



NRS&NMHPC

Newton Regis, Seckington and No Man's Heath Parish Council

Three villages, one community

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – No. 224b.

Tuesday 9th May 2017
Newton Regis Village Hall

Present: Cllr D Waithman (Chairman)
Cllr D Cox (Vice-Chair) (arrived 7.25)
Cllr S Wilson
Cllr D Davies
Mrs N Allton (Clerk)
4 x Parishioners

The meeting commenced at 7.57pm

1. Apologies for Absence

Borough Cllr D Humphries, Cllr Craig Vincent.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly

Minutes of the last Annual Parish Assembly, held on 18th May 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's Annual Report

This year has seen successes and the usual not quite so successful items so I think it only right to be positive. We started the year with again getting through our Annual Audit without any problems, this always being down to Mrs Nicola Allton, our Clerk, who handles our finances brilliantly. We have been able to add to our reserves this year which means that we are almost halfway to the recommended Reserve of 1 year's precept. The precept has remained the same as in previous years, i.e. £10,000 less the ever dwindling amount of Grant that the Government send down the line to us via North Warwickshire Borough Council, who have always passed on the full amount even though they are not instructed to, only advised to do so, therefore thank you Borough Council. As in past years we have made grants to all three local churches towards the upkeep of the respective churchyards and paid for the annual inspection and servicing of St Mary's church clock. A suggestion was made that there wasn't a waste bin between the Duckpond and the playing field so in the interests of hygiene, one was purchased and installed at the end of Kings Lane. We also supported the Annual New Year's Day Goosewalk and despite the dreadful weather the hardy walkers raised £96 which together with the £35 from the raffle that Arnold Walsh so ably ran, made a grand total of £131 that went to St Mary's fabrication fund. Amongst other things we have had the Defibrillator's battery replaced, not cheap, and bought daffodil bulbs to replace those that have gone to leaf only. The phone box has been successfully re-painted and the W.I. carry on dressing it for important dates throughout the year.

Your Council has maintained the Parish Playing Field in Newton Regis and is pleased to say that again Tamworth 3rds and 4ths play alternate Saturdays through the season. Together with the Senior teams we do all we can to support the Juniors of Austrey and Newton Regis Junior Cricket Club who run teams from 9 year olds to seniors. If anyone knows of a youngster who would like to have a go, Tuesday night is training night at the Playing Field and they will be made most welcome. You will have noticed how much tidier the edges around the playground and edges of the field are nowadays. We have contracted this out to Alan Passey who makes a good job of maintaining it. We are continually looking at some more play equipment for the playground but as the most basic items cost around £10,000 when installed we just have to keep waiting for funding opportunities before we can do anything about it. We have also been looking at the Playing Field car park but to do a basic tarmac surface on it all the quotations have been around the £40,000 mark so is totally out of our capabilities. We have tried for funding for this but no-one will entertain it as they all say that they will only fund capital projects and surfacing would be maintenance which they won't touch. With our current capability being around £2,000 per annum it would take some 20 years to reach today's total, what the cost would be in 20 years time is anybody's guess. We are still trying to replace our powered roller but I'm afraid it is dragging on. One thing we have done is to replace the light units on the car park lampposts. This came about by one lamp failing and as it was obsolete we had two options, one to find something similar or to change to modern LED lighting. Even though more expensive to buy we chose the latter as it enabled us to get a decent reduction in our electric costs and they should also last longer and need less maintenance. This year for the first time in my time, the field is free of rabbits. We still get the odd visiting bunny but having a family of foxes nearby is certainly easing our Pest Controller's workload. I also hope that this message has got through to our mole community, if you live in the hedgerow, you are welcome to stay as long as you like but if you get into the playground or out onto the cricket pitch you are causing a Health & Safety issue and that has to be dealt with. Finally on two occasions

we have had to clear human waste from the playground, not children's but grown-up's. I'm sure that we don't have to say, please report it or who.

I'm sure you will have noticed the increase in dog fouling that has taken place over the past few months. This has been reported to the Borough Council's Dog Warden who has supplied the additional posters that have popped up along Main Rd., more can be supplied, ask any Parish Councillor. Dog fouling is particularly nasty and can cause blindness in children and lungworm, a dreadful disease, in dogs and cattle. This latter can kill your dog so if you see anyone failing to clean up after their animal, report it as it might be your dog that dies. Reporting is discreet and can be made to any Parish Councillor or directly to the Dog Warden at the Council Offices, your name will not be disclosed.

