

ABERFORD & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Spring 2012

PRECEPT INCREASE

We have increased our precept for 2012/2013 by £2000. This will mean just a pound or two extra for every house.

We expect to have a reasonable revenue reserve at the end of the financial year of perhaps £10,000. There are many expenses which cannot be fully predicted such as renewing

Christmas lights at a cost of nearly £4000. Additionally there may be costs in developing Jubilee Field above the Capital Reserve amount – seating, planting and seedcorn money for additional phases.

We try to support village organisations with small grants – this year we have given £250 to Aberford & District

Community Interest Company to purchase video equipment which can be borrowed by village organisations.

A further sum of £1000 has been given to Aberford in Bloom for planting around the village. You can see the accounts on the website and they are externally audited each year.

JUBILEE FIELD

We have given School Field a new name to coincide with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year and to differentiate between it and the field next to school. Legal agreements have taken longer than expected and unfortunately we were not successful in obtaining grant funding. However a decision has been taken to re-apply which will not delay the work to any great degree – it is expected to start in the autumn. Additionally we are very hopeful of obtaining a Grant from the LCC Well Being fund – our Ward Councillors are very supportive and our application will go before them shortly.

Preparatory clearance work has been done before birds start nesting and a contractor will be appointed shortly. The Head Mistress – Miss Boulding – is very pleased with what the facilities will provide for our children and she is looking forward to incorporating them into the school week. If you are interested in forming a Tennis or Netball club or are just a group of friends who would like to play, then talk to us about what you would like as we will be managing these facilities which will be open to all. One of the courts will be multi-purpose and one for tennis.

Neighbourhood Plan/SHLAA

We had a good response for volunteers to help prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and Councillors and volunteers held a preliminary meeting in March.

A further meeting has now being held on 26th April to cover Terms of Reference and other items of administrative necessity. Currently the management group has 20 members but more are sought to lighten the load – and in particular we are interested in finding people

who live in and around Parlington as the group is under-represented from that corner of the parish. If you can help then you will be very welcome – contact the Clerk.

The main emphasis of the NP will be to look at housing, as there are several sites 'pencilled' into Leeds City Council Strategic Housing Land Area Assessment document for Aberford. Whilst Aberford is classed as 'rural' and has no particular target allocated to it, we feel it wise to put forward what residents feel about housing

needs/sites rather than risk having something imposed from above. The Garforth end of the Parish has a great deal of housing 'pencilled in' under SHLAA so it may be that a separate section within our plan can be given to it.

At the moment Cllr Forster is finding it difficult to progress this in the Cedar Ridge and Brierlands area so please contact him if you are concerned and willing to help. See how things are progressing by following the links on www.aberfordonline.com.

Parking in Lotherton Lane/Lotherton Hall

We succeeded, after a lengthy fight, in getting a stretch of raised curb pavement installed at the end of Lotherton Lane to deter people parking there, presumably to avoid paying parking charges at the Hall.

Foolishly some people are still squeezing onto the end of the pavement and opposite on the

grass! We have asked for the police to take action at the weekends but Cllr Robinson tells us that LCC Highways intend to wait until the entrance/exit alterations to Lotherton Hall are complete before they address parking measures such as yellow lines.

You may like to know that it is still possible to walk to the Hall site from the public footpath

which runs from the B1217 around the back of the site and on into the grounds.

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

This will soon be finalised and submitted to the LCC Planning Department. It will be used along with the Master Plan document to help the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Traffic Management

Some progress has been made in that we will be getting a 'refuge' island in Cattle Lane at the junction with Main Street. This should make it much safer for everyone to cross Cattle Lane at this wide point. We will also be getting some traffic islands in the B1217 junction with the village road. This will deter drivers from overtaking traffic turning left into the village road in the area marked up for right turning traffic – which is commonly done at the moment. This subject is ongoing - we will continue from time to time to tackle other traffic issues such as the parking by the football field.

An attempt was made to bring together those who park vehicles and the Football Club, so that the Club's parking could be used during the week. Unfortunately this failed to provide a solution. We are now looking at other solutions for that area.

At the time of writing, we have been unable to reach agreement with LCC Traffic on the issue of creating a Bus Stop Clearway in Main Street. Two alternative options have been put forward which are not acceptable to us – Ward Councillor Matthew Robinson is to organise a meeting with LCC Traffic Officers and ourselves as he feels sure that an amicable solution can be achieved.

WIND TURBINES – HOOK MOOR AREA

A meeting was held on 14th March between Banks Renewables and representatives from Micklefield and Aberford PCs. The purpose was a 'getting to know you' session and to set up a Liaison Committee.

At this time, Banks are taking the scheme forward. There are many planning conditions which Banks have to overcome in order to start work and it will be perhaps

two years before they can work their way through them to the satisfaction of the Ministry of Defence and LCC Planners.

If and when Banks move forward with the scheme, then there will be regular meetings with the Liaison Committee to address local concerns. The next meeting is scheduled for September and we will be keeping you informed if things progress.

BROADBAND

We have not made the progress that we would have liked at this point.

