

Winston Parish Council

Annual Report 2012/2013

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.

Firstly I would like to welcome our new Parish Clerk Jane Ayre, who will be joining us following Sybil Nelson's decision to resign at the end of March. We would like to thank Sybil for all the hard work she has put in over previous years and wish her all the best for the future.

Following a request from residents we were able to obtain 2 dog waste bins which were supplied and installed by Durham County Council at each end of the path running alongside the A67.

Complaints were also received about the state of the path which was becoming overgrown. I contacted Heart of Teesdale who run a Volunteer Service to provide help with this type of project and a working party was arranged. Unfortunately on the agreed date the path could not be seen because of the snow and we had to cancel. Since then Durham County Council have been carrying out work to the underpass running under the A67 which again meant that we could not work on the path. However now that all work is complete, we hope to be able to carry out the clearing of the path.

It was suggested at one of our meeting that it would be a good idea for the Parish Council to put together a 'Welcome to Winston' Pack which could be given to all new residents when they moved into the Village in order to inform them of the various organisations which exist and also detail which local services were available. Our thanks go to Jim Cook who has liaised with all the organisations based in the Village and has put together a document which is now ready to print.

Unfortunately we did have an incident involving the Travellers during the period leading up to the Appleby Fair in June 2012. One evening horses were put in the Children's Play Park by a group of Travellers who then locked the gate to prevent their removal 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.

As some of you will be aware I am a regular attendee of the Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum and at each meeting I 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 cut a few days before the Travellers arrived and no toilets were provided until the day before they left. 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 this year.

On the subject of grass cutting, we were informed that the firm we used last year are no longer available for this type of work. It must be said that we were not happy with the standard of grass cutting provided by them even taking into account the wet summer which made the task more difficult. We are therefore in the process of obtaining tenders from local contractors for the new season and will monitor their performance to try and ensure a better standard.

We are still concerned about the amount of water running off the fields and across the road at the approach to Winston Bridge and will continue to press the Highways Department for a better solution

to this ongoing problem. We are also trying to resolve the problem of the flooding caused by the blockages which occur to the culvert under the road at the entrance to the Village adjacent to the Bridgewater Arms.

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