

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for the Parish of

Ruddington held at St. Peter's Rooms on

Tuesday 24th April 2012 At 7.30 p.m.

Chairman

Councillor Mrs B M Venes, Chairman of the Parish Council, took the chair.

Attendance

22 members of the public were present.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A Chopra, Cllr Mrs M Robinson, Cllr Mrs R Wilson, Kim Aspinall (James Peacock Bread Charity), David Hollingworth and Julie Lazonby (Ruddington Churches Holiday Club).

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th April 2011, having been circulated to every elector present, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters raised arising from the minutes.

Charity Accounts

James Peacock Educational Foundation

Mr Andrew Green presented the report in respect of the James Peacock Educational Foundation.

During the year income amounted to £5,391.11, an increase over the previous year of approx. £50. The objects of the Charity are to assist by way of gift or grant the education of young people up to the age of 25 years who live, or whose parents live, in the Ruddington area. Total expenditure was £7,124.70 including grants to individuals amounting to £800.00. All school children on transfer to secondary school are presented with a bible, thesaurus and calculator. Total expenditure in this regard was £1,319.60. St Peter's School received £2,000.00 in respect of books and £2,000.00 for lighting in the hall. £400.00 was given for assistance with school trips. The Hermitage Pre-School Playgroup was given £560.10 for equipment.

The excess of payments over receipts for the year was £1,733.59. Total funds (at cost) as shown by the Balance Sheet now amount to £63,528.86.

There were no questions raised by the electors present.

The James Peacock Bread Charity

In the absence of Mrs. Kim Aspinall, Chair of the Trustees, the Clerk read her report on behalf of the James Peacock Bread Charity:-

“1. Trustees

We regret that Yvonne Clay has resigned as a trustee on health grounds. Her positive and sensible contribution to running the allotments will be greatly missed. We wish her well for the future.

We would like to welcome Jaqui Granger to the committee of trustees to replace Yvonne. She has been a keen tenant for several years and has recently been producing the allotments newsletter.

The current trustees are- Kim Aspinall, chair, plots 43,44; Peter Johnson-Marshall, secretary, plots 41,42; Rob Macshane, plot 9; Jaqui Granger, plots 60B,61A; Barbara Venes, Parish Council

2. Lettings

We have lost 6 tenants during the year, but the plots released have been let. Plot 19 is still vacant due to its poor location and the trustees will convert it to a communal orchard. The rent of a plot is increased to £10 (£7 half plot) to pay for third party insurance premiums.

3. Security and Access

Nottinghamshire County Council have generously provided the Charity with substantial improvements - extended perimeter fencing, two new gates on Musters Road, slab paths on the north side, a footbridge, new steps to the stream, well repairs and a raised bed on plot 4A. The trustees are very grateful for this work which will greatly improve both access for the disabled and the general amenity for all the allotment users.

4. Donations

This charity was initiated by James Peacock in his will of 1641 to help the needy and the children of this parish. We are very lucky to be receiving the benefits of his generosity many years later and we have a duty to continue with charitable activities. Accordingly the trustees will donate £100 to each of two village children's groups. Individual tenants have also donated vegetables to the widows of former allotment holders. This is in line with the aims of the Charity.

5. Maintenance

Maintenance should be easier following the construction of the new paths. Our thanks to those tenants who have contributed to the upkeep of paths and hedges and to those who have helped at the three working parties held in 2011. The stream area is now greatly improved. The hedges to the north, east and south have been tractor mown to the outside, but tenants are still responsible for maintaining their own sections.

6. Accounts for 2011/2012

The accounts will be prepared after the annual collection of rents and will be presented to the Parish Council and the Charity Commission.”

Cllr P F McGowan reminded the meeting that, at last year’s meeting, David Hollingworth suggested that the trustees may wish to pursue the position with regard to obtaining copies, or new, deeds as there is an ongoing dispute regarding the exact position of boundaries between the allotments and some properties on Musters Road. Mrs Johnson-Marshall reported on behalf of the trustees that the land was now registered. Cllr Mrs B E Breakwell reported that, as a resident whose property was affected, she could confirm that the trustees had been in liaison with those affected regarding this matter.

Annual Report on the work of the Parish Council

Amenities Committee – presented by Councillor Allen Wood.

Councillor Wood gave a résumé of the work undertaken by the Amenities Committee over the past year. A copy of the full report is appended to these minutes.

Don Sayers asked where the £27k for the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) came from. He was advised that it was from the Local Improvement Scheme. He then asked why he had not had a response after he had submitted comments during the consultation period. Cllr Mrs B E Breakwell advised that the project is still on-going, is still looking for further funding, that nothing had been decided yet and apologised for the lack of response. Fran Dent asked about the possible impact on the bowling green.

Don Sayers raised the issue of trees on The Green and offered the opinion that they were too big and didn’t allow any useful activity to take place on The Green. Andy Green said they shouldn’t have been planted. Borough Councillor N Boughton-Smith disagreed.

