

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 6<sup>th</sup> April 2010</b> <b>Presented by Councillor John Peebles Chairman of the Parish Council</b></p>
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Once again it has been a pleasure to have served you as Chair of Crigglesstone Parish Council over the past 12 months. I would like to thank Councillor Peter Daniels our Vice Chair for the help and support that he has given me throughout the year.

Over the years, the running of Parish Councils has become more complex due to legislation. The days of Parish Councils such as in the Vicar of Dibley are almost extinct. And so we are very lucky indeed to have not just one but two officers who are on the ball. First of all Janet Mitchell our Parish Clerk who has to keep up to date with all changes that have come in and implement them. I would like to thank Janet for the time that she spends making sure that all runs well and to the help that she gives to not only to myself but the Chairs of the now many committees that have had to come into place.

Julia Ford our Responsible Financial Officer has now been with us just over twelve months and again great changes in the financial side which she is dealing with very well. I thank her for the help that she gives not only to myself but to the Parish Council and the various committees. Once again I thank Maureen Cummings for taking last year's Parish Council accounts through to the final audit.

It came as a great shock to the Council to hear of the death of Janet Stocks our caretaker of the Village Institute for 27 years. Our sympathies were sent out to her husband Keith and the family. On behalf of the Trustees I would like to thank her daughter Mandy who took over when Janet became ill, and to her husband Keith for his support.

The Council has once again felt it wise to raise the precept. This is due to the fact that it has been funding activities from reserves over the last few years. The rise this year is £7,500, but we are still one of the lowest in the Wakefield District and will try to remain so.

A very close link between the Police and the Parish Council is still ongoing. PCs Laybourne or McMahon are in attendance at all Parish Council meetings to give detailed reports on all local crime. Priorities such as speeding, vandalism and groups of youths who cause problems to residents are dealt with. I can assure residents that action is taken. Once again I thank David and Paul for their dedication for trying to lower the crime rate within the Parish.

The Parish Council is still in contact with Peels at Calder Park. This is thanks to Cllrs. Wainwright and Daniels who meet with them on a regular basis and report back, over the past year it has been very quiet there. The residents of Newmillerdam who formed a Community and Conservation Association won their fight against development of the Old Colliery site on School Hill and gained Village Green status. This was achieved by the sheer will and determination of the local residents.

The Parish Newsletter is doing very well and is delivered throughout the Parish. There was however one area that was missed out and for that we are extremely sorry, but hopefully will be rectified. Parish Council activities are also publicised in the Parish Link Magazine and through the Wakefield Express community columns, and on the Parish website.

Several grants have been made to local groups and organisations. This has been less than in the past due to our financial situation.

Reports back about the hanging baskets in 2009 were nothing but praise, and just hope that they will be as good this coming year. The Parks and Open Spaces Committee along with the Clerk, have regular walks to check on maintenance and Health & Safety issues. In Betty Eastwood Park, Tom Handley has worked once again with local residents to manage trees in the Park. Tree felling took place at Willow Garth for Health and Safety reasons, and five replacement trees were planted.

The update of the Parish Plan is in progress but very slow due to trying to obtain funding from various bodies. There was also a lack of support from the public bodies and the community. An independent steering group has now been formed, and it is hoped they can find other sources of funding.

A committee was formed at the suggestion of our local Vicar to select a Community Hero. This was opened to outside bodies and with good response. We had four including our Vicar. Cllr Daniels volunteered on behalf of the Parish Council. It was after many deliberations that Keith Wainwright was selected for the award for his voluntary work within the Parish. It gave me great pleasure to present Keith with the award at the January meeting of the Parish Council.

I would like to thank Stuart Marsden from the Methodist Church on Remembrance Day at Newmillerdam for his valuable help in organising a short ceremony at the Cenotaph. This over the years is now well attended. Also Canon Ian Gaskell, Vicar of St James Church for his service at both the church then at the Crigglestone Cenotaph.

It is with great regret that two more names will be added to both the St James Church Memorial and the Crigglestone Cenotaph. L/ Cpl. David Kirkness originally from Hall Green, was killed whilst serving in Afghanistan. Corporal Jonathan Beynon-Fisher, from Durkar died of injuries received giving training to members of the armed forces prior to their departure to Afghanistan.

Last of all I thank the members of the Parish Council for the time and devotion and help that they not only give to myself, but to residents with any problems that they may have. Our sole aim is to try and help Crigglestone residents to the best of our ability, and long may we be able to do so.