

ANNUAL REPORTS – HISTON PARISH COUNCIL

2007 – 2008

Planning Committee

The Planning committee meetings are usually held every two weeks at 7:30 pm on Thursday evening. The Planning committee is open to all members of the council although there is a core of members, who have a special interest in planning, that attend the majority of meetings. All the meetings are open to the public and we always welcome participation from the public as well as developers. By discussing plans with developers we can sometimes influence the scale and design of a development and try to ensure it is in keeping with our local environment.

Although the Parish Council has limited powers over developments within our parish we can try to ensure the village character is maintained. Part of the character, and one of the reasons that Histon is such a vibrant community, is due to the mixture of employment and facilities (from pubs to churches to shops and schools) within the parish.

It is vitally important that future developments in the village maintain this mix of uses thus ensuring that we are a complete community and not just another Cambridge satellite commuter village.

Mike Barrett, former Planning Committee Chairman

Histon Pooresland Charity Trustees representative

Malcolm Ruel has resigned from Histon Parish Council although is currently a representative to the Charity and it is hoped may be persuaded to continue in this role

This report received from Jo Teague, who has also resigned from her Parish Council but is willing to continue as representative:

The Pooresland charity is continuing to maintain its allotments. The Charity has broadened its remit and is now able to offer small amounts of money to a wider section of the residents of Histon and Impington. This is to include both male and female residents and who do not have to be retired e.g. single parents.

Each Christmas a small monetary gift is made to the widows / widowers of the two parishes. The Charity would welcome being informed of any residents who may be in need of a small sum of money or the purchase of a moderate item to assist them. This is throughout the year. The names / details should be passed to one of the Pooresland committee.

Josephine Teague, Impington Parish Council representative to the Trustees

Health & Safety Officer Report

Fortunately a quiet year on the H&S front with no significant issues reported. It is a shame, however, that certain elements around the village consider it amusing to engage in activities that can put others at risk, in particular, the very young using the playground. Broken glass has been liberally scattered around on several occasions and it has been due to the vigilance of the

Health & Safety Officer Report (continued)

litter pick team, parents and the playground inspectors from the Parish Council that have prevented any incidents occurring.

Work has been done with the Recreation Ground Councillors and Clerk to develop H&S policies and procedures for the groundsman and other staff Risk assessments for issues around the village have been updated and significant changes noted.

Cllr John Emmines, Health & Safety Officer

Environment Committee

A busy year for the Environment Committee with major works to the War Memorial in time for the Remembrance ceremony in November, replacing wrecked railings at the manorial waste ground near Tesco's/Youth shelter and the planning for installation of bollards on the Green to try and avoid vehicles mounting the pavement (in one case destroying the seat in the process). Unfortunately vandalism to the seats and litter bins continues and we are regularly replacing these items.

Past work to the Brook has improved the water quality and bank side vegetation much appreciated by the ducks although litter is still sometimes a problem with some being thrown into the brook requiring some of the Parish Councillors to don waders. There are fish in the Brook now and the rat situation appears under control following regular work by the local pest control operatives.

The use of the Green has had to be strictly controlled as, in the past, considerable damage has been done to the grass resulting in expensive repair work being required. There is good co-operation between the Parish Council and the fairground over Feast week to try and keep damage down to a minimum

Tree works on the Green and around the village have proved necessary as unfortunately some trees have shown signs of disease and some planning requests have involved the removal of trees.

Allotments work has continued with nearly all the allotments at Gatehouse Road (Meadow Road) being utilised now, indeed it is good to see the work going on down there by folk keen to grow their own produce. In addition this area is a haven for wildlife with all sorts of creatures, such as foxes, frogs and toads, many species of birds and muntjac deer regularly spotted. Donarbon have provided compost free of charge which has helped to improve the soil workability although the weeds appreciate this bonus too!

Footpath improvements have been undertaken by the SCDC as part of the Northstowe project for improvements to infrastructure along with access issues around the guided bus works.

There has been considerable work put in to getting the Christmas lights on a more permanent footing with a new power point installed and cables trenched across the site. This has not moved as fast as we would like due to the prohibitive cost of the trenching and the difficulties around the route with tree roots making life tricky.

Environment Committee (continued)

It was great to see the co-operation between the Feast Committee and the Parish Council resulting in the normal lights and a Christmas tree on the Green for 2007

The Parish Pump has needed some tender loving care this year with work still to be done.

The Probation Office based team removing graffiti have been used to great effect although it is a shame that often as fast as it is removed more appears.

Playground work has involved running repairs and some more extensive work being required to the roundabout. It was felt that it was worth repairing the old equipment as it is very much a feature of the playground and modern designs are not so robust and probably would not stand up to the usage. Some additional play equipment for the much younger users is planned for this site. It is a great shame that some older users of the site feel that they haven't had a good day if they can't wreck something so regular checks and replacement are necessary. Ending on high though it is gratifying to see how much use this play equipment gets and the obvious pleasure of the youngsters well worth the effort and expense.

Cllr John Emmines, Chairman Environment Committee

Histon & Impington Youth Committee

During the last year, the membership of the committee has changed. We said goodbye and thanks to Mark Lawton, but welcomed Pene Nudds to our number. We also welcomed Sophie Lucas as our new youth worker, taking the place of Andrea who went on maternity leave in the summer term. The Youth Committee and Sophie have been well supported by Paula Mayes who is in charge of youth work in our patch.

During the year work on the skate park project progressed, with the small team of skaters and the skate park design group GBH Ramps Ltd. The resulting skate park design was incorporated into a project proposal which was presented to the two parish councils. The young people also made a successful bid to the Youth Bank for £8000 to fund the youth shelter which was part of the overall design. Unfortunately the project has been shelved and the grant money returned as the proposed site for the park, on the Recreation Ground, could not be made available. It is hoped that the new skate bowl planned for development on Arbury Park will help satisfy local need.

Of the four youth clubs started last year it is only the two sports youth clubs that are continuing to attract significant numbers of young people. Declining membership and other difficulties at the church halls have seen the transfer of the Monday night junior club to IVC and the Tuesday night senior club closed and replaced with outreach work. Additional projects have also taken place within IVC during the school day. A discussion was held with the Principal of IVC, Rob Campbell, to consider the possibility of having some dedicated space within the college for youth work.

As in previous years the youth committee had a presence at the Feast market and will be sponsoring events on the Recreation Ground during May.

A new responsibility this year has been the start of youth work at Arbury Park. A youth group is gradually taking shape as residents move into homes on the site. The current meeting place

Histon & Impington Youth Committee (continued)

is known as the 'Banana' but there is hope of having space in the new community building when it is opened.

More recently a small number of young people have been causing problems at the Recreation Ground and in the Villages generally. Our youth workers are involved with all other agencies to help find a solution for this. It has to be recognised that provision for young people in the Villages is poor and a dedicated space for our young people and youth work is much needed.

Impington Parish Councillor Hooda Abdullah, representative to the Advisory Body

Mobile Warden Scheme

The Mobile Warden scheme continues as before with very much the same numbers (averaging 15 over the year). The services of the Warden Phyllis Peacocke continues to be very much appreciated by all. It has been suggested that the Scheme takes a table at the Feast Market in July to raise profile some more. Although now retired from Council I will continue on the body this year, but a Councillor representative is required and we look forward to welcoming that person to our meetings. Hooda Abdullah is now the Impington representative.

This year the Scheme asked for £750 from the Council for which they were grateful. It would seem likely that this year the request will be higher, perhaps back to the original level of £1,500

Malcolm Ruel, representative to the Group

May 2008

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