Don Sayers asked what satisfaction the Parish Council derived from destroying the Badminton Club – as it had already destroyed the Tennis Club which now plays in Gotham. Councillor Allen Wood explained that all Parish Council sports facilities are subsidised and that the Parish Council was seeking to set fair charges for all users. Groups using the facilities need to work with the Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Wood for his presentation

Environment & Community Committee – presented by Councillor Nick Tegerdine

Councillor Tegerdine gave a brief résumé of the work undertaken by the Environment & Community Committee over the past year. A copy of the full report is appended to these minutes. He thanked the staff and members of

the Committee for their work over the last year in moving forward the, slowly, growing role of the Committee.

There were no questions raised.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Tegerdine for his presentation.

Finance & Policy Committee – presented by Councillor Nick Tegerdine

Councillor Tegerdine gave a brief résumé of the work undertaken by the Finance & Policy Committee over the past year. A copy of the full report is appended to these minutes.

Don Sayers raised the problem of parking in the Village. It was acknowledged that this is an issue for Nottinghamshire County Council. Councillor Tegerdine explained that this issue has been looked at by the Environment and Community Committee and would be again. Representations have been made to the County Council, and doubtless will again.

A wide ranging discussion followed regarding options for parking restrictions, the siting of a Park and Ride, and the possible impact of Line 3 of the Tram.

Gavin Walker asked if it was possible to know in advance which councillors would be in attendance at Parish Surgeries and, in particular, when County Councillor Reg Adair would be attending. The Clerk responded that there is an agreed rota for Parish and Borough councillors, with County Councillor Adair due to attend each surgery but the Parish Council Office is not always advised in advance about changes in attendance.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Tegerdine for his presentation.

Reports from Local Clubs/Organisations

The Chairman advised that it had previously been agreed by the Parish Council that any Club/Organisation which received priority use of a Parish Council asset, or had received funding from the Parish Council during the year, be requested to attend the Annual Parish Meeting to present a report on their activities.

Ruddington Bowls Club - presented by Fran Dent

Fran Dent reported that the Bowls Club was founded in 1924 with 26 members, at its height in the 1990's there were over 100 members. Today there are 60. The season runs from May to September and the Club play 70 league and 30 cup and friendly matches.

The bowling green is maintained by the Parish Council and the Club receive many compliments about it. The Club themselves keep up and maintain the pavilion.

There is an Open Day on May 6th to attract anyone interested in joining the Club.

The Chairman thanked Fran for her presentation.

Ruddington Local History & Amenity Society – presented by Gavin Walker

Gavin reported that there are two arms to the History Society – one being the operation of the Village Museum and the other the Meetings of the Society. The Society hold meetings monthly between October and March which are very well attended, with speakers being invited to each meeting. The History Club has 100 members. A small group runs the Museum which opens from Easter until October. During other times members of the Society work on records and clean artefacts where necessary. The Museum has some 12,000 artefacts and these are currently being catalogued. There is a new website.

There are enough volunteers to run the Museum but some younger volunteers would be welcome.

The Museum benefits from support from the Parish Council but, as has happened in many other places, funding from the Borough Council has been removed. There was, in consequence, a deficit of approx. £1,000 last year and the Museum is proactively fundraising and looking to cut costs.

Don Sayers asked about visits to the Museum by schools. Gavin explained that these still happen, but less than they once did – reducing as the costs of travel have increased. Visits from local schools are remaining unchanged.

The Chairman thanked Gavin for his presentation.

Ruddington Fun – presented by Fiona Oliver

Fiona reported that Ruddington Fun started in February 2011 to “provide either directly or through partnership with other organisations school holiday activities/events for children, young people and families within Ruddington”.

There is a committee of 8 and all events are free to users. The main activities were held during the summer holidays with 9 activities planned (although one, the Bike Ride, was cancelled due to bad weather). Attendance at the events ranged from 40 to 81.

The events were supported by the Parish Council by the provision of 6 venues free of charge. This meant that grant money could go directly on activities and on building up some resources – which they are happy to loan out.

Councillor K Piggott said, to general agreement, that this is a tremendous new initiative and benefits Ruddington greatly.

The Chairman thanked Fiona for her presentation.

Ruddington Colts – presented by Andy Scott

Andy introduce himself as Secretary to the Ruddington Colts. He reported that Ruddington Village F.C. has junior boys teams, youth, adult, male and female teams. The Club recently celebrated 25 years in its current format.

Andy reported “All involved with our are club volunteers, there are no paid staff at all. Tonight I want to explain how we work with the Parish and how the Parish help us deliver our aims.

There has been some conflict in the 18 years or so I have been with the Club and the Parish. This has largely been about access to facilities and a lack of understanding of each other’s situation.

That changed for the better big time as we joined forces to raise funds for much needed facilities to replace our derelict portacabin! This was a joint project which led to the state of the art Jubilee Clubhouse, costing over £500,000, being established for the young of Ruddington (not just our club). It was officially opened October 2008.

The Jubilee Clubhouse Project (JCP) Charity was formed to help attract tax breaks on donations. It is now sustained together with the Parish Council to encourage the use of the facilities by organisations seeking to provide the young of Ruddington with positive activities.

The JCP Charity is administered by Parish and Club volunteers to meet to consider bids and see how we can attract more youth focused activity at the Clubhouse.

Today the Club meets with the Parish at least 2 times a year at the Clubhouse to consider issues and how we can improve the facilities – e.g. we opened a £2,000 trophy cabinet for us to be able to show our trophies off in.

