

## Winston Parish Council

### Annual Report 2013/2014

During the past year there has been 12 Ordinary Meetings of the Parish Council plus the Annual General Meeting. In addition to the normal business of the Council, the following are the main issues which we have dealt with during the last year.

Complaints were received about the state of the path running alongside the A67 which was becoming overgrown. Unfortunately Heart of Teesdale were unable to help us with this project as they were fully committed to other schemes. A working party was arranged for Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2013 and over 20 residents and family members turned up as a result of which we were able to clear the full length of the path and also the path on the opposite side of the road leading to the Bus Shelter. Everybody worked very hard and I would again like to express my thanks to those who gave up their Sunday morning to do this work. Following on from this we also cleared the undergrowth around the Bus Shelter and repainted the two bench seats.

The 'Welcome to Winston' Pack has now been printed and a copy delivered to all properties in the Village. It is the intention of the Parish Council to ensure that all new residents receive a copy of the pack upon their arrival and also to update the information within the pack as and when necessary.

Unfortunately we did have an incident involving the Travellers during the period leading up to the Appleby Fair in June 2013. One evening horses were put in the Children's Play Park by a group of Travellers and as the ground was wet damage was caused to the grassed areas. The Police were informed and did speak to the Travellers about this issue, but were unable to take any action as the horses were on private land.

Members of the Parish Council attend all meetings of the Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum and at each meeting have stressed to the representatives from Durham County Council the need to leave the grass uncut on the verge to the North side of the junction in the period leading up to the Appleby Fair so that there is adequate grazing for the horses and also to provide portable toilets for use by the Travellers. The grass was left uncut this year but toilets were not provided for several days after the arrival of the Traveller. I have, with the backing of the Police, stressed to Durham County Council the need for them to take our requirements seriously and have received assurances that the grass will not be cut and toilets will be provided earlier this coming year.

Another matter which is regularly raised at the Forum meeting is the fact that the Traveller Liaison Officers are unavailable at weekends. The usual time for the Travellers to arrive is on the Friday prior to the Appleby Fair and if there are any problems this is when they often happen. The Forum Members have repeatedly asked for Durham County Council to provide cover over this weekend and although DCC are considering this matter no commitment has yet been received.

With regard to grass cutting, following our previous contractor ceasing to trade, we obtained competitive tenders for the work and awarded the contract to C.A. Stamp. We have been very satisfied with their performance and have therefore taken the decision to extend the contract for a further 12 months.

We have been contacted by the Solicitors dealing with the estate of Mr Robert Robson, late of 6 Highcliffe Edge, who sadly died on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. In his will he left a legacy to be utilised in accordance with the wishes of Winston Parish Council. It is our intention to discuss this matter with his relatives and to allocate the money in accordance with his wishes.

The development of the Parish Council website continues and it is hoped that it will soon be available in a much improved and user friendly format. It is our intention to place as much information relating to the Parish Council as possible on the site, so that it easily accessible to all members of the public.

I would like at this stage to express our thanks to Jane Ayre who took on the onerous task of Parish Clerk last May. The number of documents which are passed down to us from both central and local government seems to grow year by year and in addition to dealing with this Jane has been working hard to develop the website and also obtain her CiLCA qualification without which the Parish Council would be unable to apply for Quality Status.

The Parish Council is always keen to be aware of any issues which may affect the local community and therefore have representatives on the Teesdale Local Councils' Forum, the Smaller Local Councils' Forum and the Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum and attend the Teesdale Action Partnership Meeting when appropriate.

Members of the public are always welcome to attend Parish Council meetings which are held at 7pm on the second Thursday of each month and, with prior written application, raise any issue of particular concern.

Mike Taylor

Chair-Winston Parish Council