



KIRKBURTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2011 – 2012



KIRKBURTON PARISH COUNCIL

Contact Details:

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Angela Royle
Clerk to the Council



Rachel Perry
Administrative Support Officer

Meetings:

Parish Council meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of each month, except for May. Committee meetings are called as and when required. A timetable of the meetings has been included on the website, which will be updated as meeting dates are confirmed.

Agendas are uploaded to the website at least 4 days before the meeting, and they are also put up on the Council's noticeboards, in the 4 libraries, at some village halls and post offices.

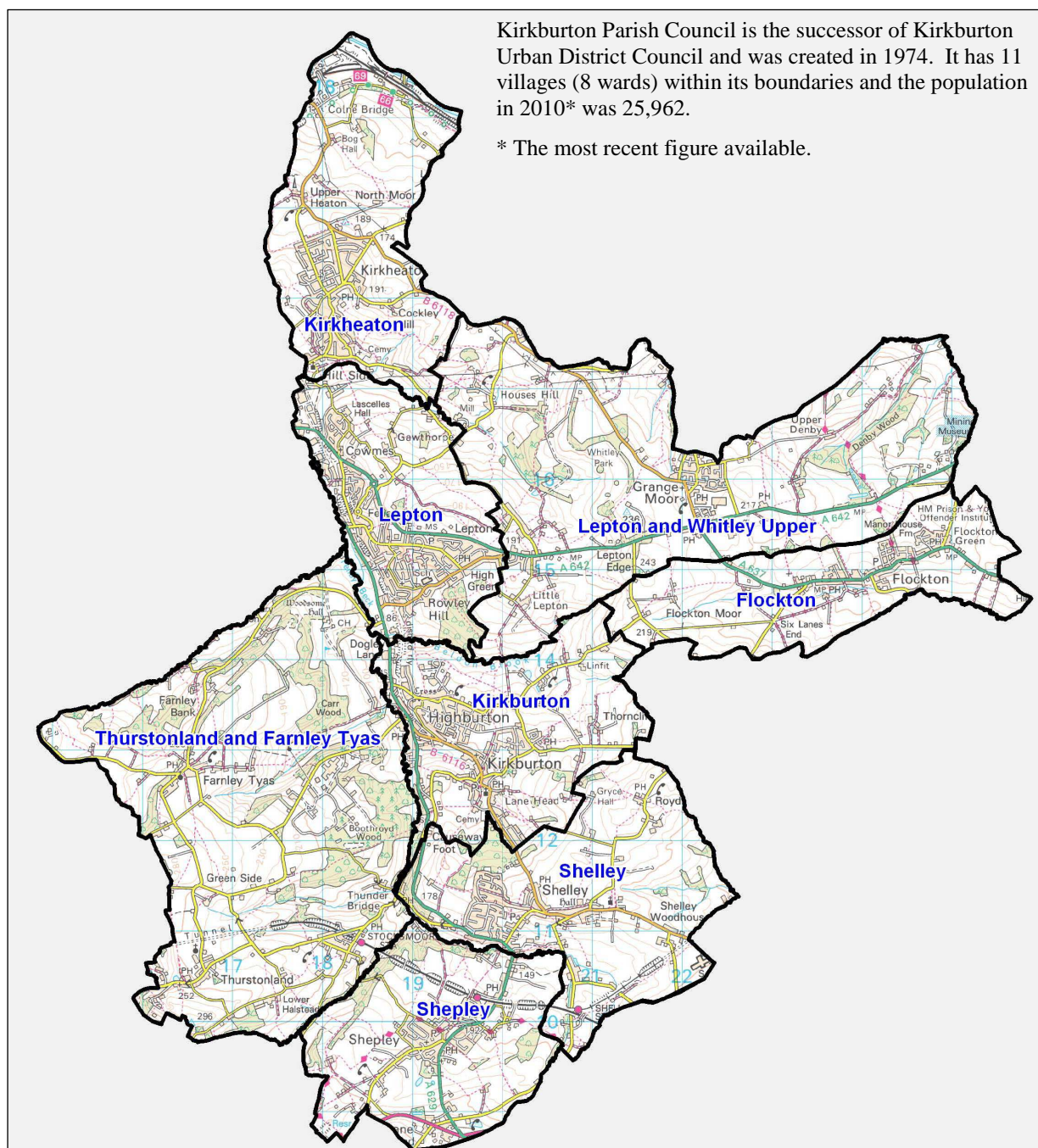
The Council (Planning/General Purposes) meeting which was previously held on the third Thursday of each month has been discontinued. If the deadline for a planning application falls between the two monthly Council meetings, the Council will make no comment to Kirklees Planning Services. However, Councillors will be able to request an additional meeting to comment on a specific application if it impacts significantly on the area, or if there is considerable public concern.

