

Chairman's Report

Another Busy Year

We've been petitioned by residents to provide allotments, and have agreed to do so. We've approached Bassetlaw District Council to see if space can be found at the former detention centre site, and it looks as if this will be possible.

Walkers and horse riders will have noticed the new stiles, etc. which are being installed on public rights of way in partnership with the County Council. This is a big improvement. We're also looking at extending the handrail on Sam's Yard. We have a problem on path 1, where bridges are required, and this is something that the County Council is looking at.

We remain vigilant on all highway matters requiring attention, such as lighting, surfacing, signage, etc. We've submitted an application to the County Council to provide additional pavement and street lighting along the Beacon Hill Road/Halls Road/Finkell Street route.

We've started to work through the conclusions reached in the Parish Plan. We've again raised with Bassetlaw the need for planning applications to be judged against neighbouring properties, with a requirement being that adjacent properties are shown drawn to scale on plans submitted. Bassetlaw District Council tell us they are considering updating their application guidance notes and checklists to incorporate such provision. It will also soon become a requirement to submit a design statement as part of certain planning applications.

We've asked the County Council to standardise street light provision throughout the village with a uniform style. They say that, as a general guide, damaged concrete columns are replaced by steel ones, when the opportunity is usually taken to replace the lanterns and change the yellow lights to ones that provide white light. The lanterns are more efficient and shine the light downwards so as not to pollute the night sky. Unfortunately, there are no plans in place at the moment to undertake major changes from concrete to steel.

We're surveying litter bin provision in order to see if we need more. We're also considering the use of some litter bins for bagged dog waste.

We've changed the old tennis court into a car park, which has greatly improved the parking situation. Further improvements are to follow, and we intend to repair the fencing along the entire length of the agricultural field next door. The farmer is concerned about possible damage to his crops as a result of people entering the field to retrieve balls from the multi court. Notices have been displayed asking for co-operation.

We also intend to replace the play equipment tiled safety surfacing with wet pour surfacing shortly.

The District Council has withdrawn the recycling facility on the Playing Field because it's been little-used since the new twin bin system was introduced.

We're going to carry out tree surgery work at the Old Cross Keys site and at the Playing Field. We've also persuaded the Home Office to reduce the height of the poplar trees at the former detention centre on Leys Lane.

The water tap has been located to a more-convenient position at the entrance to the Cemetery, and we've obtained a second wheeled bin. The WI continue their excellent care work at the Garden of Rest, and a local resident has kindly donated a very-nice seat which has been located in the Garden of Rest.

The illuminations at The Fairpiece once again drew favourable comment, and we've now provisionally agreed with the County Council to illuminate one of the conifers on the old Cross Keys site. Gringley should look really-nice this Christmas.

There's good news in that the Home Office has agreed to substantially increase the amount offered towards a new community building. A final decision is expected shortly.

As ever, Planning takes up a large amount of time at the Parish Council. We continue to be particularly concerned over the need to preserve the character of the village.

We intend to enter Gringley in the CPRE Nottinghamshire Best Kept Village Competition and we're relying on everyone to do their bit. Malcolm Taylor is co-ordinating the entry.

Along with other local parish councils, we're now financially assisting Five Villages First Responders, who work with the emergency services to provide an emergency medical response service. We've also put money in the budget to cover donations to the Play Group, St. Peter's Gardening Club and the School Dare Project.

Whilst Broadband is now available in Gringley, it suffers from a weak BT signal, fluctuating in strength in different parts of the village. There are other odd things happening as well. We've written to BT and are awaiting their response.

We were very proud of the fact that our Clerk to the Council, David Wright, was awarded the runner-up prize in the national Clerk of the Year Competition, after being jointly nominated by Everton, Gringley on the Hill and Misterton Parish Councils.

A couple of years ago the District Council started to phase-out concurrent grant to parish councils. Concurrent grant was designed to go a little way to avoiding double taxation. They're now having a rethink about double taxation, and parish councils have been invited to submit details of services provided which are doubly-taxed. Our precept has risen this year from £16,000 to £16,700, after remaining at £16,000 for two years. The cost to a band D property is now £62.23 per annum.

The web site is now managed by the Parish Council, and we're wanting to make it as interesting and useful as possible. We're encouraging businesses, organisations, etc. to link into the web site and to advertise on it at the very reasonable cost of £25 per annum.

We've been running Councillors' surgeries for a year now, and yet we've only had one visitor - presumably everyone's happy? Some might say surgeries are a waste of time, but the thing is that we need to run them as part of a package of measures necessary to get us Quality accreditation next year. We want accreditation because it's the best way of trying to secure parish government in Gringley. With over 10,000 parish councils in England and Wales, it's a certainty that the Government will soon wish to see if changes can be made. We're also keen to provide a quality service.

Gordon Shepherd, Chairman.

Summary of the Accounts

The Parish Council began the year with a balance of £15,009.57 and ended it with a closing balance of £13,002.13. Details of receipts and payments are shown below.

The major source of income was the precept, which is the local charge on the Council Tax. Other grants received were Concurrent Grant and Street Cleaning Grant from Bassetlaw District Council, the balance of the Parish Plan Grant from the Countryside Agency and Parish Paths Partnership Grant from Nottinghamshire County Council. We ceased to carry out agency work on behalf of the County Council because of new, onerous health and safety requirements, although a payment was received in respect of work carried out in 2003-04.

Maintenance of the Cemetery, Playing Field and other pieces of Parish Council-owned land continued. A Christmas Tree was again provided on the Fairpiece, although the invoice has not yet been received. Final payments were made on the Parish Plan and the multi-court. Administrative expenses were higher mainly as a result of the bye-election in April.

Various donations were made to local organisations, including for the first time to Five Villages First Responders (community medical response team). The Village Hall didn't need financial assistance.

The closing balance of £13,002.13 included an earmarked reserve of £963.47 Parish Plan Partnership Grant, to be spent in 2005-06. The £3,000 previously earmarked for a skate park was returned to balances as there was insufficient public interest in such provision.

Total fixed assets amounted to £212,192.99.

Receipts	£
Annual Precept	16,000.00
Bassetlaw Annual Grants	1,375.00
Parish Plan Grant	2,432.92
Parish Paths Partnership Grant	1,197.47
County Council Agency Services	370.27
Recycling	12.08
Cemetery	1,075.62
Interest on Investments	215.73
VAT Refunds	829.73
Refund of Overpayment	160.00
BT Wayleave	2.00
Playing Field Hire Charge	175.00
Donation - Christmas Illuminations	200.00
Sale of Surplus Equipment	100.00
	<u>24,145.82</u>

Payments

Playing Field	3,024.83
Multi-Court	2,980.00
Cemetery	1,818.98
Neighbourhood Watch	250.00
Payroll	4,587.30
Parish Paths Partnership	234.00
Administrative Expenses	5,147.84
Village Maintenance	2,754.75
Local Donations, etc.	401.00
VAT on Payments	1,309.56
Parish Plan	3,645.00
	<u>26,153.26</u>

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