

MORTON & HANTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL. ANNUAL REPORT 2008/2009

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CLERK'S GENERAL REPORT

Last year the cemetery waste collection regime changed, leaving the Parish Council with the problem of persuading those tending graves to take away the flowers and wreaths. Anyone visiting the cemetery likes to see it tidy and free of withered flowers and wreaths. Fortunately the requests have largely been taken note of, though some is still left.

During the past year further repairs have had to be carried out to the safe surfacing of the childrens' play area, because of settling and cracking of the joints and some damage due to vandalism. One of the swings had to be removed for safety reasons after a securing bolt was removed. It would seem that some vandals actually come prepared with tools for the job! The two cradle swings, which were beginning to show a lot of wear have been replaced by new ones. Misuse of the playing field, after hours, remains a problem.

Although the Parish did not win any award in the 2008 Best Kept Village Competition it did remarkably well on points and surely should be able to gain a trophy for 2009. Unfortunately the continuing poor condition of the former Kings Head does not help.

At the beginning of April 2008 a request was received by the council for the provision of allotments in the parish. The council is bound to try to make such a provision and a public meeting was held in an effort to gauge the amount of local interest. Several pieces of land were considered as preferences but were not available for reason or other. One of the approaches made was to the Lincolnshire County Council, through the Land Agents, who it was hoped would be sympathetic to the cause. For a few months now County Council officers have been considering the request for a piece of land but their consultations still go on without a decision. The Parish Council has been assured that a response will soon be forthcoming. In the mean time other pockets of land are being discussed.

The council have joined forces with the school to try and make some headway with improving A15 safety by campaigning for a 30mph speed limit and if possible a pedestrian crossing. The greatest number of complaints received, by far, continues to be on the matter of dog fouling, especially, it would seem, during the darker months. Reports for action are passed on to the District Council who can, and do, take further action if they can catch the culprits in action.

The road surfaces have suffered due to the extreme winter weather and pothole reports are made to the County Highways for repairs to be made. A wide variety of matters continue to be dealt with on a day to day basis throughout the year.

Terry Barnatt.
Clerk & R.F.O. April 2009

CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW

This is my 10th year as chairman and that has caused me to reflect on just how much of the quality of the community life is in our own hands. Although part of the Parish Council's role is to relay problems to the relevant authorities, many of these problems are of our own making and so are the remedies.

The persistent problems of dog fouling, and speeding, are cases in point. It is disappointing that the few who disregard the feelings and safety of others should have such a deleterious effect on village life. Both of these issues impact particularly on children and I would urge all responsible citizens to assist the Parish Council in identifying the culprits.

During the year we have been approached by many people asking for allotments. We welcome this interest and, following a well attended meeting, we have been actively investigating possible sites. It goes without saying that this is not easy, but currently we are making enquiries regarding one, possibly two, options.

We continue to express concerns to the relevant authorities about the dangers of the crossroads and continue to press for a 30mph speed limit on the A15. We are currently working closely with our new headmaster, Mr George Trafford, and our new county councillor, Mrs Sue Woolley, to this end. It is hoped that these two 'new brooms' will bring added impetus to our campaign to make the crossroads safer for the people of Morton & Hanthorpe.

This last year saw our Quality Status up for renewal. As we were among the first to apply, we are consequently among the first having to re-apply. As with all government initiatives the criteria have been ratched up considerably, making it difficult for us to comply, at present. This is largely because we do not have a parish office, where information can be made available, or a full time clerk, both of which seem to be assumed by the legislation. As a Parish Council we are questioning the advantages of quality status and so, to date, have not re-applied. We are keeping the situation under review and waiting to see the response of other similar councils.

Finally, I wish to place on record again my thanks to the councillors, who freely give of their time and to the clerk who, as ever, has dealt with the business of the council in his quiet and efficient way

David Creasey
Chairman. April 2009