Unfortunately the NextGenUs company has, we believe, ceased trading within the last couple of weeks so that we need to regroup. However, we shall continue to take this forward.

NEWS from CEDAR RIDGE, BRIERLANDS and NORTH NEWSHOLD

At last we have had the entrance to Cedar Ridge tidied up and Garforth in Bloom have agreed to continue with maintenance. They have one volunteer from the estate and would welcome some more.

The maintenance of the pathway between Cedar Ridge and Brierlands was again broached by Cllr Forster at a recent Forum meeting for Garforth and Swillington when he asked why one side was tidied up and not the other. The problem of rubbish and dog excrement was brought to the attention of Cllr Forster as this is on the increase since Mrs McGill, who was our Neighbourhood Warden, was transferred to other duties. PLEASE take your

rubbish home with you and watch what your dog is doing, use a 'poohbag'.

You would not wish to be fined we are sure! On the latter subject please ensure your dog is on a lead when you are on a path abutting a public highway. The City Council is obviously keen that this particular law is adhered to as a number of fixed penalty fines have been served recently for this offence.

As you are all aware the land at North Newhold has had outline planning permission for some time and now specific plans have been placed before the LCC Planners. As a consequence there has been a lot of activity

on the site so we can expect warehouses and industrial units, no offices as they have been removed from the latest plans, to appear shortly together with a new roundabout on the A642 and some alteration to the road layout. This is on the proviso that the drainage is satisfactory and the items on the public highway are paid for.

Finally to echo the item on Councillor Vacancies - your local Parish Councillor, Ian Forster, would like some support from this area. He is not getting any younger and must seriously consider retirement shortly and he feels you must be represented by someone who lives in this particular part of the Parish. Could that be you?

HANGING POTS/ ABERFORD IN BLOOM GROUP

We will be having Red/White/Blue this year to honour the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year. Several sponsors have already come forward to sponsor a Pot and their names will be displayed as before.

The AiB Group will also be trying to stick to the same colour theme this year. They welcome volunteers as there is much to do with a village as spread out as Aberford. Matt & Maria are at aberfordinbloom@googlemail.com.

Special thanks are due to Mr Rogers and Mr Prentice for their litter-picking efforts at the north and south ends of the village. Our village is generally mostly litter-free and we want to keep it that way.

Public Footpaths/ Countryside

Please keep to the footpaths – we have many within the Parish. Wandering off into the fields or woods really angers landowners who may have game birds and stock frightened by dogs in particular.

We are very lucky to have easy access to countryside but permissive paths can just as easily be withdrawn. If you are a cyclist or horse riders please do not ride on footpaths – there are several bridlepaths in and around the village.

The footpath over the A1 seems to be regularly cycled and it will become churned up in time to the detriment of walkers.

POLICING

Occasional sessions are held in the Village Hall (PACT meetings) and the dates will be publicised on the noticeboards.

Additionally our PCSO Geoff Nottingham has regular open sessions in the Arabian Horse. We have generally been a low crime village and parish but crime has actually doubled over the last year!

Thefts from unsecured outhouses and sheds, together with thefts from (sometimes unlocked) cars have increased.

Recently someone was going around and pretending to be deaf and raising money to attend art school – they had pencil ‘sketches’ to sell which proved to be photocopies on close examination. There will always be scams of this nature so be vigilant.

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

We will be helping to fund a commemorative souvenir for every child at our school. Details have to be decided in consultation with school.

The P.T.A. tell us they are planning a Jubilee Tea Party for the children at school on Thursday 31st May from 4-6pm. The P.T.A believe that village organisations such as the Arabian Horse pub, Aberford Albion Football Club, Horticultural Society, Methodist Church and Sunbeams Group are wanting to get involved in various ways with the celebrations. The Village Gala is now scheduled for 7th July at 1pm.

Cllr Mrs Gill Broadley will be helping to co-ordinate events.

Bin Collection Days

If you are confused about your regular collection days then you can get information via the internet – if you visit Leeds City Council Refuse Collection website you will find you can put in your address and see the information.

Service seems to have been quite good recently so it should not be necessary for bins to be left out for days if everyone knows the specific day.

If the collection is missed then advice is to leave the bin out for 48 hours only. Thereafter report direct to LCC and the Clerk who will take this up for you.

COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

At the risk of repeating ourselves – we have 2 vacancies. Some of us are getting on in years and some are not in the best of health. Some still work fulltime or part-time. Some volunteer on other village organisations in addition to being Councillors. There have been no contested elections since the early 1980s due to lack of candidates.

Whilst it would be great to think that everyone is delighted with the Parish Councillors and doesn't see the need for any change, we are sure that's not exactly the case! For the sake of continuity, it would be best if some new Councillors could come forward so that they could benefit from the experience of existing ones.

Perhaps Parish Councils everywhere find it difficult, but will there be one in Aberford in a year or two? Perhaps you feel that would be acceptable. If you see your future as being in the village then please think about joining us. You can keep up to date with what we are doing on our website www.aberfordonline.com.