Meetings are usually held at Burton Village Hall at 7.30 pm, with a public participation session at the beginning when members of the public are invited to address the Council. These arrangements are subject to confirmation at the Annual Meeting each year.

Members of the public are welcome to attend any of the Council and Committee meetings, except where it is notified that a particular item of business is exempt under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 for legal reasons.

INDEX

Contact Details and Meeting Procedures	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Map of Kirkburton Parish Council area	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Chairman's Overview of the Year	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Summary of Council's Activities & Decisions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Summary of the Accounts	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Details of the Small Grants	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Details of Community Project Grants	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Environment Committee Expenditure & Summary of Projects	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Contact details of Kirkburton Parish Councillors	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12



Chairman's Overview of the Year

The first year of any Parish Council term is an interesting time, with many new Councillors joining us (11 at this year's election!), settling into the first year's business in our four year term and saying farewell to some of our old colleagues. My year as Chairman has been no exception to this. We were sorry to see 3 Councillors resign from the Council, but have welcomed three new colleagues after the recent by-elections in the Kirkburton and Shepley wards. Despite the unavoidable settling in period of our new Council, we have made some good progress this year on many projects that were on-going, and instigated some new and exciting ones! This year we also welcomed our youngest ever Parish Councillor, Ben Wightman, who at 22 years old, considerably lowered our average age! I hope to see this trend continue in future Councils.

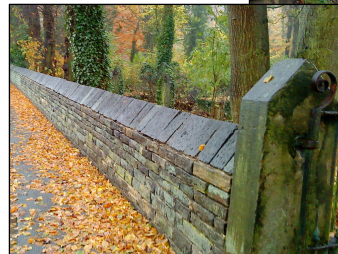
As well as many new Councillors, we welcomed our new Administrative Support Officer, Rachel Perry, who joined our team after the retirement of Sandra Harling in July 2011. Rachel is already proving to be a valuable addition, and is helping to run several Council projects along with her many other varied duties. I would like to thank her for all her efforts.

The Council's programme of works to improve drainage at Grange Moor Allotments has continued apace, and several of my Council colleagues have been instrumental in progressing this and planting the seeds of a good working relationship with many of the allotment holders. I must thank my colleagues, Cllrs Robert Barraclough, Norman Berry, Jimmy Paxton, Cass Whittingham and Ben Wightman for the work and many hours of their own time they've committed to this. I'm pleased to report that the remedial drainage work carried out there appears to have had a positive impact on the problem to date, and the planting of fruit trees as part of a new Parish Council project should further help to drain the extra water away.



The Parish Council's 1000 Fruit Trees Project is a project begun this year, with planting already well underway. Again several Councillors were involved working with the residents and allotment tenants. A full report on the project can be found in the Environment section.