Each week the Parish Council Maintenance Staff prepare and maintain the pitches; provide the goals and nets to meet the various league standards we are in. Currently we have 15 squads of players from under 7 to adults to cater for. All need to be supported by having the right playing surfaces and equipment.

Annually the Parish help by:

- a. Free marking out of six a side pitches to allow us to fund raise for the club;

- b. Free use of pitches and facilities to stage an annual Boxing Day charity football match. This has allowed us to donate hundreds of pounds to charities such as: Help for Heroes, Meningitis Research, The British Heart Foundation, and Kidney Research,

We help the Parish by providing funding to help maintain the facilities and pay for use by us for training and volunteer coach development.

The Parish own and sustain the Clubhouse – there is no way in truth a group of volunteers like us could cope with all the costs and demands running such a facility brings. The Club and the Parish Council are working together to sustain and develop the Jubilee Clubhouse – not just leaving the Parish to pick up the bill alone.

Problems and issues are being addressed together. For example:

- a. Parking on Loughborough Road. Problem arose due to huge demand on some Sunday mornings when well supported junior teams were at home. The Club worked with the Parish Council and the Police to provide parents etc. with alternative options for parking to help overcome the problem,
- b. Litter. Working with the Parish to consider providing more litter bins in and around playing areas to ensure stuff is not blowing about at the end of games, and
- c. Dog fouling playing areas. A serious issue for the health and welfare of players. Nationally there have been instances where children playing have encountered dog mess and lost their sight as a result of contamination / infection arising. The Parish policy of all dogs left on leash makes it better for us. Not so easy for an owner to skulk off and leave dog mess.

In summary we have a proper partnership. Our club does not simply demand the Parish buy this, that or the other. We work together to try and find ways forward. The Colts would be a poorer club without Parish Council support, the Village would be a poorer place for lack of our club running 15 teams for kids, adults, males and females”.

Councillor Allen Wood, on behalf of the Parish Council and all those present, thanked Andy for all the work he puts in, saying “He deals with all the complaints and holds it all together”.

The Chairman thanked Andy for his presentation.

Ruddington Churches Holiday Club

The Clerk advised that apologies had been received from Julie Lazonby, who had advised him that for reasons of changes in personnel due over the summer it will not be possible to hold the Holiday Club in 2012, but instead to hold a one-day Holiday Club on Saturday 21st July.

Any Other Business

There was no further business conducted.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and invited them to stay behind for the refreshments which had been provided.

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

Chairman

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Recreational and Sporting Facilities

Play Areas

As in previous years, Play Safety Limited inspected the Parish Council's play areas in May 2011 in accordance with RoSPA's recommendations. Their reports were as follows:

Sellors Play Area – Risk rating MEDIUM – Recommendations were made and actioned by the ground staff.

Vicarage Lane Play Area – Risk rating LOW – Some minor remedial maintenance recommended and actioned by the ground staff.

Elms Park Play Area – Risk rating LOW – Some minor remedial work recommended and actioned by the ground staff.

Unfortunately, there have been numerous reports of vandalism and youngsters gathering late at night on Elms Park. As a result, the Parish Council took the decision to install CCTV to protect the new play area and as a deterrent to vandalism in the area in general. In October 2011, an order was placed for this to be installed and cameras now cover all vulnerable areas of Elms Park including the Maintenance Unit entrances and yard.

Following the opening of the new play area on Elms Park in February 2011, plans are still being discussed as to the future of an area adjacent to it. The Parish Council has been allocated an award of £27,500 towards the cost of a Multi-Use Games Area and has to the end of March 2013 to decide on how to spend this funding.

Sellors Playing Field

During the summer, the Parish Council received a request from a 15 year old asking whether it would consider leaving the goal posts in place at the end of the football season so that children could continue to use the playing field. Since the ground staff had decided to accommodate all the football teams on Elms Park and the Jubilee Playing Fields, it was agreed that this was a good idea and has been a huge success. The goal posts are now in regular use and even local residents have commented on how well they are being used.

Bowling Green

This facility continues to receive praise from everyone who plays there, both from the quality of the green to the quiet and beautiful location. Ruddington Bowls Club is actively looking for new members to ensure that the green is used to its maximum effect during the season.

Cricket

In April 2011, the Finance & Policy Committee agreed funding for the installation of cricket nets with 2 batting ends using a standard base. Funding for the nets was helped by a donation from County Councillor Reg Adair's funds of £1500 and £200 from the Cricket Club. The Parish Council made up the balance of £4,500 which had already been included in the 2010/11 budget. The nets were installed to the delight of both the cricket club and local children who started using them as soon as the installation was completed.

Ruddington Cricket Club has two teams who play regularly on Elms Park and in the summer of 2011 Edwalton Cricket Club also regularly played on the artificial wicket.

Venues & premises hire

Village Hall

Still a very popular venue in the village, the Village Hall continues to have a nearly full diary during most days of the week and many weekends. Unfortunately, the Village Hall has not been exempt from vandalism with damage usually caused by occasional users and not our regular users. On at least one occasion, a children's party deposit has been retained to go towards the cost of repairs and cleaning.

Risk Assessments had previously identified a concern that the Village Hall had a restricted access for disabled users and that the Parish Council should take steps to address both access and toilet facilities. The Parish Council is currently seeking quotations for this project and it is hoped that work will commence during the quieter summer period once a contractor has been selected.

