

Annual parish assembly reviewed 2008/9 and looked forward with optimism

The Annual Parish Assembly took place on Tuesday 21st April and Chairman of the Parish Council John Priestley spoke at length about the big issues of the past year and some of the challenges ahead. In a moment, his speech in full. The annual event is an occasion when villagers can hear from their Parish Councillors and question them in a public forum. Parish Clerk June Gallant outlined the proposed 2009/10 budget and presented the draft 2008/9 accounts. Councillor Janet Thornton spoke on the progress made in the Parish Plan which has now accomplished all but four of its aims. Councillor Sylvia Pinkney spoke on the Parish Plans project and introduced guest speaker Rosie Watts from the Leeds City Council Rights of Way department. Finally Councillor Andrew Batty did a short presentation on the village website and the progress being made by the Village Hall to introduce wifi internet there. This is Councillor John Priestley's speech in full: Started with Post Office under threat – on 17/05 heard that EK not to be closed which was a huge relief though later in the year facilities were under threat of withdrawal but Govt withdrew the proposal. So, for the moment the PO is safe. Thanks to all who involved and particularly Melanie Smith who was active in the campaign to keep the PO open. I'll return to the PO shortly Next issue was closure of Main Street. Initially it was thought that the contractors could operate leaving one lane open. Because of safety issues, put on hold. On 19th Dec told that the prog would recommence on 5th Jan. Mtg held with 2PC's which resulted in an improved later service during the week but unfortunately, no service Sunday. School buses were catered for. What we understood would take 5 weeks took 9 in part due to bad weather. There was some dislocation to the villagers and to the shops in particular. One or two residents were badly inconvenienced. Fortunately, all issues now resolved. Am sure people will have views about work and way it was carried out but PC tried to ensure inconvenience was minimised. You'll have your say…. But, real issue for village is loss of revenue for businesses. If we want to keep shop/PO/ butchers/beauticians within village, must use the services they provide. PO in particular has lost substantially during road closure. We need to use the facilities that we have and spread the word! No doubt there will be another round of PO closures and it will have to be shown that usage is good…. Again, use it or lose it. Other matters: Crime – extremely fortunate to have PCSO Lois Lodge who works hard within village. She attends PC meeting to give her report monthly; she will pick up on issues trying to diffuse potentially diff situations arising eg out of poor/inconsiderate parking. She is visible in Village and is approachable. She'll deliver her report . On this subject, thanks to Eliz Ward who has become the village rep on WDCPC. We are fortunate to have low levels of crime which generally is of a minor nature. Carr Green : installed new swings at CG cost of approx £4k which was paid for from a grant from Green Leeds and which seem generally well received by users

Village Hall – continued to assist where possible with funding of projects through PC and recovered VAT. More recently helped in the submission of a claim for a grant towards WIFI in VH. There have been a number of excellent events in the VH and wish the Cttee every future success. Wildlife Trust – continue to benefit from the excellent management of Ox Close Wood, Frank Shires Quarry and Keswick Marsh. The agreement between PC and WT is under discussion and it is hoped will be concluded in the next few weeks. Highways: Moor Lane – scheduled for repair in the coming financial yr; road is a disgrace but understand that a proper job will be undertaken rather than throwing gravel down. Footpaths – really mean pavements; LCC do come out and clear up on request. But dog owners- please ensure your animals faeces are removed by you – there has been deterioration in last couple of months. Planning- will make a separate report but broadly, a small sub cttee meets (JT/ NOgden and GEN) to discuss applications. We visit as a matter of course. All matters are referred to PC in general meetings. Stats will follow. Remembrance Service: a great turnout of over 60 people inc Bardsey Scouts – their presence enhanced the day and thanks to the scoutmaster and to David Smith of Br. Legion for all he has done. Future Matters of concern Encroachment of Trees/ Hedges. This is a recurrent theme in a village like ours. PC tries to ensure people can use the paths within the village without attack from brambles or hedges. Owners must do their part by keeping the paths etc free. Generally a letter form PC suffices = not always! Duke of Wellington: There is concern about the pub. Now empty, starting to show signs of neglect. All sorts of rumours about possible uses – but as yet no takers. The Clock- this item has appeared on our agenda for a number of months. Various people have threatened to help and sort but it has come to nothing. We are now back with the manufacturers of the innards and are trying to get a quote to put the clock back into working order. Gala: There will be village gala on 13/06. Janet has agreed to run it. She and her Cttee deserve a huge vote of thanks for undertaking the event. However, it is a concern because this should be run by the next generation (apologies) or even the one below that and there are few if any volunteers. SUMMARY Generally a busy year for PC. Your Cllors do try to improve the village lot- We try to keep you informed through Website and Newsletters (Andy); Parish walks are undertaken annually to ensure Boundaries remain open ; Cllors attend Forum run by LCC to discuss and be aware of issues affecting other Parish councils and LCC approach (JT/ GA/ JP) ; Housekeeping is essential and SP has worked hard to ensure boundaries are clear and agreed on land owned by PC. Neil has his eyes open and alert to any planning/criminal concerns and raises these at or in between meetings. And we drive June mad with our demands and requirements which she endeavours to satisfy with customary good grace and a smile. Thank you. None of this is possible without your help- from posters for the PA(BD) to examination of accounts(G Plant) attendances at meetings (J Dedicoat) and work done by a host of volunteers in the village. We thank you and hope that the support and constructive criticism will continue through the coming 12 months.