It was pleasing to see work continue at Kirkheaton Churchyard, where repairs have been carried out to the boundary wall on Church Lane in the older section of the churchyard. Also, the path in front of the Colne Bridge memorial was relaid and flags replaced where necessary; adjacent walls which support the ground at the bottom of the slope were also repointed. In the Spring of this year a tree overhanging Church Lane had to be felled for safety reasons, but a new sapling has also been planted elsewhere in the churchyard.



sapling has

This year, as in previous years, we have given thousands of pounds in grants to community groups and projects within the Parish. Full details can be found later in this report as well as photos of some of the groups and projects supported. This funding is in my view, one of the most important roles of the Parish Council, and without it many groups could not exist and survive, particularly in the current economic climate. It's more vital than ever that these grants are maintained at their current levels, as other revenue streams dry up for many volunteers and community groups. I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank all those people in our villages who give of their time, energy, enthusiasm and ideas, to help make their communities more vibrant, supportive and fun places to live. And also for inviting me to their events throughout the year and for making me feel so welcome.

Although the Council's support to its communities and residents has continued, it is worth noting that the precept¹ was frozen at its previous level. Employment costs remain at less than 25% of turnover.

¹ Portion of the Council tax which funds the Parish Council

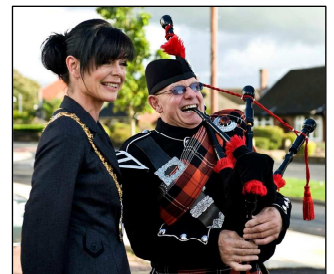
A new innovation this year is the Council's the Youth Engagement Committee, which aims to become more involved with the children and young people of the Parish. By working more closely with them, it is hoped that the Council will be better informed of what is needed for this age group and hopefully, will be able to accommodate them in future planned activities. The outcome of initial discussions is a jubilee project, which will involve all young people attending schools in this area up to the age of 16. We hope to be able to update you more on the detail of the project later in the year. I must particularly thank Cllr Suzanne Triggs for her enthusiasm in bringing this to life. It will undoubtedly help to break down some of the perceived barriers to young people getting involved with the Parish Council, and we hope to work in collaboration with our colleagues in neighbouring Parish Councils to achieve this more widely. Perhaps we can further reduce the Parish Council's average age?



Another new project this year is the Dog Fouling project which was initiated to try to reduce the escalating problem of dog fouling within the Parish, by installing and maintaining dog waste bag dispensers in suitable locations. To raise awareness of the problem we ran a very successful poster design competition for local school children. We had some fantastic entries and the winning posters, which were designed by children from Rowley Lane J, I & N School and Highburton 1st School, will be displayed throughout the Parish. I was pleased to present gift tokens to the 3 winners and their schools also received garden centre vouchers.

Our Parish Walks project is now nearing completion, and I must thank my colleague Cllr Michelle Atkinson for the work she's put into this project, and her tenacity, the freely-given effort and commitment needed from her to see this project come to fruition. It's hoped that as part of our Jubilee celebrations, a Jubilee Walk can utilise the guide-stoops that are an integral feature of the walks, and that a Chairman's Charity Walk will take place later this calendar year along the Lepton circular route. Keep an eye on our website for further details!

This year was the 60th Kirkburton Parish Council Civic Sunday, the first one being held in 1951 in Kirkburton at the invitation of Cllr Wilson Senior. It was an honour and a pleasure to host the day with many Mayors and Chairmen from our fellow Town and Parish Councils, and their consorts, attending. To mark the occasion, I was determined that this year we would 'process' from the square in Lepton, and process we did as the Heavens opened! I firmly believe that it was something to do with the bagpipes of the West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service Pipe Band that charmed the rain from the sky, as once we had reached St John's Church in Lepton for the Civic Service, the rain miraculously stopped. The service was conducted by our vicar, Rev Anita Raggett, who as ever rose to the occasion with suitable aplomb: thank you Anita! I must also thank Cllr Jimmy Paxton, without whom my Civic Sunday would not have been anywhere near as memorable. We did not know it at the time, but sadly this was former Parish Council Chairman Geoff Earnshaw's final Civic Sunday attendance, as he passed away in November last year. Mr Earnshaw was Parish Council Chairman twice - in 1977 and again in 1987. He was held in high regard.