In the spring of 2011, the removal of unwanted hazel and conifers at the back of the building was undertaken. The Parish Council is aware that there are issues with the condition of the Village Hall and as part of a process of investigation, instructed the Clerk to order a full structural survey of the property in November 2011. The survey highlighted one or two issues including wet rot to the rear of the building and an order has been placed to have this problem rectified. There are other less urgent issues which were highlighted at the time and will be addressed over the next few months. An order has been placed for the hall floor to be completely refurbished and relined for badminton during August 2012,

St Peter's Rooms

Although there appeared to be a lull in occasional bookings towards the end of 2011, the office has been inundated with booking enquiries since the start of 2012. In addition to the boom in regular classes, especially fitness classes, we are receiving more enquiries for larger occasional events such as weddings, anniversaries and senior birthdays.

Unfortunately, during the course of the year, one hirer caused damage to the Hall floor coating resulting in the hall being taken out of hire one weekend for repair work to be completed. The hirer donated £50 towards the cost of repair which came to £450 before vat. As a result of this, the Parish Council agreed to review the amount of deposits paid and the way in which deposits are paid.

During the winter of 2011/12 it was noted that a fungus was growing at the base of the large Acacia tree at the side of St. Peter's Rooms opposite the Co-op. The tree preservation officer from Rushcliffe Borough Council was consulted about this issue and the need for pruning. Unfortunately, following his recommendations for further investigation, it was discovered that the large Acacia tree had more dead wood than good wood internally and should be removed before it becomes a hazard. The Parish Council has also been advised that it has a duty to replace the tree, albeit with something smaller.

Jubilee Clubhouse

Whilst the clubhouse continues to be in regular use for youth football, it still does not attract as many hirers as other Parish Council venues. Phoenix Bridge, Tai Chi classes and the occasional corporate event helps to generate income but the Parish Council is keen to secure regular use of this modern, large pavilion.

The Jubilee Clubhouse Liaison Group who meet twice a year, had previously agreed a "core use" fee for the use of the facility by the football club. The formula used for this was reviewed this year but was still based on the number of playing weeks, the number of teams and an agreed rate. For the 2011-12 season the agreed rate was set at £3.10 and the fee of £1,116 was paid by the club on invoice.

Elms Park Pavilion

Whilst essentially another sports pavilion, the social area of this pavilion is regularly hired by small groups for training purposes, knitting groups, etc. during weekdays.

Other amenities

Allotments

In July 2011, the Allotments' Competition was judged by an independent judge. Winner of the Thorncroft Trophy was E. Dorman of Paradise Gardens and a further 3 awards were also given to tenants on Paradise Gardens. Third place went to a tenant on Buttercup Gardens. Awards and prizes were presented to those who attended the new Competition Presentation Evening which was held on 25th October.

The Parish Council still has a waiting list for allotments and the 75 sq mtr starter plots are very popular with new tenants. The only downside to this policy in the past has been that there is not sufficient space for greenhouses and sheds but this has now been overcome with the allocation of one of the less popular plots being split in to 12 shed or greenhouse sites. At the moment there are still around 7 of these plots still available.

Whilst the replacement of the old water pipework on the allotments was disruptive, it was a very welcome improvement to the water supply. Work was undertaken by volunteers on site with the Parish Council providing the fixtures and fittings and paying for the hire of equipment, etc. The Parish Council would like to thank those people who gave up some of their free time to undertake this work.

On the same subject, in the spring of 2012, the Parish Council agreed a policy in the event of a hose pipe ban so that allotment holders can be clear about what is and what is not acceptable. Notices about these arrangements will be posted at various places on site if and when a ban is implemented by Severn Trent Water.

Car park

The car park has been subject to a number of small attacks of vandalism including sawing through some railings to remove a bike chain and the theft of “no entry” signs. The Parish Council is planning to renew the entrance and exit markings in the near future.

Vicarage Lane Cemetery

During the year the Parish Council ground staff have installed a new row of ash vaults in the Garden of Rest. The Parish Council has also modified its policy to include guidelines and charges for the interment of ashes for those who do not wish to use the services of a funeral director. Following the withdrawal of trade waste collection by Rushcliffe from Parish Council premises, Shanks Waste Management now provide a large waste bin at the cemetery gates.

Flawford Cemetery

The Parish Council ground staff continue to maintain Flawford Cemetery which is a popular site for walkers.

St Peter's Churchyard

Discussions in respect of the maintenance of St. Peter's Churchyard have been ongoing throughout the year and agreement has been reached on grass cutting and several areas of general grounds maintenance of the Churchyard. The Parish Council is also addressing the issue of maintenance and repair work which is required to some of the memorials.

Churchill Open Space

Following requests from residents, a survey of five willow trees on Churchill Open Space was undertaken and a 50% reduction was recommended. This work was being undertaken at the time of this report.

War Memorial

Having obtained four quotations for maintenance work to be done to the War Memorial, the Parish Council had concerns about the large variance in the amount of work quoted for and costs for doing the work. Whilst attempting to investigate exactly what work was deemed necessary, what was preferable and what was purely cosmetic, County Councillor Reg Adair suggested that the Parish Council apply for funding through the Local Improvement Scheme and added that he would support

such an application. Forms were duly completed and dispatched and the Parish Council is hoping to hear back sometime in April or May 2012.

