

# Appendix 1 16/5/24

## Chairman's Report - Annual Parish Meeting May 16<sup>th</sup> 2024

Good evening. First of all to introduce myself I am Alison, the current chairman of the parish council. I would like to welcome you all and thank you for coming along to our Annual Parish Meeting. I would also like to offer a warm welcome to members of the Yorkshire Wolds Railway who have kindly agreed to join us this evening to give a talk about their heritage railway at Fimber Halt.

After the talk, refreshments have been provided by members of the parish council, and we hope you will be able to stay on to enjoy a drink and piece of cake.

*I should mention that we are not expecting the fire alarm to go off, but if it does please make your way out of the building via the two exits from this hall.*

I will start by giving a brief summary of our parish council activities over the past year, and outline a few plans we have going forward. This will be followed by an opportunity for you to ask questions, and raise any suggestions or project ideas you would like us to consider.

So, following the local elections last May which were uncontested in our parish, we started the new council year with 5 councillors and four vacancies. However by the end of June we were down to just 3 councillors after two members Fiona and Philip Nixon left the village to start their new life in Scotland. I am pleased to say that over the past few months we have attracted a number of new members and now have a healthy number of 7 councillors on board with just two vacancies remaining.

At our annual meeting of the council two weeks ago, I was elected as chairman for this year. I would like to thank Daniel who has been our chairman for the past four years, for everything he has done to support the council. Daniel is our vice chair for this year. Thanks also to Catherine, who has been our clerk for nearly 10 years now, and for all her help in supporting and advising councillors, preparing for our monthly meetings, ensuring our finances are in order, annual audits and many other statutory matters. Thanks also to all of our councillors who give up their time to help improve facilities and services in the village for everyone's benefit.

An ongoing issue is the village drainage system which has caused localised flooding after heavy rain. The parish council has been in further discussions with the ERYC flood risk management team to discuss proposed works which would help to clear surface water more quickly and we will continue to push for a satisfactory solution.

Last summer councillors met with the ERYC Streetscene team for a walk round the village to discuss various maintenance issues. We are given this opportunity every two years. We are pleased to say that after much chasing, a section of footpath in Church View was finally resurfaced earlier this year. We also highlighted the terrible state of roads in a number of other areas of the village which undergo endless unsatisfactory pot hole repairs, and we are still pushing for additional signage and road markings at the bend near to the green lane junction along Station Road which is very hazardous during winter.

We continue to maintain the pond area and flower displays at this focal point of the village, as well as displaying Christmas lights each year. We unfortunately still have a problem with vermin at the pond and seem unable to prevent excessive feeding of the ducks which is the main cause. This results in a cost to the council as we have just needed to renew our contract with ERYC for pest control services for a second year.

The village defibrillator located in the former telephone kiosk is maintained and regularly checked to ensure it is always ready in the event of an emergency. The parish council hosted a defibrillator training session for residents one evening in October, carried out by Driffield based company FAB Training. Attendance for this free training was a little disappointing, but it was felt to be really beneficial by all those who came along.

Each year we endeavour to plant more trees around the village where possible. Earlier this year we planted some maple trees at the west end of the village to mark the coronation of King Charles III, also installing a new commemorative bench on the opposite side of the road.

We have just applied for grant funding from the Do It for East Yorkshire Fund to decorate and refurbish the inside of the village bus shelter to create an information point and make it a more welcoming space. The Driffield based charity Men in Sheds will be making a wall of book shelves for us so that the book swap can also be reinstated. After a couple of incidents of vandalism last summer, the book swap moved from the bus shelter to a monthly session in the church and we thank Reverend Jane Anderson for supporting this and providing refreshments. We hope our grant application will be successful and the bus shelter project will soon be underway.

The parish council continues to take a close interest in the condition of our local green lanes to ensure they remain safe and passable for walkers, cyclists and horses and are not subjected to further damage by 4x4 vehicles. After another inspection in April with the ERYC Highways and Local Access Forum, officers took the decision to keep both sides of Garton Balk closed to vehicles, due to its deteriorating state and to allow further repair works and scrub clearance to be carried out later this year.

Speeding of vehicles through the village continues to be a constant issue day and night, and until recently we were unable to operate a Community Speed Watch scheme as the Safer Roads Humber van carried out speed monitoring in the village. However in November, councillors met with an officer from Humberside Police and two locations on Main Street were approved where CSW teams could operate from. Following a training session in March, we have 9 trained volunteers with a few more expressing an interest and awaiting training. Teams of three volunteers are required for each speed watch session for around one hour at a time. We understand that automatic number plate recognition speed cameras are currently being trialled in parts of the county, so we are hoping this may soon offer an effective alternative to the current speed monitoring schemes.

We set aside a sum of money each year for donations. In the past year we have given a donation to support the Driffield School Twilight bus, and also a donation to Garton primary school. We are very grateful to the staff of Garton school who allow us to use the school for our meetings and events through the year, and also to the parochial church council for the use of the church during school holidays.

That just about concludes my report for the year. Thank you for listening. If you would like to keep up to date with our news and activities during the year please keep an eye on the noticeboards at the bus shelter, on our website or follow our parish council Facebook page. Residents and members of the public are always welcome to come along to our monthly meetings, the next one is on June 6<sup>th</sup> here in the school.

Before I hand over to Yorkshire Wolds Railway, we now move on to the Public Open Forum section of the meeting if anyone would like to raise any questions or issues now.

Cllr Alison Botten