So, at the end of my year as Chairman, I feel that it is just beginning, and can't believe that this time last year I was at the previous Chairman's house getting something of a 'pep talk' from Cllr John Hirst and his wife Viv. Thank you to both of these outstanding people, for your continued support and advice this year.

Thanks also to my Vice Chairman, Cllr Richard Burton for his calming influence, our Line Manager, Cllr Robert Barraclough for his good sense and safe pair of hands, and my Consort for this year, Cllr Michelle Atkinson for sticking with me! A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes of the Parish Council, and much of this is done by our Clerk, Angela Royle, who, although an employee of the Parish Council, also gives her time, support and knowledge to Councillors and public alike, above and beyond the call of duty. Thank you Angela, it has been a splendid year!

Cllr Sharon Dunford, Chairman, 2011-12

Summary of the Council's Activities and Decisions

The Council continued to work on behalf of its many community groups and residents, including by representing their interests to outside organisations on a variety of subjects. On planning issues the Council takes an overview of planning developments in the area and submits comments to the Planning Authority, where appropriate. It has also been involved with the Local Development Framework, the decisions of which will impact considerably on residents for many years to come. The Councillors are not against development and progress, but are concerned to try and ensure that any development in this area represents an improvement and does not detract from the beautiful countryside, much of which is either Green Belt land or in Conservation areas. The area is noted for its woodlands and open countryside, and the Council is anxious that these are maintained for future generations.

Representations were made to the formal consultations on the National Planning Policy Framework and also on the proposed changes to the Parliamentary constituency boundaries.

The Police are regular attendees at Parish Council meetings, when officers update members on crime statistics and any other related issues. Parish Councillors are also often able to pass on useful information on these occasions, so we are all working together to try and make the Parish a safer place to live.

Public transport is close to many people's hearts, and Councillors kept a close eye on the various proposed changes to routes and timetables. In some cases their involvement with the bus companies and Metro has resulted in a better outcome for the passengers on some routes in this area.



Working Together

Council has kept up its links with the neighbouring Parish Councils, whose Clerks share information and expertise. We have also worked with Kirklees wherever possible, such as via the Area Committees and the Environment Unit, to ensure that our activities complement each other rather than overlap. All of this helps to minimise operating costs as well as often obtaining a better end-result. Kirklees Planning Services have provided free training sessions on planning issues, which have been useful and informative. On one occasion two officers attended a meeting at Highburton and delivered a training session to the whole Council. This was much appreciated by all who attended.

Councillors have also been working closely with EPIP on various projects in this area, such as the Parish Walks project, digitizing the Council's records and a new project at Farnley Mill, which also involves Huddersfield & District Archaeology Society. We hope to update you all all of these projects over the course of the year.



The Clerk now updates EPIP's tourism website for events in the Kirkburton parish area: www.denbydale-kirkburton.org.uk Community groups are encouraged to let her know of local events in the villages, so they can be included and groups will obtain additional free publicity.



Communication The Council is always looking for new ways of improving its channels of communication and now has a Twitter account (@KirkburtonPC), which is updated by the Clerk with the latest information & consultations on a regular basis. It is encouraging to see the number of followers continues to grow.

You may have also noticed our new website: www.kbpc.co.uk Previously it was provided and updated completely free of charge by Mr Adrian Royle, to whom we are most grateful. However, the Council felt that it was taking too much advantage, and it also wished to expand it in a way which was not reasonable on a free of charge basis.



We have therefore commissioned a new website, which we hope will make the Council even more accessible to the public, and provide another way for the public to make contact. As well as making agendas, minutes and other Council information readily available, it has sections for Council News & Consultations and for Community News. We want to help you to publicise your events free of charge, so please put us on your distribution list. It would be helpful to have around 7 days notice of the event, but we will do our best to put it up, whenever it arrives at the office.