Essential pruning of overhanging and low branches was undertaken by the Parish Council ground staff prior to the Remembrance Sunday and Remembrance Day services at the War Memorial.

The Village Green

During the course of the year, contractors employed by the Medical Centre have returned on a number of occasions to ensure that remaining issues were addressed to the satisfaction of the Parish Council. In November, ground staff acknowledged that in their opinion the re-instatement of The Green following the removal of the temporary buildings, was now at an acceptable level.

Part of the agreement for the temporary occupation of the Medical Centre on The Green, was that the Medical Centre paid a charge to the Parish Council for the loss of the amenity. This amounted to £16,410 and has been "ring-fenced" until all the re-instatement has been completed to the satisfaction of the Parish Council. Now that work has been completed and assuming the Parish Council sign off the project, we will be seeking opinion from residents as to how this money should be spent.

Ruddington Fun Summer Activities

For the second year running, Councillor Mrs Barbara Breakwell was actively involved in organising activities for the summer holidays. The Parish Council granted a limited use of some of its facilities to enable events to take place during July and August. In total, Ruddington Fun offered a programme of events covering the period 25th July to 2nd September with only 6 days when nothing was taking place.

Village Survey

In March 2012, it was agreed that the Parish Council would undertake a Village Survey regarding the social, recreational and sporting activities within the village. The survey will be circulated later in the year, to every household and publicised on the website and in the Village Newsletter.

ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Traffic Management

Concerns continue to be forwarded to the Parish Council office in respect of parking on Dutton's Hill. Specifically outside the supermarket where lorries load and unload and issues of safety when leaving the supermarket car park. However, despite representations from members of the public, councillors and the Parish Council office, Highways have said that they have no plans to make any changes to parking arrangements in the near future. Following intervention by local residents and the Parish Council, the store agreed to restrict their delivery lorries to arriving at a more reasonable time of day to reduce any noise nuisance.

The Parish Council has also been approached on several occasions in respect of parking on Cumberland Close and has referred residents to the police and to NCC Highways Department.

Highways Work

In March 2011, the Highways Department advised that they proposed to make the old section of Loughborough Road 30mph keeping it consistent with the new speed limit for Landmere Lane.

At the same time, Highways advised that they would be implementing reductions in grass cutting and gully clearing as a result of budget cuts.

The new block paved pavements on High Street had been very well received at the end of 2010 but despite numerous requests to several departments at Nottinghamshire County Council, the Parish Council was unable to persuade any department to install additional bollards or any other way of preventing vehicles mounting the pavement which might ultimately cause damage to the paving.

In the summer of 2011, Councillor Mrs Barbara Breakwell reported that there had been numerous problems with parking in the village where it impeded the progress of bus services. As a result, the Parish Council Office contacted the Highways Department and asked that they consider double yellow lines at the junction of Church Street and the Green. The Parish Council is still waiting for a decision on this matter.

During August, it was necessary for Highways to install temporary traffic lights and road closures during re-surfacing in the village.

Planning Applications

In June 2011, 16 members of the public attended a meeting of the Environment & Community Committee to voice their objection to application number 11/00727/FUL from Soar Valley Homes Ltd. The application was for "*Land rear west of 218 and 220 Loughborough Road – Five detached two storey dwellings (accommodation within the roofspace); and associated garaging*". Residents had concerns over a number of

issues including drainage, trees with TPO's, traffic and the effects on wildlife and the environment. The Parish Council objected and the application was later withdrawn.

In October 2011, 15 members of the public attended a meeting of the Amenities Committee to object to application number 11/01365/FUL by Soar Valley Homes Ltd for the same site, to build four detached dwellings with garaging. The Parish Council objected to the application listing various areas of concern. Rushcliffe Borough Council gave consent with conditions applied.

There were two special planning meetings called to discuss planning applications during the summer recess, where a total of 12 applications were presented. In December 2011 two applications were considered by post/email.

Residents regularly attend meetings to speak about specific planning applications – whether it is to promote their own application or to voice an opinion on someone else's application. The Parish Council encourages residents to come forward with their opinions and suggestions so that they can be taken into account when making recommendations to the Borough Council.

Planning Appeals

10/01899/FUL

In April 2011, the Parish Council were advised that an appeal had been lodged by Mr A Bhatia for the "Erection of garden machinery store and associated works (following demolition of stable block) (retrospective application). The Parish Council had previously objected to this application. The Planning Inspectorate dismissed the appeal.

10/01903/FUL

In June 2011, the Parish Council were advised that an appeal had been lodged by Mr Brian Dickman for the construction of a dwelling at 25 Kirk Lane. The Parish Council had previously not objected to this application. The Planning Inspectorate dismissed the appeal.

11/00318/FUL

Also in June 2011, the Parish Council were advised that an appeal had been lodged by Mr & Mrs A Clough for a first floor front and side extension at 98 Churchill Drive. The Parish Council had previously not objected to this application. The Planning Inspectorate dismissed the appeal.

11/00548/FUL

In November 2011, the Parish Council were advised that an appeal had been lodged by Mr Ian Cousins for "loft conversion; dormer window to rear (retrospective)" at 27 Clifton Road. The Parish Council had previously objected to this application. The Planning Inspectorate dismissed the appeal.

