

ULNES WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2002/2003

INTRODUCTION

The past twelve months has been a busy and interesting period, the role of Parish Councils has changed significantly with more opportunities being made available. The report that follows is a brief summary of the main activities undertaken by the Parish Council during 2002/2003.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership was unchanged during the year the Council being made up as follows:-

Eileen Doran (Chair), Dorothy Todd (Vice-Chair), John Ascroft, Philip Mortimer and Derek Ormerod.

Due to the growth in the workload and responsibilities of the Parish Council, successful application was made to the Borough to increase the Membership from five to six; approval was given for the additional Member to take office from the 1 May 2003. In the meantime it was agreed that a temporary non-voting Member could be appointed, this position was taken up by Mr John Barlow.

THE GREEN CENTRE RURAL PARTNERSHIP PROJECT (GCRPP)

During the year the GCRPP got under way. A project worker, Andrew Suter, funded by the National Lottery is based at the Green Centre in Eccleston, to work with seven parishes that are part of the project one of which is Ulnes Walton. The partnership has already made a significant impact on the Parish Council's ability to access funding for improving the local environment. A very good working relationship has been established with the Team at the Centre.

Following a favourable response from residents and with the help of the Green Centre application was made to the Countryside Agency for funding to allow for the preparation of a Parish Plan. The maximum grant allocation (£5000) has been awarded and a Steering Group established to carry the project through. Ulnes Walton took a lead with the Parish Plan and as a result several other partners in the GCRPP have followed suite. Various consultation exercises will glean information for the plan including questionnaires and a Past, Present and Future Day will be held on 21 June 2003.

A further grant of £680 has been obtained from Awards for All, to assist with the expenses associated with the 21 June 2003. This will enable the event to be much more than a consultation exercise and be a mid summer celebration for the Parish and a group of Viking re-enactors will be in attendance. Several groups from the Parish will also be taking part, put this date in your diary and come along to support your community.

Funding was obtained from the International Tree Foundation and permission granted by the County Council for trees to be planted in the grass verge on Southport Road near to Lydiate Lane. Sadly these were vandalised less than a week after being planted, but hopefully will be replaced.

Another successful joint project was the chipping of Christmas trees, which was co-ordinated by the Green Centre and took place at Ernshaws Shire Farm. A big thank you needs to be recorded to the Mortimer family for the use of their facilities. It is hoped to do the same again next year.

The Parish Council are working with Andrew Suter to secure funding for a major Heritage project. This will encompass upgrading the footpaths; a wildlife survey; an archaeological survey; a possible archaeological dig and boundary signs. It is hoped to involve as many people in the parish as possible with this project.

Consideration is also being given to the purchase of a mobile loop system for use by different groups in the Parishes covered by the GCRPP.

The GCRPP lasts for three years and it is hoped much can be achieved during this period.

OTHER GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Successful application was made to the Countryside Agency for funding to allow the bus shelter on Southport Road, near Lydiate Lane junction, to be replaced and for a new shelter to be erected on Willow Road (Wymott Village). The grants obtained totalled £4000, with contributions being made by the Parish Council and the County Council.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

Members have continued to lobby the County Council regarding traffic and road safety issues with some success. After two years of pestering a weight restriction has been imposed on Ulmes Walton Lane, the signs were promised before Christmas (which one?) and are still awaited.

Further lobbying secured a speed camera for Southport Road.

The Members will not allow road safety issues to drop as long as there is a problem. It seems perseverance is the key and it is also important for residents to lobby as well.

COMMUNITY LINKS

The Parish Council has joint responsibility with South Ribble Borough Council for the appointment of a representative on the Board of Governors at St James Primary School. The term of office of the Borough representative expired and the vacancy has now been filled by a Parish Council Member – Derek Ormerod.

POLICY DOCUMENTS

During the year a new policy which was required under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has been adopted. This governs the right of access by the electorate to Parish Council records.

DONATIONS

A donation of £75 has been made to the work of the North West Air Ambulance.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Parish Council has continued to lobby on other issues affecting the Parish, including getting the parish put on the ordinance survey map; persistent dumping of rubbish, planning and much more.

AND FINALLY

There are lots of people to thank for their help during the year, here are just a few - the members of the Steering Group; the staff and Trustees of the Green Centre; our Borough Councillors; Lindsay Hoyle MP; the Engineering Team at the Borough for their help with the bus shelters; Tammy Smith from Community Futures; Jo Parr at the Countryside Agency and many more. Their assistance has been invaluable in helping the Parish Council achieve some of its goals during the year.

SUMMARY

The Parish Council has had a successful year with some pleasing achievements and is looking forward to moving ahead with other plans and grant opportunities. In order for the Council to be successful it needs the support of the public that it represents, if you feel the Parish Council may be of assistance, in any way, by working to improve the Parish or putting forward opinions, ideas etc. please contact one of the Members, the Clerk or make your views known at a Parish Council meeting.

Eileen Doran
Chairman of the Parish Council

Lynne Rowett
Clerk to the Council