

Haxey Parish Council
Annual Parish Meeting 4th May 2010
Parish Council Chairman's Report

Introduction

My report covers the period from 26th May 2009 to 27th April 2010.

It has been a very busy year for this my first year as Chairman of Haxey Parish Council. I feel honoured and privileged to have been elected to this post and I can now appreciate fully how much work a large Parish Council like Haxey has to do. The Council is constantly striving to make improvements and this is very much a team effort. We have been fortunate to have had a settled Council for the whole of the past year, with not one Councillor leaving. Everyone has played a part and would like to thank the Vice Chairman and Councillors for the time and effort they put into their work for the Parish. I would also like to thank our Clerk, Deb Hotson, who has given me tremendous help and support throughout the year.

Meetings

During the period there have been 12 monthly meetings of the Council, plus several working party meetings of the Land Working Party, the majority dealing with the Allotment Project, also the groups producing the Website, the Awards Map, Footpaths and the Parish Plan Steering Group.

Planning Matters

The Parish Council is consulted by NLC on all planning applications within the Parish. In total 51 planning applications were dealt with during the period. This represented a 23% reduction on the previous year

Representation by Councillors

The Parish Council is represented on Haxey Memorial Hall Committee, Westwoodside Village Hall Committee, Haxey and Westwoodside Playing Field Committees, Haxey C of E Primary School Governing Body, St Nicholas Church, Parochial Church Council (closed churchyard), Isle of Axholme Physically Handicapped Committee, Neighbourhood Action Teams (NATS), ERNLLCA (East Riding and North Lincolnshire Local Councils Association) on which Cllr Knowles is on the Executive Committee.

Trustees

The Parish Council is also represented by members who serve on the Haxey Combined Charity and Haxey Endowed School Estates.

North Lincolnshire Development Framework – Housing and Employment Land Allocation

Development Plan

Following the original consultation in November 2007, the overall view in Haxey Parish was that it should remain a Minimum Growth Settlement. The Final Development Framework is now due to be adopted later this year.

The maps for Haxey & Westwoodside show the newly drawn development boundaries which take in existing development. The proposed housing development is for infill only which will be very limited.

The Parish Council is content with the proposal for minimal development in the Parish, but would support limited development of affordable housing provided the infrastructure to support it is available.

Road Safety

The speed of traffic through Haxey and Westwoodside remains a cause for concern. North Lincolnshire Council have installed temporary flashing 30mph signs on the A161 in Haxey during the year and the Parish Council has hired for 6 months two flashing signs that are at present installed on Akeferry Road and Doncaster Road, Westwoodside. Data obtained from these signs will help the Police identify the times of persistent speeders.

State of Roads

The Parish Council has been pressing North Lincolnshire Council for major road improvements in the Parish. The A161 from Graizelound crossroads to Low Street has now been re-surfaced and the drainage system updated. The two major remaining roads which need considerable work to improve them are the B1396 from the western edge of Westwoodside to Levels Farm and Akeferry Road which is in a very poor state of repair. We will continue to press NLC for these to be repaired and Akeferry Road at least is said to be in this years capital programme. The severe frost this past winter led to many potholes appearing and temporary repairs have been carried out on most of them

Flooding and Drainage Improvements

Following the serious flooding events of June 2007 and January 2008 the Parish Council was invited to meetings with the Flood Forum Groups set up by North Lincolnshire Council.

As a result, major road and drainage improvements have been carried out on Haxey Lane. Drains and gullies throughout the Parish have been jetted and cleared and the Isle of Axholme Internal Drainage Board has had surveys carried out at Low Burnham and Haxey at a cost of £10,000 each. The Parish Council has just received details from the Internal Drainage Board of new drainage schemes for Low Burnham and Haxey Village.

Environment Agency -Trent Catchment Flood Management Plan

There was strong opposition to the Policy which was proposed by the Environment Agency and the Parish Council, North Lincolnshire Council and the Isle of Axholme Drainage Board all protested about Policy 2 which stated "Whilst total flooding will continue to be prevented, fresh water levels will increase considerably and large areas of currently drained farmland will be permanently or at least seasonally wet. Much of the area will revert back to marsh and fen landscape. Flooding will no longer be considered "flooding" and will become part of the natural cycle of seasonal inundation". In response to this pressure an Isle of Axholme Strategy Group was set up and after thorough investigation; the Environment Agency has changed our area to Policy 3. Negotiations are continuing to try and persuade EA to retain the present standards as represented by Policy 4.

Calor Village of the Year and CPRE Best Kept Village

Haxey won the County Calor Village of the Year Competition in 2008 and took part in the Northern Regional Finals in early 2009. Unfortunately we were not successful in this but learned a lot from the experience. Haxey and Westwoodside entered the CPRE Best Kept Village Competition in the Past Winners Category having won in 2008. Again there was stiff competition and we failed to win again. However this has made us more determined than ever to win again this year and to this end we are planning to have a voluntary clear – up day around the Parish later in May.

Thanks to all who take the trouble to make the villages look at their best. We will be putting up hanging baskets and flower troughs again this year.

We will be entering again this year in a past winners group, so the competition will be tougher.

Financial Support

Financial support is an important part of the Parish Councils remit and we have given support by way of grants under S137 of the Local government Act 1972, to a number of organisations including; Westwoodside Methodist Chapel, Westwoodside Playing Fields Association, Isle of Axholme Physically Handicapped Society, Haxey Pre-school, HWRCC (Community Transport), Haxey and District Bowls Club, Haxey and Westwoodside Allotment Association, St. Nicholas PCC, Haxey Playing Fields Association, Axholme Camera Club, Royal British Legion, Low Burnham Village Centre, and we continue to support the very popular Over 70's Party.

Wherever it is within our remit we are always willing to give financial support to local organisations in accordance with S137.

Communications

The Parish Councils Website is continually being updated to include more and more information and has steadily increasing viewing numbers. Following last years Parish Meeting, a forum has been set up and this has been well used throughout the year by a number of residents. Mr Colin Ridley has acted as administrator for this and I thank him on behalf of the Parish Council for his help.

We continue to place our monthly Newsletter in the Haxey and Westwoodside Arrow to keep residents informed of the work of the Parish Council.

Cllr W. Lindley

Cllr W Lindley completed 60 years service to the Parish as a Councillor in August last year. I congratulate him on this great achievement and all the work he has carried out in that time to help parishioners and improve the community.

Improvements

A number of improvements have been carried out in the Parish over the past year. These have included :-

Repairs to monuments Cross of Piety at Greenhill and the ButterCross have been completed.
Land and financial help has been provided for new allotments in Cove Road
Parish Footpaths leaflet has been published and well received.

During the next year, it is proposed to appoint a handyman, publish a Parish Heritage Trail leaflet , make a secure, safe storage unit for the Awards Map, Tithe map, and Tithe book, and purchase a new burial ground.

Northside

Over the past year, much time and effort had to be devoted to trying to resolve the situation over Northside. After considering all the options, the Parish Council has taken the view that the lane is an Ancient Highway and has produced historic documents to support this. The matter has been with North Lincolnshire Council since December for their decision on its future status.