

MORTON & HANTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2003/2004

CHAIRMAN: Councillor David Creasey, 22 Stainfield Road. Tel: 570553
COUNCILLOR: Bryan Hyde, 10 Haconby Lane. Tel: 570621
COUNCILLOR: John Richardson, 32 High Street. Tel: 570233
COUNCILLOR: Walter Lawrance, 19 Station Road. Tel: 570333
COUNCILLOR: Arthur Bates, 19 High Street. Tel: 570203
COUNCILLOR: Nancy Needham, 9 St John's Close. Tel: 570171
COUNCILLOR: Jean Lees, 91 Millfield Road. Tel: 570558
COUNCILLOR: Peter Chubuck, 15 The Crescent. Tel: 570506
COUNCILLOR: David Ward, 3 East Lane, Tel: 570661
COUNCILLOR: Richard Wells 41 Station Road Tel 570370
COUNCILLOR: Gordon Lack, 6 Edenham Road. Tel: 571689
CLERK & R.F.O. David Thomas, 8 Hawthorn Road. Bourne. PE10 9SN Tel 423327

The Election for a new Council was held in May 2003, nine of the existing Councillors stood for election together with R. J. Wells and J. Elliot, and these eleven were returned unopposed. Since the election, Councillor Elliot has decided to resign due to other work commitments, and Gordon Lack has been co-opted on to the Council in his place.

The Clerk obtained his A. Q. A. Certificate in Local Council Administration, and has guided the Council in fulfilling all of the criteria necessary for it to apply for Quality Council status, a decision on whether or not to apply will be taken at the Annual Parish

Council meeting on May 11th.

In the "Best Kept Village" competition, Morton scored 138 points out of 150, and received very favourable comments from the judges.

Mr T. A. Jacobs has been appointed as the Council's independent internal auditor, following the resignation of Mrs J Gray. An extract from the Council's statement of accounts is attached to this report.

Along with items which the Council has to pursue with the District or County Council on an ongoing basis, such as missing road & street signs, potholes, grass cutting, overgrown hedges, and blocked gullies, together with its own duties such as managing the Playing Field and the Cemetery, there have been certain other specific items which the Council has taken action on over this period as follows:-

A15 SPEED RESTRICTION AND A15/HIGH STREET JUNCTION

Members of the Council held a site meeting with the Area Highways Manager and Police Sgt. Gallant in November to observe the behaviour of traffic at the cross-roads.

Sgt Gallant monitored the speed of vehicles during the meeting, he found all vehicles to be travelling at or below the 40 M.P.H. limits, and the Area Highways Manager said that he had no powers to make a further reduction to the speed restriction. It was agreed that the new lay-out of the High Street junction had given better

forward visibility for vehicles joining or crossing the A15, and that to reduce the width of the road markings, or to kerb the hatched area, would result in unacceptable delays to High Street traffic, would cause major problems for large vehicles trying to turn left towards Bourne, and it was therefore decided not to take any further action for the time being.

POWER CUTS.

Council has once again taken up the matter of the frequent disruptions to the power supply in some areas of the Parish.

In 2003, the Electricity Board promised that the old manual switches which were causing the problems would soon be replaced with automatic switches, and that Morton & Hanthorpe would be given priority in view of the problems being experienced.

At the time of going to print the Electricity Board has not been able to provide a satisfactory explanation for the continuing problems, but has agreed to investigate the matter further, and their reply is expected in the near future.

SPEEDING TRAFFIC HIGH STREET & STATION Road

Council has continued its campaign to draw motorist's attention to the 30 M.P.H. speed limits in High Street & Station Road.

A recent petition by some residents asking for traffic calming measures to be introduced, has not been supported by the Council, as it feels that traffic calming in these areas may well create more problems for residents than it would solve (i.e. noise, pollution, traffic delays.), that it would cause problems for the Emergency Services, that it might result in the loss of the Bus Service, that it would detract from the view of the Conservation Area, and that the cash cost of such measures would result in doubling the local Council Tax.

Council also thinks that vehicles parking outside the Post Office already acts as a form of traffic calming, and that as 95% of vehicles using High Street and Station Road belong to residents of the Parish, the answer to the "Speeding traffic" problem is in our own hands, and would ask everyone to keep Morton & Hanthorpe safe for all road users by observing the speed restriction and taking great care when driving at all times.

Council will continue to support the School Governors in their campaign to obtain a 20 M.P.H. speed limit in the area of the school, will continue to have frequent speed checks carried out in High Street, and has arranged for the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership to carry out a traffic survey in the Parish.