11/00917/FUL

Also in November, the Parish Council were advised that an appeal had been lodged by Mr Twiss to "extend bungalow to rear to form first floor; two storey side extension with balcony; single storey rear extensions" at 206 Loughborough Road. The Parish Council had previously objected to this application. The Planning Inspectorate dismissed the appeal.

Community Bus

The Community Bus continues to be a very popular service bringing less mobile residents in to the village for shopping, medical appointments, etc. Despite increases in costs, the Parish Council agreed to continue funding the service as it provides a valued and necessary facility. However, the bus is still very short of volunteers despite notices on the website and in the Village Newsletter. Volunteers tell us that they have a lot of fun and that those who use the service are always happy and grateful for the help they receive.

Annual Garden Competition & Photographic Competition

Publicity of the Annual Garden Competition helped to maintain a healthy response from residents. There were eleven entries, some from entrants new to the competition and these were viewed on Tuesday 19th July by an independent judge.

Prizes and certificates were presented to Mrs L Sharpe who won the Front Garden Competition, Mr V Calladine who won the Window Boxes / Baskets / Planters Competition and Mrs Sharpe also won the Harold Wroughton Memorial Trophy.

The new Photographic Competition was very well received and the Parish Council had 13 high quality entries taken in a wide variety of gardens. Entries were judged by Don Bakewell who had suggested the competition during his time as a Parish Councillor and Mr P Brown won first prize.

Also for the first time this year, prizes and certificates for the Allotment Competition, the Garden Competition and the Photographic Competition were presented at a special Competition Presentation Evening in October 2011. All of the photographs were displayed and around 40 people attended the evening which was rounded off with refreshments supplied by the Parish Council.

Policing

As in 2010, Councillor Mrs Barbara Breakwell has represented the Parish Council at the Police Priority Setting Meetings whose aim is to identify particular areas of concern for each district. One of the issues which continues to be highlighted is anti-social behaviour.

During the course of the year the Parish Council was made aware that the Police Contact Point at the junction of Kirk Lane and High Street was due to close as part of Police cutbacks. The Parish Council has had several discussions with representatives from the Police including Inspector Nolan, and agreed in principle that it would allow the old IT room to be used as a Drop In point for the Beat Manager and PCSO only. The Parish Council is keen to retain a police presence in the village, however at the time of writing this report there have been no further developments.

Beat Manager, PC Ann Gill makes regular contributions to the Village Newsletter and website highlighting issues which are relevant for the time of year and

recommending steps that residents can take to make the village safer for everyone. Residents have reported that they find these articles both interesting and helpful.

CPRE Best Kept Village

Ruddington again entered the Best Kept Village Competition and posters were distributed encouraging schools and businesses to participate. Unfortunately, on this occasion Ruddington was not placed in the top four for section A. The Parish Council decided that in 2012, they would form a working group to try and motivate other organisations in the village to help with a general clean up in readiness for the competition.

Following the retirement of Tony Palmer from Streetwise, the bi-monthly meetings have discontinued at the present time. The Parish Council Office continues to report issues that require attention directly to Streetwise.

Hanging Baskets & Christmas Trees

Although the demand for hanging baskets in the village has declined in recent years, those who take part are keen to continue and make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing the basket.

In December, with the agreement of St. Peter's Church, the Parish Council dressed a tree with festive lighting in the churchyard as part of the Christmas decorations.

At the start of 2012, the Environment & Community Committee agreed to enquire whether there was sufficient demand to increase the number of Christmas trees displayed in the village following requests by new businesses to be included. Although business owners are required to provide their own electrical connections and time switches, the Parish Council provides the bracket, tree and lighting and asks that the business makes a voluntary contribution towards the cost.

Consultation Documents & Processes

As many consultative documents are lengthy and complex, Committees ask that at least one Parish Councillor thoroughly reads the document and reports to the committee on the content. The documents mentioned below can be seen and read at the Parish Council Office. On some occasions, consultations are at open meetings and members are invited to attend.

"A Fresh Approach to Housing Growth – Nothing is Yet Decided"

During the summer of 2011, several meetings took place between Rushcliffe Borough Council and residents of the village to consult on development both in the village and in Rushcliffe as a whole.

Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network

Councillor Mrs Barbara Breakwell attended this meeting which aimed at highlighting the needs of vulnerable people in the village. Cllr. Mrs Breakwell liaised with the Beat Manager and the PCSO to see how best to move forward in assisting with this initiative.

Communities and Local Government – Future of Local Public Audit

Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Consultation

This consultation with Rushcliffe Parish and Town Councils over its Fire Cover Review had been circulated to members so that they could respond on an individual basis.

Nottinghamshire Country Council – Developing a Nottinghamshire Approach to Localism

This correspondence advised that the Localism Bill was progressing through parliament and was expected to become law before the end of the year. To help with the development of the policy, the views previously expressed by the public, town/parish councils and the voluntary/community sector were being used to inform various aspects of procedure.

Nottinghamshire County Council – Street Lighting Energy Saving Proposals
Nottinghamshire County Council were asking for comments on draft proposals to reduce the level of lighting in certain areas. The proposals included switching off some lights completely, dimming some lights when traffic flows are low and switching off some lights between midnight GMT and 5.30am. Members were asked to respond on an individual basis. Following this consultation, NCC instigated a programme based on the information above.