The website is updated quite regularly, so keep an eye on it to ensure you are up-to-date with the happenings in the area. We also have a noticeboard in most of the villages, which are updated by Cllrs and staff on a regular basis. So next time you're passing one, have a look and see what's new at the Parish Council. We are also very willing to display notices from community or voluntary groups. Please get in touch with the keyholder, or if you do not know who that is, contact the office, and the staff will be pleased to tell you how to get your notice displayed. It should be noted, however, that we do not display notices of a commercial nature.

We are also keen to expand on the number of links to your community organisations, so please get in touch and let us know your web address. All of this helps to speed up the flow of information in both directions, and most importantly, provides the public with the information they need.

The newsletter, One Voice, continues to come out four times per year and is distributed by your local Councillors to various public venues in the villages, such as post offices, village halls, medical centres, libraries, shops and other suitable locations. Copies can also be viewed/downloaded from the website and are available from the office on request. It is sent out directly by email to people who have requested to receive it in that way – if you would like your name adding to the list, please let us know.



The Council always plays its part in enhancing the villages by providing 100 hanging baskets on lamp posts in almost all the villages and centres across the Parish. At Christmas 10 trees were put up – 9 of them financed by the Parish Council and the 10th funded by Kirklees, for which we are grateful. We are currently consulting on providing a living Christmas tree in Lascelles Hall in the same place it is usually sited. Councillors will shortly be making contact with local residents on the subject. If you live in that area and have a view, please let us know what you think.



On Remembrance Sunday, Councillors could be seen in most of the villages laying poppy wreaths in memory of those who have given their lives for their country.

The Council takes its responsibilities very seriously, and to ensure that we are all working correctly and to extend our areas of expertise, the Councillors and the staff have undertaken training on a wide range of subjects including neighbourhood planning/planning, green technology, allotments, the Localism Act, website management, as well as Council procedures/law, to name but a few of the subjects. It is worth noting that in many cases,

attendance of these courses was in personal time.



Parish Councillors undertook a bus trip across the parish, so that new Councillors could see the extent of the parish and find out what the issues were in villages other than their own, and the re-elected Councillors updated themselves on various situations. It all serves to make everyone more aware of what is going on all across the parish.

Finance

Summary of Accounts 2011-12		£
Precept		122,000
Alloment Rents		222
Refund of VAT		1,796
Shelley Village Hall Rent		4,500
Rent refund and bank interest		2,931
Total Income		131,449
General Running Costs:		41,738
Administration including employment costs, insurance, meetings, office equipment, postage, stationery, telephone/internet.		
Rent and VAT (to be reclaimed in full)		10,266
Civic Governance:		29,206
Audit, conferences, chains of office, civic functions, main 4-yearly Parish Council elections, legal & professional advice*, quality council, subscriptions, training.		
Public Information:		2,688
Advertisements, annual report, newsletter, noticeboards, shows and website.		
Grants:		40,089
Small grants to 45 non-profit organisations within the Parish; Community project grants and environment grants.		
Village Projects:		31,323
Allotments, public seats and other environment projects		4,495
Hanging baskets*, Christmas trees and poppy wreaths		5,019
Kirkheaton Churchyard		20,995
Shelley Village Hall		814
Total Expenditure:		155,310
Allocated Reserves (To cover costs of projects in progress, but not yet completed):		36,988
General Reserve:		30,299

The general reserve figure is at the lower end of the range legally required to be maintained by Parish Councils under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011.

Notes: The amount included above for Legal Advice covers two years' fees. The hanging baskets for Summer 2011 were included in last year's accounts, due to the timing of the accounts meetings at the year-ends and a change in the baskets ordering system. The full Receipts & Payments Statement is available on the website.

Small Grants Awarded 2011-12

In total, £10,206 was awarded as annual small grants (listed in full below). Community organisations are invited to apply in the autumn each year and are entitled to £250 every year. It can be taken in larger amounts so long as the total awarded does not exceed £750 over three years (the year of application and the two immediately preceding it). Please check with the staff if you are unsure how much you are able to apply for or for any other help you may need with your application. Forms become available in September and must be returned with the financial information by the last Friday in October. Organisations with public clocks are invited to apply for a clock maintenance grant during the same period. Forms are sent out to the qualifying organisations. Cheques are issued the following April at the beginning of the financial year.

