

Winston Parish Council

Annual Report 2015/2016

During the past year there has been 11 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.

We reviewed the grass cutting carried out by C A Stamp and were pleased with the work that he had done during the previous year. It was therefore decided to renew his contract as he agreed there would be no cost increase.

The provision of a defibrillator for Winston is still an issue which we have not yet resolved. We continue to ask for assistance from the North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust to obtain financial support and hope to resolve this matter in the near future.

We are pleased to report that there were no problems with the Travellers during the Appleby Fair period. The numbers of Travellers stopping at the various official stopover sites in Teesdale was significantly lower than in previous years although we have been informed by the Cumbrian Police that the overall number attending the Fair was the same as last year. We did have complaints about the gate to the Play Park being locked, but explained to the complainants the situation that had been experienced in previous years of horses being put in the Play Park and the resultant damage that had to be rectified.

The main issue affecting Winston last year was the planning application submitted by Hill Top Farm to construct a new building in connection with the plasterboard recycling plant and a retrospective permit for increased tonnage of processed material. Many local residents had submitted objections to Durham County Council about the application, but there were also those in favour.

Mr Ian Bainbridge requested to attend a Parish Council Meeting to explain his position and we were pleased to invite him to our August Meeting.

Councillors took the opportunity to raise concerns put forward by the local community in respect of environmental and traffic issues and the overall management of the site. They also queried the statement that within 5 years it was proposed to move the business to another location. (For a more detailed report please refer to the minutes of our meeting held on 13th August 2015 available on the Parish Council website).

Another issue which arose was the fencing off of an area of land at the entrance to the field adjacent to the Bridgewater Arms. This area of land has been maintained by the Parish Council for many years and we therefore wrote to the owner of the field to ask if he had any proof of ownership. We have in our possession maps of the Village going back a number of years, all of which show that this area does not belong to the field. This matter is still to be resolved.

The Parish Council website continues to be updated with all documentation relating to the Council

We continue to work towards achieving the Local Councils Award Scheme at Foundation Level. I would like to give a big thank you to our Clerk, Jane Ayre, for preparing all the documentation required and ensuring that our website is updated on a regular basis.

I would also like to thank Cllrs Kath Race and Richard Smith for carrying out all the work in connection with the Christmas tree and lights which the Village can be proud of.

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.

Unfortunately I have to report one unwelcome item. Recently we had an act of mindless vandalism in Winston, when the glass panes in both the Parish Council and the Village Hall notice boards were smashed. The cost of the repair to the Parish Council board was £105.60. There has also been fly tipping in both the lay-by on the A67 and also on the verges. We would ask everybody to look out for any instances of this nature and report them to the appropriate authority.

Currently we are one member short on the Parish Council and I would encourage anyone who has an interest in joining to contact myself or any of the other Councillors.

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