Nottinghamshire County Council Budget Consultation 2012/13

Nottinghamshire County Council's Chief Executive emailed the Parish Council with details of its Budget Consultation. Members were invited to respond directly to NCC.

The Village Guide

The Village Guide is produced by the Parish Council Office with Councillor Mrs Barbara Breakwell doing most of the legwork needed to keep it up to date. The Guide is provided for new residents to the village and as a source of information for those who do not have access to a computer and therefore the village website. Unfortunately, due to pressure of work it has not yet been updated in 2012 and therefore any councillors or members of the public willing to assist with the paperwork will be made most welcome.

The Parish Council Website

The Village Website continues to be very popular and receives more than 1,200 visitors a week. In October 2011 the site received more than 6,300 visitors which is an all-time high.

The Parish Council is able to use this facility to communicate with residents in a way that the Village Newsletter and Village Guide cannot manage, with items of local news being updated regularly throughout the month. Parish Council Agendas and Minutes can be checked by any resident at any time even when the office is closed. The site also presents information about the whole of the village and not just issues related to the Parish Council. Details about classes, meetings, organisations and

events are published along with a History Corner and Gallery of photos from the past.

The Village Newsletter

Ruddington Parish Council's Village Newsletter is now on its 27th edition and with help from the new photocopier is produced in an A5 sized, full colour booklet. There is a team of around 6 or 7 contributors who, along with village residents, provide more than enough editorial copy for each edition. Around 1200 copies are distributed to local shops and businesses each month and we can judge the success of the Newsletter by the response to its content. The Newsletter is produced by the Parish Council Office and taken out by the Parish Council staff.

Cleansing

At the start of the new financial year, Rushcliffe Borough Council took the decision to stop the part time cleaning service provided through Streetwise in the village. The Parish Council were advised that whilst a cleansing service would continue, it would be at a reduced number of hours. The Parish Council reluctantly advised that there was no funding available to retain the part time cleaner but promised to keep a close watch on developments and report issues to Rushcliffe Borough Council as necessary.

Recycling

The March 2012 Village Newsletter reported that of Rushcliffe's 2,359.89 tonnes of recycling, Ruddington accounts for over 6%. In fact, the recycling centre in the Parish Council car park adjacent to the Co-op is the 8th largest collection point in Rushcliffe.

Ruddington Festival 2012

The Parish Council was approached by the festival planning group and was delighted to be able to offer use of Elms Park to hold the Ruddington Festival 2012, a decision which was agreed by the Finance & Policy Committee. Elms Park pavilion will be made available to the organisers for toilet facilities, etc. The Parish Council also agreed to take a stall in the 'Market Place' to promote the work of the Parish Council.

FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE

The name of this committee is a clear indication of its purpose – to manage the financial side of the Parish Council and oversee all expenditure to ensure that the best value is always achieved. Both the Environment & Community Committee and the Amenities Committee refers its plans for expenditure to this committee before any decisions can be taken. It is also primarily responsible for reviewing policy decisions before they are taken to the full Parish Council. It has three members from each of the other committees so that all sections are represented.

In previous years Ruddington has been fortunate to benefit from new housing on Pasture Lane, Old Station Road and Woodhouse Gardens which has helped the Parish Council to maintain its Parish Rate without increase for the past four years. Additional income resulting from an increase in lettings of St. Peter's Rooms and the Village Hall as a result of the Parish Council's website has also helped. However, 2012/13 will have no sizeable increases related to new properties and so the Parish Council has been obliged to make a modest increase to cover the inevitable increases in costs. The Parish Rate will rise slightly from £97.53 to £99.76 per year on a Band D property, which equates to only 4p per week – or less than 2.5%.

The coming year will see careful scrutiny of the Parish's costs and investigate additional ways of increasing income to ensure that residents continue to receive value for money. The Finance & Policy Committee will also be reviewing the way charges are made for room hire, etc. to see whether it can be better structured to the premises. Any changes agreed will be implemented for the 2013/14 financial year once agreed by the Parish Council.

Meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees.

Meetings of the Parish Council and its three Committees now receive additional publicity by posting dates on both the website and in the Village Newsletter. Residents are also able to view agenda's prior to each meeting and research minutes of meetings which have already taken place.

There are 6 Parish Council meetings held each year and meetings of the Amenities, Environment & Community and Finance & Policy Committees fall between each Parish Council meeting. Members of the public may attend any, or indeed all of the meetings and are allowed to speak on agenda items during the adjournment. Planning applications are considered at the first meeting after which they have been received and a list of planning applications is also on the website. In addition, plans are displayed on the internal notice board adjacent to the office door. In the event that an application is received during a recess, or a decision is needed before the next meeting, a special planning meeting will be called and advertised on the notice boards and on the website.

Parish Council Surgeries continue to be held on the 2nd Saturday each month, except for August and December, at St. Peter's Rooms between 10am and 12 noon. This is an opportunity for members of the public to meet with and talk to a Parish Councillor, a Borough Councillor or a County Councillor without the formalities of a

council meeting. Appointments are not required and issues which affect the Parish Council will be referred to the Clerk for action and will then be discussed at the next Parish Council Meeting. On some of these dates, you will also find representatives from your local neighbourhood policing team available for you to speak to if you wish. As before, you can find a full list of these dates on the website or the notice board.