Last Christmas was the first time we have managed to get lights on a tree, the large fir in the corner of the churchyard. The lights were kindly donated by the owner of Newton Regis Garden Store but the installation was totally down to Cllr. Craig Vincent, ably assisted by his wife. We have to thank the Vicar and P.C.C. for the loan of the tree and allowing us to tap into the church's outside lighting. This we expect to be a permanent fixture.

We have, unfortunately, found major problems with one of the willows around the Duckpond our tree surgeons have looked at it and think it might be saved by reducing the top hamper considerably so we have had this done. The tree is now on a three year watch cycle and if there is further deterioration it will have to come down and be replaced. We also have the benches around the pond maintained and regularly replace some of the wooden slats. We have been asked to investigate cleaning out the pond and this is ongoing but the cost is looking to be out of our price range.

I'm sure everyone is aware of the speeding problem through the village, especially at the ends of Main Rd/Austrey Lane. We have been successful in gaining funding from our County Councillor, Cllr. Dave Parsons, to have work done to these points. This will hopefully ease the problems of vehicles exiting Seckington Lane and the right angle bend coming into the village from the Austrey direction, the latter compounded by parked vehicles. We are having some success with controlling the abysmal parking by parents picking up their children by photographing vehicles parked in dangerous places and passing on to the Police. The PCSO with responsibilities for this area will then write to the offenders warning them of possible prosecution. Any resident can help with this, but two points, when taking the photograph make sure you note the time and date and secondly do NOT get involved in any altercation. Finally let any Parish Councillor have a copy and it will be followed up. We are hoping that being in a new Financial Year that we can get similar attention given to the Kings Lane entrance into the village.

There have been various items relating to Planning, most of which we support, or at least have no objections to but the firm trying to build on the field next to Lime Grove has again tried to get Planning access for 6 houses on that site. This we objected to as it was basically the same as the plans that were thrown out by the Planning Inspector after the Borough Council had turned it down and it went to Appeal. We still support the plans to build houses on the site of Manor Farm after Mr. Wilson retires. There is an ongoing item relating to the two boards outside the Queen's Head. When the revamped signage and lighting was up for Planning Permission, those two boards were considered to be out of keeping with the location and we objected. Eventually a deal was done in that if we would withdraw our objections to the plans providing these signs were removed. Punch Taverns has seen fit to ignore this and despite it being out for enforcement, continue to do so.

We have been asked to see if we can arrange for a second Defibrillator training session to be held but unfortunately the Ambulance Service, who carry out the training, requires more than 12 people to attend to make it viable and so far we have only got half a dozen so if anyone out there wishes to put their name forward it will be added. Those names already submitted are stored so there is no need for putting it forward again.

It is nice to know that there are residents of Seckington with a serious urge to tidy up and upgrade Seckington to make it into a much better looking village. We are, of course, supporting them in every way that we can. This is another area where the Garden Store is helping out and I would like to think that we all reciprocate when buying gardening items. One resident, whose property is accessed off the Ashby Rd is having problems with heavy goods vehicles overnighing in the lay-by and blocking their access, not nice as the lady is a MacMillan nurse and needs to get in and out at all hours. On top of this is the fact that some drivers use their hedge as a toilet and leave rubbish behind that has to be cleared on a daily basis. The Police, Borough & Council are all involved with little progress.

The Parish Council website is now fully up and running and will be the easiest way to see what your Parish Council is doing. We also have a Facebook page that is used. At this time we do not have a Twitter account as we don't really believe that, unlike the President of the USA, this is the way to conduct our business.

Finally I must thank all my fellow Councillors who have made this year go well and add extra thanks to our Clerk, Mrs. Nicola Allton who has kept us all on the straight and narrow. Now we can all look forward to the challenges that the next 12 months will bring.

4. Audited Accounts 2015 / 2016

The Clerk reported that the external auditors, Grant Thornton, had successfully passed the annual accounts of the Parish Council for 2015/2016, though the auditor advised that the signing of the annual return needed two minute references and the new value of assets should be RESTATED. These were available for viewing.

5. Any other Parish affairs

None

The Chairman closed this part of the meeting at 7:38 pm.

Chairman
Cllr D Waithman

Date