Kirkburton	£
All Hallows Church	200
Burton Out of School Club	250
Highburton Baby & Toddler Group	155
Highburton Brownies	250
Highburton Playgroup	250
Kirkburton Pre-School	245
Kirkburton Senior Citizens Support Group	250
Time Out	100



Kirkheaton

44th Huddersfield (Kirkheaton) Cubs	250
119th Huddersfield (Kirkheaton) Guides	250
119th Huddersfield (Kirkheaton) Brownies	250
119th Huddersfield (Kirkheaton) Rainbows	250
Kirkheaton Senior Citizens Club	200

Lepton

Lepton Highlanders Girls Football Club	250
Lepton Highlanders Junior Football Club	200
Lepton Luncheon Club	250
Lepton PCC	200
Lepton Pilots	200

Shelley

10 th Pennine East Rainbows	250
Far Bank Playgroup	250

Pierrot Players Amateur Dramatic Society	150
Scissett Youth Band	170
Shelley Conservation Association	650
Shelley Junior Football	250
Shelley Over 60's Club	250

Shepley

Shepley Badminton Club	250
Shepley Band	250
Shepley Bowling Club	190
Shepley Croquet Club	250
Shepley Football Club	250
Shepley Good Companions	200
Shepley & District Naturalists Society	200
Shepley Spring Festival	250
Shepley Tennis Club	200
Shepley Women's Institute	250

Thurstonland/Farnley Tyas

Farnley Tyas Community Group	250
Farnley Tyas PCC	200
Farnley Tyas Women's Institute	250
Stocksmoor Toddler Group	250
Stocksmoor Village Association	100
Stocksmoor Village Hall	211
Stocksmoor Villages Twinning Association	200
Stocksmoor Women's Institute	250
Thurstonland & Stocksmoor Out of School	250
Thurstonland PCC	200
Thurstonland Village Association	300



The photographs above and left are of groups and projects supported by Parish Council grants, from the top they are: Stocksmoor WI (bottom of Page 8), Shepley Spring Festival, Lepton Youth Club, Thurstonland Cricket Club, Shepley Good Companions and Yetton Together.

Community Project Grants		£
Lepton Highlanders Sports & Social Club - Improvements to drainage on sports pitches.		3,400
Kirkheaton Parish Centre Management Committee - Improvements to Parish Centre.		5,420
Thurstonland Cricket Club - Towards costs of replacing old cricket pitch.		1,500
Kirkheaton Scouts & Guides - Replacement windows at the HQ.		2,500
Lepton Methodist Church - Towards the costs of essential roof repairs.		3,000
Total Spent		15,832

The Environment

The Environment Committee is the largest Parish Council committee and includes two co-optees – Mr Tim Scott representing the Kirkburton & Highburton Community Association and Mr Neil Windett, Kirklees Countryside Manager. They both make valuable contributions to the Committee and give different perspectives on the various issues dealt with. We would like to put on record our thanks to both gentlemen for their input this year.



The Committee has continued to develop its Environment Plan. Sitting alongside the Council's Aims & Objectives, it is an ongoing operation, which continues to develop and grow. The Committee considers all suggestions received from the public for new projects and new issues arising in the area, which if agreed, are included into our area of work and added to the Plan. So please let us know if there is something important to you, which we have not yet addressed. The latest version of the Plan is updated to the website when it has been agreed, and is also available as a paper document from the office on request.

The Committee usually meets five times per year. All the meetings are open to the public, with a public participation session early in the meeting, when everyone is encouraged to speak to the Committee and give their opinions and suggestions on anything which falls within the Committee's remit. Agendas and minutes can be downloaded from the website, so there is no excuse for not keeping up!

