

HUSTHWAITE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR MAY 2013 – APRIL 2014

At the annual parish meeting last May we were three Parish Councillors short, so the areas of responsibility within the council were assigned as follows: -

Peter Davison - Easingwold & Villages Forum, Hambleton Play Partnership and Communications
Elaine Smith - Easingwold & Villages Forum deputy, YLCA and Vice-chair
Carol Fenwick - Beckwith Trust, Neighbourhood Watch, Police Liaison, Risk Assessor, Street Lighting, Village Hall Representative and Chair

It was also decided that any problems regarding Highways and Public Footpaths should initially be reported to the Clerk who would then forward details to the relevant authority.

During the bi-monthly meeting that followed, it was noted that Geoff Jones had resigned from the Parish Council and it was agreed that, in addition to placing an advert in the Village Newsletter, Councillors would approach parishioners who they thought might be willing to be co-opted onto the Parish Council. Highway repairs, a Public Footpath landslip and section 106 grants were discussed and the annual accounts were unanimously approved. Peter informed the Council that his presentation on establishing a Recreation Area had been well received by the Hambleton Play Partnership, 9 volunteers had attended the Annual Spring Clean Up of the Recreation Area on 15th May, the access track improvements were due to start in the near future, a cycle rack had been ordered and funding for some outdoor fitness equipment and a volleyball net had been applied for.

In July we were shocked and saddened to learn of the sudden, unexpected death of Councillor Peter Davison who had worked tirelessly to improve facilities within the village. A summary of his achievements on the Council between 2005 and 2013, from producing a Parish Plan to the development of Husthwaite Recreation Area, was presented to the meeting and his success in applying for over £165,000 of funding which was all spent on Key Priorities within Husthwaite Parish Plan was applauded. It was noted that the Recreation Area Access Track Improvements (funded by a Big Lottery Awards for All grant and Section 106 funding) had been completed, the new Cycle rack had been received and a grant of £4000 towards the provision of Outdoor Fitness Equipment had been secured from Leader Rural Development Programme for England funded by DEFRA and the European Union. Alison Gambles and Peter Fox confirmed their willingness to become Parish Councillors and were duly co-opted onto Husthwaite Parish Council before New Parish Liaison Meetings, Community Services grants and the disbandment of the York and North Yorkshire Playing Fields Association were discussed. Thanks were offered to the volunteers who had scrubbed the Village Green railings clean on 12th June and a donation towards a Recreation Area Activity Day in August was approved.

At the September meeting we were informed that Cath Jones had unfortunately tendered her resignation and, in light of the changes on the Parish Council, a new bank mandate detailing the revised cheque signatories was completed. Councillors discussed the Orchard Inn planning application, North Yorkshire County Council's proposed Bus Service cuts and the provision of superfast broadband in the village. It was reported that a splendid New Village Noticeboard, commissioned by the Orchard Project, had been erected near to the Village Green, a new cycle rack had been installed in the Recreation Area, items of Outdoor Fitness equipment (Double Skier, Double Air Skier, Double Rower, Arm & Pedal Cycle and Chest Press / Pull down) had been ordered from Fresh Air Fitness and a £1200 Celebrate Your Space Grant had been applied for.

On 21st September I was delighted to be asked to represent the villagers of Husthwaite and say a few words at the Presentation to John Williamson on the occasion of his retirement after 45 years excellent service to our village. Then, on a slightly damp Saturday morning at the beginning of November, we hosted a Grand Community Fun Day & Picnic to celebrate the completion of Husthwaite Recreation Area. Luckily the rain held off until after Anne McIntosh MP had officially opened the new facilities, children had competed in various sporting activities and attendees had enjoyed a sizeable picnic lunch.