Elections

In May 2011, it was confirmed that the Parish Council would not require an election as there were 14 candidates for 16 places in Ruddington's four wards. The new term saw the appointment of four new councillors, Arun Chopra, Michael McGowan, Mrs Marion Pell and Mrs Rachel Wilson. Councillor James Norton stood down as Chairman after 8 years on the Parish Council and Mrs Barbara Venes was elected as chairman.

The two remaining vacancies were filled by David Hall and Mrs Marilyn Robinson who stood for election and were unopposed.

In March 2012, Councillor Peter Lyons-Lewis reluctantly gave notice that he would need to resign as a result of pressure of work. Rushcliffe Borough Council later advised that an election for the vacancy for Flawford Ward had been called and would take place on 17th May 2012 if the vacancy was contested.

Major capital projects and purchases

Following considerable discussion and comparisons, the Parish Council purchased a replacement tractor which had been budgeted for in 2011/12 taking in to account trading in the old equipment. The replacement tractor will enable the groundstaff to undertake more maintenance work using tractor mounted machinery.

Staffing

In May 2011, the Clerk to the Council, Mrs Jane Goodbody, who had worked for the Parish Council for nearly 20 years gave notice that she intended to retire at Christmas 2011. A Recruitment Working Party was formed to ensure the correct procedure was followed for the advertising, interview and selection process. Although the first round of interviews failed to find a suitable applicant, the second round of interviews were more successful and Gary Long was invited to take up the position in September 2011. The new clerk started to work alongside the existing clerk in October 2011 to ensure a smooth transition.

A well-attended leaving event was organised for Tuesday 20th December for the retiring Clerk and presentations were made by a number of organisations along with speeches thanking Mrs Goodbody for all her efforts during her time in office.

Following the appointment of the new Clerk, the Parish Council is in the process of reviewing its Recruitment Policy though feedback from the recruitment process used.

In June 2011, it was resolved that Councillors Nick Tegerdine and Allen Wood conduct staff appraisals on behalf of the Parish Council. However, these have been temporarily deferred until the new Clerk to the Council has been formally appointed to the post.

There have been no other changes to the Parish Council's permanent staff during this year.

Office procedures & management

The IT Working Group, were charged with finding the best possible services and deal for the replacement computers, backup and maintenance of equipment and photocopying services used by the Parish Council Office. As a result of their efforts, the Parish Council has a new networked computer system incorporating the latest software, backup facilities and maintenance. In December 2011, the photocopier was also replaced with one that includes numerous additional features which are beneficial to the office.

In January 2012, it was agreed to trial some changes in the way that agendas and minutes are presented and distributed. To assess these changes it was agreed that they would be used for the Environment & Community Committee only for six months after which the Parish Council could decide whether to roll them out to all committees and Parish Council Meetings in general. Members of the public are welcome to provide feedback on the "new look".

Premises

Valuations: In June 2011 the Parish Council had a revaluation of all properties which meant an overall increase from the existing valuation of £1,978,500 to £3,940,000. The Parish Council insurers were informed and changes included to the current insurance schedule.

Hire: During the course of the year, the Parish Council implemented several modifications to its policy for hiring out venues to organisation and individuals. A new regular user agreement is issued each August for all regular users which clearly identifies the responsibilities that the hirer accepts when using the venues. Following numerous incidents of damage to the venues and their contents, it was agreed to review the deposits paid by hirers for individual events to enable the Parish Council to gain prompt recompense for such damage and/or additional cleaning if necessary.

Following on from the above, the Parish Council has also appointed a member of staff to be on duty for emergency call out purposes so that the hirer can contact someone for help if needed.

Risk Assessments

During the course of the year and with the help of professional advisors, the Parish Council undertook a comprehensive review of the existing Fire Risk Assessments. These highlighted a number of issues where remedial work was undertaken immediately and other issues which have seen remedial work done during the

course of the year. The Parish Council obtained three quotations for the on-going maintenance of the fire alarms, emergency lighting and other related equipment at all the venues and an order placed with the company who offered the best arrangement at the best price.

Dog Control Policy

During the early part of 2012, the Parish Council ground staff installed signage and recommendations on its open spaces in respect of dog control. The signage confirmed that dogs are not permitted within children's play areas and are required to be kept on a lead on playing fields where children might be playing games. On Elms Park, a poop bag dispenser had been provided on a trial basis and its success will be reviewed after a few weeks. Whilst some residents were unhappy at being asked to keep their dogs on lead, the new arrangements have generally been well received.

Strategic plans

Members had requested that each committee review and/or renew its own strategic plan for the future to enable each committee to help identify where it needs to spend funds especially in the light of tougher economic times. Working parties were set up for each committee with the aim of presenting relevant plans in the near future.

Grant Aid

During the course of the year, the Parish Council receives requests for assistance from different groups and organisations and these requests are put to the Finance & Policy Committee or Parish Council for consideration. Depending on the impact the organisation has on the residents of Ruddington, the Committee votes on whether or not to make a contribution. The following are organisations which have benefited in the last 12 months.

Robin Hood Cadet Corps Of Drums	£125 donation
3 rd Ruddington Brownies	£75 donation