cutting, tree inspections (and tree work by professionals where appropriate), leaf clearing, and the monitoring and repair of any damage. Parish Council grass cutting has once again been extended to cover verges (and grass in Linden) to fill the gap created by the County Council financial cuts. The seats on the green have been restored and re-painted along with the decommissioned BT Telephone box we purchased for £1 last year. We have been looking for sites and funding to help a local group plant wild flowers around the village to encourage bees.

I would like to thank the **Care for our Village Association** for their voluntary work around the village and on the green for providing and maintaining the tubs. The yellow and blue flowers for the Tour of Yorkshire were particularly well done.

The Parish Council also own and maintain the **village allotments and burial ground**. These areas have required monitoring by Councillors throughout the year and their work is appreciated.

Traffic and Parking

Speeding traffic and pedestrian safety is always of high concern to the Parish Council. During the year we continued to lobby the County Council Highways department for better speed controls in the village. Working with the Highways Authority we provided 2 temporary flashing 30mph signs located on Stokesley Road and Belbrough Lane for 6 week periods during the year. A third sign will be installed on Garbutts Lane later this year. These also gather useful data for us to lobby for permanent measures.

Parking on pavements is an ongoing problem in the village. A new Bill to going through Parliament has been withdrawn leaving us to try and resolve the issue ourselves.

Web Site

The Parish Council web site is up and running at www.rudbyparish.org.uk and holds a record of Parish Council Minutes, events, links and notices.

Other Parish Council Areas of Work

- With the help of the Yorkshire Ambulance Association a community defibrillator is now located at the village hall operated by the First Responders.
- Teams of litter pickers organised by RPC have been clearing litter from roadsides and footpaths round the village
- Each year the PC provides and erects the village Christmas tree and lights. This is an event in itself which provides much joy to the community.

Links to external organisations.

Parish Councillors represented the council's interests on a number of outside bodies including:

The Village Hall Management Committee. Two parish councillors sit on the VHMC and report back to the Parish Council after the quarterly meetings. The VHMC managed to make another £3000 contribution to the Parish Council during the year but warned that income has fallen and a similar donation next year will be difficult. These donations help offset the impact of loan repayments on the parish precept. The PC are working with the VHMC to reduce noise disturbance emanating from their functions.

The Village Hub

Rudby PC supported the Sycamore project at the Methodist Chapel with a £6000 donation. The Hub has proved to be a great success providing the community with a local café, cosy meeting place, a children's library, free wifi and computer access. It is run on a volunteer basis and may need PC support in the future.

A PC member sits on **The Bathurst Trust** which provides educational grants to local children who fulfil the trust's criteria.

The Tarran legacy has been gifted to RPC to provide money to use on the green for maintaining trees and seats.

We have also been represented on a number of different outside organisations including:

The Yorkshire Local Council Association

Stokesley and Villages Community Regeneration Group

Yorkshire County Council (regarding grants, speed signs, gritting, grass cutting and grit bins)

Ringmaster Messages – crime prevention

Campaign for the Protection of Rural England

Hutton Rudby Fly Fishing Club

Thank you and well done to you all once again for your contributions to a particularly busy year for Rudby Parish Council.

Jonathan Cooper
Chair RPC