

Annual Parish meeting for Scarning
Chairman's report 20th april 2009

I have been pleasantly surprised by the numbers of members of the public in attendance. It has been another really busy year for the parish council and since our last annual parish meeting a huge amount of business has been dealt with, some of which has still to be resolved.

We have had some really positive outcomes as a village and the parish council has moved forward into facing new challenges and have engaged in these on behalf of the majority of the people who live in the village in a transparent and open manner.

We have dealt with much business regarding the local development framework and the ongoing challenges that the boundary commission present with the proposals that Norfolk face with the two new options on:-

- (1) a singular unitary council or
- (2) " the doughnut" or a greater Norwich council.

The consultation for these two options ends 14th may 2009. What will these changes mean for the parish councils? As at this stage the status quo does not seem to be an option!

Finance

We have cut the parish precept considerably for the coming year from £38,000 last year to £30,000 for 2009-2010 whilst still giving good financial support to the majority of village organisations for the benefit of the inhabitants. Please see breakdown of expenditure below.

Financial year 2008/09

The parish council continues to support the local community with grants to the Village Hall, the church, the bowls club, the pre school and playing field committee. The parish council paid £4,000 to Scarning playing field committee to help with the rebuilding costs of the pavilion which was burned down during the course of the financial year. It gave £5,000 to the Village Hall Trust & Estate and a grant of £2,800 to the Scarning Parochial Church Council for works to the church. It also gave £2,000 to Scarning pre school towards the purchase of a new climbing frame and £2,000 towards the Scarning bowls club, the clubhouse of which was destroyed by fire. The money is to be spent on new greens mower and chairs. In addition, the parish council funded the cost of resurfacing the track leading to common land on Scarning Fen.

We are also spending £10,000 on adult exercise equipment at the playing field on the informal play area next to the water meadows and it has given us great pleasure in financially supporting to print, the village history book, which the clerk, Mr Nick Hartley, Sheila Eagle and others have archived. We look forward to seeing copies of the new village book at the launch in the village hall next Saturday. Well done to Nick and his team, a really great effort and achievement.

The playing field committee in the original part of the village have had both their pavilions burnt down and as the parish council have played an active role in supporting staged payments to the playing field committee £4,000-2008 £3,000 April 2009 and £3,000 in October 2009 to make a total of £10,000.

We have also worked with the chairman of the Playing Field committee, Mr Ken Steward to secure two substantial grants £8,000 approx from "Awards for All," for new powered triple rotary ride on lawn mowers for the playing field and £5,000 grass roots grant towards the new pavilion building. This has now got full planning permission and work begins any day to achieve a permanent structure where the timber pavilions stood. We look forward in anticipation to see this project develop to fruition and I, on behalf of the council, wish the playing field best wishes in their endeavour to achieve this goal.

The year has been tinged with some sadness and I would like to record the "going out" of councillor John Gretton our very valued county councillor who gave us much support over the years, we will miss him and will look forward to working with the new county councillor after the May elections.

Also the church over the past 6 months our clergy team have completely gone, we are in an interregnum. Richard James Lewis, our benefice rector retired in January. I record with great sadness the recent death of our team vicar the Rev Bridget Hill, shortly after her retirement last year. Also this Easter the Curate David Hill has moved on to be rector of the Banham group of parishes and we wish him and Richard best wishes for the future and we very much appreciate the service they have given in Scarning.

I am also most grateful for the support and encouragement we have received from our district councillors and officers of Breckland Council who have given us good advice over the past year on important issues.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable service given by all the Parish Councillors for the people of Scarning and my thanks to our clerk, Mr Nick Hartley for his expertise as responsible

Financial Officer and Clerk to the Parish Council and the support he has given to me in many ways over the years we have worked together.

Finally grateful thanks to Mr Richard Allan of Old Sarum for his continued support and updating of the most important Village Website www.scarning.info/

Alan Glister
Chairman
20.4.2009