

Chairman's Report

I'd like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their past four years' service, and in Councillor Foreman's case many more years than that. I would also like to thank everyone else who has helped in the running and maintaining of the village, and as Parish Councillors we appreciate the valuable help given. A special word of appreciation goes to the excellent service given by Councillors Terry Way and Ian Tremelling who decided not to stand for re-election.

We started down the road to Quality accreditation in 2003, and are almost at its end. The Accreditation Panel will shortly consider our application. 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 reorganisation. There's 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.

Last year we won the 300 to 700 population Category of the Best Kept Village Competition and also the Best New Entrant Award. These were fantastic community achievements given the fact that this was our first entry for many years. The winner's plaque is displayed at The Fairpiece, where it will stay until November, or longer if we win again. Mr. John Mann, MP formally unveiled the plaque last November, with other dignitaries present. A good number of villagers turned out for the occasion. Afterwards we enjoyed a superb buffet at the Blue Bell, prepared by Mr. & Mrs. Baxter and staff, and arranged and donated by two anonymous benefactors. All villagers were invited to attend. After last year's success, we intend to retain our title this year, which will involve a lot of hard work. Because of our success in the Competition and our initiative in being one of the first parish councils in Nottinghamshire to produce a parish plan, Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council featured Gringley in the winter edition of its news magazine Rural Voice. You can see copies in the Post Office.

Work continues on implementation of the Parish Plan. New litter bins have been provided, with some designated as suitable for bagged dog waste. We're also looking at the possibility of introducing a good

neighbour scheme. We're going to talk to the District Council about incorporating our Village Design Statement into the new Local Development Framework, which will replace the Local Plan around 2008.

We're pleased to announce that North East Bassetlaw Forum is to provide the funding for Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council to carry out a housing needs survey for us. Every household will receive a questionnaire, and it's most important that these are completed. We really need to know if there's a problem as regards affordability.

At the moment it looks as if British Waterways won't give us permission to develop moorings on the canal at Gringley Wharf, although we've asked for a rethink. However, we still want to improve the site, and that remains on course, subject to public consultation.

Together with Mr. Chris Downton, we recently met a Home Office representative to discuss development of the detention centre site. We're currently awaiting the next steps, but our stance is that a new community building should be provided as part of the package, at no cost to the community, together with allotment provision. If that comes about, the proposed woodland area could be given over to residential development. We'd also wish to see some affordable housing provided.

We're concerned about vehicles overriding the green area surrounding the Buttercross, so we're going to place three dressed stones on the corners of the green. English Heritage and the District Council have been consulted, and support the proposal, although we need to seek formal approval from Bassetlaw.

We've recently provided new public seats, one in the Cemetery and the other at the junction of Leys Lane and Westwells Lane.

Our contractors, North Notts Landscapes Ltd, are maintaining the Cemetery in excellent condition. They also maintain other parts of the village for us, including the playing field. Last year we redecorated the exterior of the chapel of rest, and this year we're going to carry out pathway improvements. We've also started a chapel of rest window replacement fund.

We're currently in negotiations with the owners of Beacon Hill regarding the possibility of a permanent relocation of the beacon on to Beacon Hill.

At Christmas we provided our own illuminated Christmas tree in order to save costs. We intend to plant a live tree at The Fairpiece to serve as a Christmas tree in the

future.

Work on improving rights of way continues. One of our major achievements was the construction of bridges on path 1. This path, which has now been opened up, had been unusable for many years. It cost the County Council many thousands of pounds to carry out. All paths are now being cut annually by Steve Rose of Calverton – again funded by the County Council.

We now have an excellent relationship with the County Council over highways matters, including lighting and signage, and they gave us great assistance in bringing about improvements in the run up to last year's Best Kept Village Competition. We have to remain vigilant though, as roads deteriorate all the time.

As ever, Planning takes up a large amount of our time. We continue to be particularly concerned over the need to preserve the character of the village. Despite the fact that we can't please all of the people all of the time, you can rest assured that we always do our very best and will continue to do so.

The Parish Council, along with other local parish councils, continues to financially assist Five Villages First Responders, based at Misterton, who work with the emergency services to provide an emergency medical response service.

We've also put money in the budget to cover a donation to the Gringley Celtic Football Club, who we'd like to see back playing football at the playing field.

Broadband reception continues to be a problem in parts of Gringley, and we've taken the matter up with our MP, John Mann.

Running a village like Gringley takes a good deal of money. This year we've had to raise the precept to £20,963 as a contribution to estimated expenditure of over £25,000. It sounds a lot of money, but actually represents an average of £31 per head of population or £77 per household. Three years ago Bassetlaw District Council started to phase-out Concurrent Grant to parish councils, but have this year stopped the process, so that's a bit of a help.

That's my report for this year but would remind you that public attendance at our meetings and surgeries is most welcome. We do our best to serve the community, and unless told otherwise we assume that we do a good job in representing your views.

Gordon Shepherd

Summary of the Accounts

The Parish Council began the year with a balance of £13,002.13 and ended it with a closing balance of £9,654.02. 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 and Parish Paths Partnership Grant from Nottinghamshire County Council.

Maintenance of the Cemetery, Playing Field and other pieces of Parish Council-owned land continued. Cemetery costs were considerably higher owing to repainting of the Chapel of Rest and the provision of a replacement public seat. Staffing costs were considerably higher owing to the new national conditions of service for Clerks, which had a significant impact on the Clerk's salary. Administrative costs were less, as there were no bye-election costs, as opposed to 2004-05.

Donations were made to Five Villages First Responders, Primary School (DARE project) and the Playgroup. Neither the Village Hall nor Youth Club needed financial assistance.

The closing balance of £9,654.02 included an earmarked reserve of £444.40 Parish Plan Partnership Grant, to be spent in 2006-07.

Total fixed assets amounted to £222,622.40.

Receipts

Annual Precept	16,700.00
Bassetlaw Annual Grants	1,454.00
Parish Paths Partnership Grant	566.70
Cemetery	1,038.03
Interest on Investments	104.10
VAT Refund	686.73
Playing Field	297.00
Best Kept Village Prizes	225.00
BT Wayleave	2.00
	21,073.56

Payments

Playing Field	2,830.97
Cemetery	3,055.55
Neighbourhood Watch	250.00
Payroll	7,352.76
Administrative Expenses	4,260.98
Village Maintenance	2,286.38
Local Donations	373.50
Christmas Illuminations 04/05	524.10
Christmas Illuminations 05/06	417.97
Village Amenities	511.00
Parish Paths Partnership	1,199.77
VAT on Payments	1,358.69
	24,421.67

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