

Nether Poppleton Parish Council - Annual Report April 2016

During the year we were sorry to hear of the death of Ronnie Hansell, who had been Clerk to the Council for over 50 years.

He has been missed since his retirement for his input based on a depth of knowledge and understanding.

In May we said goodbye to John Craven who had complete nine years on the Council and Chris Walsh who was finding a conflict between his own work load and Council business.

We were pleased to welcome Sean Barry and Ian Woods to fill the vacancies.

Much of the work of Councillors is dealing with week by week matters. These can include checking on the maintenance of the Parish Lands, considering planning applications, attending meetings as a representative of the Council and generally keeping an eye on what is going on.

The management of the Parish Lands includes the ongoing work with the Conservation Volunteers controlling the undergrowth and replanting of Warren Lea.

Additionally we have had removed the dangerous end of life ash trees adjacent to Riverside Walk and planted a suitable hedge to replace the trees.

Grass cutting on the river bank and along the verges of Main Street continues.

Separately there is a group who looks after the Wild Life Area and another who controls what goes on in the Moat Fields. This again has been particularly difficult this year due to the persistent problems arising from the exercising of dogs and the worrying of sheep.

Separation on a permanent basis was considered but found unworkable. Steps are now in hand to have a Public Service Protection Order implemented.

We regularly receive reports from our representatives attending Youth Club meetings, Adventure Playground, The Poppleton Community Trust, The Millennium Green, York Branch of the Local Council Associations and meetings called by the City of York Council; and other organisations.

Edie Jones has been the prime mover on formulating a Neighbourhood Plan for Poppleton with the assistance of Don Simpson and Peter Powell together with representatives from Upper Poppleton Parish Council. We receive regular reports on how the Plan is progressing and we particularly thank Edie Jones for her persistence in ensuring the Plan reaches its legal stage and becomes part of the Local Planning Law.

Once again the Council was please to support an application to Yorkshire in Bloom.

Regrettably we just missed out on receiving gold but had to be content with a silver gilt — again. Better luck this year.

One of the ways the Council helps organisations within the village as whole is by allowing grant applications to help with paying for capital works, covering insurances and oiling the wheels.

Amongst those organisations are Poppleton Community Railway Nursery, St Everilda's Churchyard, Millennium Green, Poppleton Under Fives, the Adventure Playground, Poppleton Community Trust and Poppleton Youth Club.

Towards the end of last year, it was agreed to tidy up Council procedures and to operate on a more efficient basis.

To this end, and to comply with good practice regulations, a Planning Meeting is now held before the Parish Council meetings, so that issues arising from applications can be discussed in public.

Parish Council meetings are now value driven so that discussion matters are dealt with early in an agenda and representatives provide written reports in advance of a meeting.

The aim is to focus meetings on decision items rather than for information only, to cut down on the time taken to debate issues and to reduce the length of time taken with any particular meeting.

As regards the future, the Council will need to consider whether further works should be undertaken on tree maintenance, the control of the undergrowth in the woodland area behind the War Memorial, the frequency of the grass cuts

to maintain a better greensward and the implementation of the PSPO on the Moat Fields.

The Annual Report closes with thanks to all Councillors for the time and involvement all given on a voluntary basis and to our Clerk keeping Council Records and advising us all of our legal responsibilities.

Peter Powell

Chairman

18 April 2016