CHILDREN'S PLAY EQUIPMENT

Council has had repairs carried out to the safer surfacing around the Children's Play Equipment at the Playing Field in Station Road. There were a few areas of minor damage, but the main problem was that the edges of the surface were coming away from the concrete surrounds.

CEMETERY

During the last year Council has introduced a programme of "Safety Checks" on all headstones at the Haconby Lane Cemetery. The checks revealed that fourteen headstones were coming loose at the base, and persons tending these have been advised to get them re-fixed. A further four headstones were found to be unsafe and had to be laid flat in the interests of safety.

Checks will now be made each year during July and August.

D. J. Thomas, Clerk & R.F.O. 12th April 2004

CHAIRMAN'S OVERVIEW

this has once again been a busy and active period for the Parish Council, all meetings have been well attended and I wish to thank Councillors for their support throughout the year.

Within a village such as ours, there are few quick answers to problems that we face, and consequently much of the Council's time has again been taken up with matters that concerned it in previous years, and will no doubt continue to concern it in the future.

The increased volume of traffic on the A15 and High Street, which is causing problems at the junction of these two roads, is a case in point. There is no easy solution, and we know that one off campaigns by well meaning, but sometimes ill-informed pressure groups do not bring success.

What the Council will do is to continue to bring this matter to the attention of the Highways Authority, the Police and the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, as we know from experience that quiet, consistent pressure eventually yield the results that we are seeking.

The Clerk, in his report, has covered the main points of the Council's activities during the year, but there is one problem which I would like to highlight, which concerns the Cemetery in Haconby Lane.

We as a Council are proud of our Cemetery, it is well cared for, and is a credit to the village, but we need to ensure that as time goes on it remains as such. In recent years various problems have arisen which have made maintenance more difficult, time consuming and expensive. Most of the problems are due to people not reading or not understanding the cemetery rules at the time of interment. This is a delicate area, and the Council does not wish to make unnecessary rules and regulations, nor to offend the sensitivities of the bereaved, but it must look at the "Bigger Picture" concerning maintenance, and the overall appearance of the Cemetery not just for the present, but for future generations as well. With this in mind, steps have been taken, and will continue to be taken to bring irregularities to the attention of those concerned in as sympathetic a manner as possible.

Once again, the smooth running of the Council's affairs is to be attributed to the hard work and dedication of the Clerk, and I wish to pay tribute to him. He is the first clerk in Lincolnshire to obtain the A.Q.A. Certificate in Local Council Administration, and was one of the first six in the country to achieve this.

This puts Morton Parish Council well in line to be one of the first, if not the first local council in Lincolnshire to be awarded "Quality Council" status. It is a mark of the Clerk's diligence and understanding that this is possible, and I wish to place on record the thanks not just of the Parish Council, but the village as a whole.

David Creasey, 13th April 2004

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT For Year Ending 31st March 2004

Year Ended			Year Ended
31 st March 2003			31 st March 2004
	INCOME		
£ 10,500.00	Precept		£ 9,500.00
	- Agency Services Reimbursed		
	- Loans Taken Out		
£ 10,375.00	Capital Receipts		
£ 18.78	Miscellaneous		£ 17.79
£ 135.53	Interest on Investments		£ 139.00
£ 1,532.50	Burial Fees		£ 2,205.00
£ 148.00	Parish Land Rents		£ 168.00
£ 22,709.81	TOTAL INCOME		£ 12,029.79
	EXPENDITURE		
£ 5,024.74	General Administration		£ 5,304.72
	- Agency Services		
nil	S.137 Payments		£ 250.00
£ 26,200.00	Capital Spending		nil
£ 1,682.84	Loan Interest & Loan Repayments		£ 1,682.84
	- Loans Made		
	Running Costs:		
£ 106.86	Cemetery		£ 319.28
£ 1,408.11	Playing Field		£ 2,889.61
nil	Parish Land		nil
£ 788.87	Miscellaneous		£ 1,163.38
£ 35,211.42	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£ 11,609.83
	General Fund		
£ 15,540.99	Balance at 1 st April		£ 2,039.38
£ 22,709.81	Add Total Income		£ 12,029.79
£ 38,250.80			£ 14,069.17
£ 35,211.42	Deduct Expenditure		£ 11,609.83
£ 3,039.38	Surplus for year		£ 2,459.34
£ 1,000.00	Transfers to reserves		£ 1,000.00
£ 2,039.38	Balance at 31st March		£ 1,459.34