In November I was again honoured to lay a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council at the Remembrance service at St Nicholas Church and at the Parish Council meeting later that month we welcomed Paul Escreet and Barney Smith who verified their agreement to become Parish Councillors and were duly co-

opted onto Husthwaite Parish Council. We were informed that the Public Footpath landslip had been repaired, the fallen tree in the Recreation Area had been removed and the surplus bricks had been collected by Alun Nixon. In addition the Outdoor Fitness Equipment (funded by the Leader Rural Development Programme and section 106 funding) had been installed and the Recreation Area Committee's application to the Skipton Building Society for £500 to purchase Volleyball Equipment had been successful (PD). Other items discussed were the planning application process at Hambleton District Council, superfast broadband installation, speeding buses / tractors in the village and the revision of the Parish Councils Standing Orders and Finance Regulations. This is also the meeting at which we set the precept for the following year and it was unanimously agreed to maintain our precept at £7500, so provision was made towards fittings for the new Village Hall, painting of the Village Seats and extension of the Cemetery as well as ongoing costs for grass cutting, Recreation Area maintenance, insurance, the Village Newsletter and the annual audit.

The January meeting took place in the newly completed Village Hall and, after a tour of the new facilities, we discussed the closure of the Orchard Inn, flooding on Elphin Bridge road, Community First Responder training, moss on the MUGA surface, the need to update the Parish Council webpage and Village Street Signs, as well as blocked drains and water leaks in the village. The revised Standing Orders and Finance Regulation were officially adopted and a donation to the local Citizens Advice Bureau was approved.

Before the March meeting, four enthusiastic volunteers from Husthwaite joined forces with others from Coxwold to clear the new Public Footpath along the Old Railway Line between Husthwaite Gate Station and Coxwold in an effort to make it more accessible to walkers. At the meeting later that month, it was reported that works to improve the drainage on Elphin Bridge road had been completed, the gully sucker had visited Husthwaite to clean out the blocked drains, the Parish Council webpage now included pictures and statements from all new Councillors, the 'Welcome to Husthwaite' pack had been updated and a total of twelve good citizens had confirmed their intention to undertake Community First Responder training in the near future. A Recreation Area Spring Tidy Up was organized for 5th May and it was agreed to purchase and apply a product to kill the moss on the surface of the MUGA and the Cemetery paths. It was also decided that, after the Volleyball Equipment had been installed on the Flat Grass Area, the Recreation Area Project would be complete and therefore the Recreation Area Committee (who were originally formed to plan and oversee the development of recreational facilities within the village) should be disbanded. Councillors thanked members for their excellent work in delivering such a well equipped facility and confirmed that all future responsibilities would be transferred to Husthwaite Parish Council. Other items discussed were the Allerton Park Incinerator, village Waste Bins and the intention to request quotations for the painting of the village seats.

During the last year we have been asked to comment on 12 planning applications, ranging from the formation of a ménage to the construction of a garage. The Parish Council objected to four of these applications and Hambleton District Council approved seven, refused two, one was withdrawn and two are still ongoing.

Hopefully we have kept parishioners apprised of the activities in which we have been involved with regular articles in the Husthwaite Newsletter and, more recently, on the Husthwaite website. Over the past year Councillors have attended meetings of the Beckwith Trust, Community Hub, Easingwold & Villages Forum, Hambleton Play Partnership, Husthwaite Village Hall, Husthwaite Neighbourhood Watch, Rural Action Yorkshire, Yorkshire Ambulance Service and Yorkshire Local Councils Associations. This, in addition to our regular bi-monthly meetings, has kept us all quite busy and I think that we have all represented our parishioners to the best of our ability.

I would like to end my report by thanking my fellow councillors for their hard work and support over the last year and also Caroline Patmore, our District / County Councillor, who attends as many of our meetings as she can. Finally I would like to express our gratitude to Barrie, our Clerk of the last ten years, who is soon to move away from the area. Barrie has always performed his duties so proficiently, often going over and above what was expected of him and I am sure all the Councillors will agree when I say he will be sorely missed. We wish you and Joan every happiness in your new home and hope that you will accept this small token of our appreciation for all your hard work on behalf of the village of Husthwaite. Thank you Barrie!