

Bishopton Parish Council

Parish Meeting 16th May, 2018

Chairman's Annual Report

Bishopton Parish Council welcomed one new Councillor this year Debbie Latham and said goodbye to Colin Headlam, whose contribution had been much appreciated. We are still looking to make up our numbers to 7. Very sadly our clerk David Thorman became ill in the summer and unfortunately was not able to continue in the role. David has contributed an enormous amount over the years and in fact completely modernized the Parish Council. There are not enough words to express our thanks to David and we wish him and Val our very best. We were lucky enough to find a new Clerk Les Foggett by the end of the year and we look forward to a long and happy partnership with him. We continue to work with DBC, our Borough Councillor Brian Jones and always support our Village Hall and St Peters church. Councillors attend various committees representing BPC. We strive to communicate effectively with residents and hope that they feel able to contact any member of the Council if they have queries or concerns.

Registered Village Green

The main work that has been done this year is outside nos 11-17 High Street. This has been completely re-done and following the renovation of the properties has we feel finished off the job to a high standard. Some smaller jobs were completed at the same time and we hope that residents are happy with how the village looks. The Parish Council work very hard to maintain the registered Village Green to a high standard thus improving the visual amenity for all its' residents.

Annual Litterpick – we are most grateful to the residents that turned out to complete a very successful litterpick. 21 people in total (plus a small baby) turned out. We have found that there has been more rubbish dumped this year and have had to contact DBC on a number of occasions about fly tipping. A special thank you goes to Ian and Jayne Robins in collecting all the litter left on the roadside by volunteers - no mean feat!

Whilst some jobs are now having to be paid for we still have some loyal volunteers who do odd jobs around the village when requested. A big thank you to them.

Planning applications.

A number of planning applications were received during the year and the PC considered them and responded to DBC accordingly.

Outline planning permission has been granted by DBC for 9 houses on Cobby Castle Lane. A Sec. 106 Agreement was attached to this planning with a contribution to the local bus service that goes to Darlington once a week.

Various applications have been granted for agricultural sheds, extensions, tree felling, a dog walking area etc.

Highways Issues

Our speed monitoring equipment is unfortunately broken at the moment and the Council is considering its' options. Our attempts to start up Community Speedwatch have failed due to a lack of response from residents. We are still hoping to get enough people to give it a go in 2018.

Along with the rest of the country our roads have been covered in potholes. No sooner are they filled in than they appear again. The Parish Council has contacted DBC on numerous occasions and informs them straight away if they notice a new problem. Flooding on Mill Lane has caused great concern to residents. We have also had damaged road signs and are waiting for these to be fixed.

Local Bus Service

The service to Darlington on a Monday continues and we believe that funding has been secured for this to continue beyond 2018.

The Village Coffee Shop has also been funding a mini bus to take some of its' customers shopping once a month to places other than Darlington.

Financial

Les Foggett is our responsible Financial Officer and will report separately. We are very grateful to Peter Wood for his help at audit time and whenever we need financial advice.

Playing Field

We are now making great progress with this project. The lease for the field is being prepared and arrangements made to pay for the solicitor's and land agent's fees. New quotes have been obtained for the initial preparation work and funding obtained via a grant from Banks to cover this. We obtained planning permission from DBC for the change of use and access into the play area. As soon as the lease is signed we will be able to go ahead. The Village Coffee Shop and Blue Bell Inn have very generously both donated amounts which will go towards buying equipment as soon as we are ready.

Parish Councillors attended the School Fair and had a very productive day informing parents about the new playground and compiling a list of contacts for the future.

Very soon we will be looking to form a committee of residents/parents who will be asked to think about how they want the playground to be run and to come up with suggestions to make it successful. It is the Councils intention to apply for more grants to pay for larger equipment.

Parish Neighbourhood Plan

This is a very slow process and the position at the moment is that we have applied to DBC for the area covered by this plan to include Little and Great Stainton. This is classed as the "designated area". We have now applied for this designation and it has been granted. We can now enter into discussions and begin to formulate our local plan.

Battles Over

In commemoration and remembrance of the end of WW1 and the many millions who were killed or came home dreadfully wounded, a chain of beacons will be lit throughout the UK. Bishopton Parish Council has registered to take part in this on Sunday 11th November 2018. At the same time the church is looking into possibly ringing the bells of the church as will many others. More details about this national event can be found on the web site of the Pageantmaster -brunopeek.co.uk and residents will receive more detailed information nearer the time.

Bishopton Airfield

We were approached by Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust (ABCT) to see if we would like to receive a plaque to commemorate Bishopton Airfield. They have a scheme set up to honour Britain's World War One Home Defence fighter Flight Stations and landing grounds (such as Bishopton) which played a major part in winning the conflict. Bishopton Airfield was used from October 1916 to August 1919 and various fighter types of No 36 Squadron had Bishopton available to them as a Home Defence landing ground.

The plaque has arrived and we are in the process of deciding on a location and ordering the stone plinth.

Tree Charter

Bishopton Parish Council submitted a number of signatures supporting the Tree Charter and received a Legacy Tree to plant in the parish.

Data Protection Regulations

New legislation entitled the General Data Protection Regulations comes into force on 23rd May. The Parish Council has to comply with this. We have registered with the Office of the Information Commissioner and have produced all the relevant documentation and believe that we are now ready for this and will be fully compliant.

Other activities

The Parish Council again provided a Christmas tree for the village which volunteers kindly erected along with lights throughout the village. Once again BPC paid for Fishburn Brass Band to come and play carols for residents around the tree. It was a most enjoyable event and well attended.

A poppy wreath for Remembrance Sunday was provided and placed on behalf of residents by the Parish Council.

We have had a number of complaints from residents about **dog fouling** and a flyer was sent out to all residents explaining the health hazards and asking them to be more thoughtful. This offence carries a fixed penalty of £75.

Finally, I would like to thank all Councillors for their continued support and hard work in serving the interests of the parish. Also I thank Les Foggett for taking over so swiftly and smoothly.

Lindley MacMahon - Chairman