

Year at a Glance

Thanks are due to all the Parish Councillors who gave their time and energy to the tasks undertaken during the four-year life of the Parish Council. Special mention should be made of Bob Troop, who unfortunately resigned from the Council due to ill health. We're sad that Jen Marsh has decided to retire from the Parish Council, and we thank her for her sterling work, especially on behalf of the people of Harwell. Thanks are also due to our former District Councillor Nip Martin, who has helped on many occasions.

We started down the road to Quality accreditation in September 2003, and our application has been successful - more in the summer newsletter. We decided to go for accreditation for two reasons: the first was to demonstrate that we provide a quality service, and the second was to give us the best possible chance of survival in any future local government re-organisation. There's now no doubt that there'll be a shake up of principal councils within the next two years and there's a lot of uncertainty about what's intended at 'Neighbourhood' level. It's commonly accepted that the Quality scheme was set up by the Government to test the resolve of local councils, and it's a fact that take-up has been poor. Hopefully those of us who've grasped the nettle will be looked on favourably.

The village website is not just for the Parish Council, and although it's continually improving there's still little interest from village organisations in submitting information. Please provide some input to make the website more interesting.

Although our villages didn't win any of the main prizes in the Best Kept Village Competition last year, we did very well at our first attempt. We were awarded a certificate of Merit in respect of the Metcalfe Recreation Ground, and congratulations go to the Trustees, Management Committee and especially the Groundsman who received the certificate at the awards ceremony last November. This year Everton is entering the 300-700 population category, and we are going to be up

against some tough opposition: Oxton will want to regain their title from Gringley who will be fighting hard to retain their title. The village looked very good last year but we need a little more effort to improve our chances. The District and County Councils have already responded to our requests for improvements, and several old signs have been replaced with more to come hopefully before the judging in June.

We've provided two dog waste bins on Pinfold Lane, which are emptied courtesy of a small group of public-spirited local residents. We're also willing to provide others where residents perceive a need and are willing to empty them.

The odour nuisance from Tunnel Tech North is horrendous. No-one should have to suffer odour nuisance on this level, and Harwell residents get it pretty bad. There are new Government guidelines in place, but it's going to be some time before they really take effect. In the meantime we're doing everything possible to reduce the nuisance, although it has to be said that responsibility for control of such nuisances lies with the District Council.

We're all aware of recent problems with low flying and night flying. Via the North East Bassetlaw Forum, the Parish Council is represented on the Airport Consultative Committee, and we're progressing the concerns voiced to us.

Although we're now stuck with four large houses in Harwell, the fight to stop this development gave us one small victory, in that, threatened with being reported to the Standards Board for England, Bassetlaw Planning Department have realised that we can't be fobbed off all the time. They've finally provided information that we requested several times since last June. It doesn't get us anywhere with this development as the damage is done, but at least we've put down a marker for the future.

The County Council erected the replacement bus shelter near the Harwell Road junction, and it's an improvement on the old one in respect of design and visibility issues. We've made a bid to the County Council under its Building Better Communities scheme for lighting at the Harwell

Road/A631 junction. Because of our concerns for road safety towards the southern end of High Street, we've made a further bid under the same scheme for pavement widening and an associated traffic priority scheme. This year saw an end to the saga of the beacon on the pedestrian crossing, and we've been promised that permanent interactive speed signs on the A631 have been ordered and will be installed shortly. Again our thanks go to former District Councillor Martin who alerted us to the fact that the promised signs had been cancelled from last year's budget. We then successfully applied pressure for a change of mind and have the signs agreement reinstated.

We're pleased to say that the cemetery remains in really good condition. The contractors do an excellent job. There's still, however, a problem with visitors leaving dead flowers, etc. in the Cemetery instead of using the bins provided; this detracts from the overall tidiness of the Cemetery and causes a nuisance. We held a civic service in the Cemetery on Remembrance Day to mark the 60th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War. One negative comment is that last year we had a problem with someone depositing nappies in the bins. We solved that one, but now someone's dumping bags of garden refuse in the bins. These bins are emptied at the expense of the Joint Burial Committee and costs will increase if they have to be emptied more frequently than contracted.

Our precept (local council tax) has risen from £8440 to £9000. Last year we subsidised the Parish Council out of balances, but there's a limit to how many times we can do that - hence the increase. Fortunately the phasing-out of concurrent grant by the District Council has been put on hold, and so we continue to receive a small annual grant and a small cemetery grant.

Finally, thanks go to David Wright for his sterling work in keeping Parish Council business moving forward, acting as our 'Rottweiler' where necessary, and putting in a lot of hard work on the Quality Council bid. He puts in a tremendous effort on behalf of the Parish.

Summary of the Accounts

The Parish Council began the year with an opening balance of £4,834.74 and ended it with a closing balance of £6,541.73. Details of receipts and payments are shown below.

The main source of income was the precept, which is the local charge on the Council Tax. Other sources of income included rent for Parish lands, Parish Paths Partnership Grant paid by Nottinghamshire County Council and grants from Bassetlaw District Council in the form of Cemetery Grant, Concurrent Grant and Street Cleaning Grant.

The Parish Council continued to make donations to HEDS Together, the Metcalfe Recreation Committee (support for the Playing Field and Village Hall) and the local first responder teams, plus a small donation to the WRVS. Street Cleaning Grant was distributed to Holy Trinity Church (bus shelter cleaning) and the School and Brownies who help to keep the Parish clean and tidy.

Our other main service costs related to rights of way maintenance and upkeep of the Cemetery.

Receipts

Annual Precept	8,440.00
Bassetlaw Annual Grants	1,648.00
Parish Paths Partnership Grant	1,289.88
Parish Lands Rent	1,633.00
Interest on Investments	59.59
VAT Refund	529.48
Electricity Wayleaves	<u>23.15</u>
	<u>13,623.10</u>

Payments

Parochial Christmas Party	80.00
Amenity Expenses	771.07
Staffing Costs	3,619.21
Administrative Expenses	2,613.18
HEDS Together	325.00
Community First Responders	200.00
WRVS	30.00
Village Hall	650.00
Joint Burial Committee	1,922.00
Parish Paths Partnership	623.84
Street Cleaning	607.00
Neighbourhood Watch	227.50
VAT on Payments	<u>247.31</u>
	<u>11,916.11</u>

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Everton Parish Council



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