The Committee has seen another active year. As mentioned earlier in this report, the Council has set up an initiative set up to address and reduce the problem of dog fouling on pavements and in public areas. We propose to provide cost effective support and extra facilities in the form of dog waste bag dispensers to enable dog mess to be picked up and disposed of in an acceptable and hygienic manner. To date 12 suitable locations have been identified, one in each village/centre, where dispensers will be installed over the next few months once the appropriate permissions from Kirklees and the various landowners have been obtained. We are proposing to install further dispensers over the next 12 months and consultation with the public will take place over where the most suitable locations are.



Information about the project is on our website and further details will shortly appear in village magazines and on village websites. We are very keen to hear from you where you feel the worst areas are and a dedicated e-mail address has been set up for this purpose: dogs@kbpc.co.uk. We are also trying to obtain additional bins on the streets to ease the problem, but these are provided and emptied by Kirklees and they have to be on existing street-sweeping routes. This does cause some limitations, but if you have any suggestions where an additional one would be useful, please let us know and we will see what we can do. Dog waste bags are also available to the public free of charge. If you would like a supply please contact the office or your local Councillor.

1000 Fruit Trees



This is a long-term project running for the whole Parish Council term of office up to 2015. Councillors and community groups are actively identifying areas of public land, which are suitable for planting with fruit trees/shrubs, herbs and nut trees, the choices being dependent on the growing conditions and locations. So far planting has taken place at Stockmoor and on Grange Moor allotments, where local residents, allotment tenants and Councillors all worked together planting cherry, apple, pear and plum saplings. On both occasions, the event created a great

sense of community spirit. Further sites have been identified for autumn planting sessions. For planting to get the go-ahead village groups must be prepared to be involved with the planting and subsequent maintenance. So if you know of any sites in your village, which may be suitable please get in touch with us, and we will look into it further.

Fruit and Vegetable Growing Workshops



The Council is currently running a series of 6 workshops at Grange Moor allotments free of charge for all of our allotment tenants. The course content has been designed specifically in-line with the needs and suggestions of the participants, covering all aspects of fruit & vegetable growing on an allotment. It is hoped that the participants will benefit from the course and find new and better ways of managing their allotments and addressing any problems. As well as learning from the tutors of the Holme Valley Gardening Network, it is also providing an

opportunity for tenants to share information and tips with each other and improving the feeling of community, as they get to know each other a little better.

Bat Boxes

The Committee welcomed Geoff Keenlyside, Kirklees Environment Officer (Biodiversity), to a meeting in March. He came to advise members on the intricacies of siting bat boxes, since bats are a protected species and a lot more care needs to be taken when deciding where to place the boxes. There is also a requirement to register the exact sites of the boxes by grid references. The Committee will be investigating this matter further before deciding on how to proceed.

Allotment Competitions

The Committee is keen to run competitions this year at both of the allotment gardens, and has already notified the tenants about them. We hope that most tenants will take part and look forward to awarding some prizes during the summer. Updates will be reported in the newsletter during the year.



Thunderbridge Meadows

Mr David Knight of the Garganey Trust attended a meeting at the invitation of the Committee, to allay concerns raised about the condition of Thunderbridge Meadows. He gave a brief overview of the Trust and reported on current and future maintenance plans for the site.

How was the Environment Budget spent?	£
• Drainage works at Grange Moor allotments	2,695
• Thurstonland First School – To develop a nature study area and pond on a new piece of land adj to the school.	1,594
• Stocksmoor Village Association – Purchase of 2 planters.	254
• Shelley First School - Equipment for school garden & allotment.	500
• KHCA (Burton Environment Group) - Purchase of garage to house the flail machine at Shelley College.	500
• Dog waste bags for general distribution.	300
• Annual subscriptions to the CPRE, Milestone Society and Rural Action Yorkshire, all of whom provide valuable information and support to the Committee.	79
Total Spent:	£5,923

Some of the environment budget has also been put into the allocated reserves to fund the ongoing projects described above.

Parish Councillors' Contact Details

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Jimmy Paxton	7 Park Side, Flockton, Wakefield. WF4 4AD	01924 848445
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