

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO UPPER POPPLETON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 8th APRIL 2013

At the start of the year last May, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was almost upon us. Your Council had agreed to support the celebrations with funding and Nether Poppleton Parish Council had also agreed to a similar level of funding. A series of meetings were held with volunteers from across the village chaired jointly by the Chairmen of both councils and, in spite of the bad weather, the weekend of the Jubilee was considered a great success.

The two parish councils had also both agreed to provide funding for an entry to the Yorkshire in Bloom competition and Councillor Eddie Allen played a leading part in planning the entry along with Mike Walker. This was very much a village-wide entry with the judges visiting key locations in both parishes and Poppleton received a Silver Gilt award which was an excellent result for a first entry. The entry is being repeated this year.

In June, your Council installed a new parish notice board Main Street end of Dikelands Lane. The small notice board which had previously been put on the fence by the owner, former Councillor Kate Richardson was regularly overwhelmed by the number of notices which tended to spread along the fence.

The Standards Board for England was abolished by the Coalition Government. The Standards Board had been misused in some instances with action being taken against parish councillors for simply seeking to do their best for the residents they represented. Under the new regime, councillors will only be liable to sanction if they are seen to have a real conflict of interests and, if there should be an attempt to secure financial gain, the conflict becomes a criminal offence.

During the course of the past year, your Councillors have been looking at what might be done to refresh the War Memorial as the Centenary of the outbreak of the 1914-18 War approaches. After exploring a variety of options, it has been decided to wash it down initially to remove any lichen and then possibly have some of the lettering re-done.

In July a local contractor had offered to paint the Maypole on the Green using his cherry picker if the Council was prepared to pay for the materials. This offer was gratefully accepted.

During the course of the past year, the Park and Ride project at Northfield Lane was confirmed and your Councillors have held a number of meetings with representatives from City of York Council to try and ensure that steps are taken to minimise the effect of traffic diverting through the village both during the construction phase and after the facility opens.

It had been noted that the large Elm tree on the Green was suffering from Dutch Elm Disease and your Council commissioned a report on what could be done. Unfortunately, the only option is to take the tree down. It has been suggested that up to 8 feet of the trunk should be left in situ and that a wood sculpture should be created from it. Your Council will be looking to consult on this suggestion when the next Parish Newsletter is published.

Many of the planning applications which your Council is invited to comment on are very straight-forward but there were two applications during the past year where your Council

supported neighbours of the proposed developments. One was in Bankside Close where City of York Council unfortunately approved the application in spite of objections from your Council and many neighbours. The other was the application for a wind turbine on land at Grange Farm. In this case, your Parish Council formed a useful forum for residents to express their views at the parish council meeting in January. Councillor Robson also met with those campaigning against the application and was also instrumental in bringing the application to the attention of the RAF at Linton on Ouse who took the view that this structure could interfere with radar signals. In the face of this opposition, the application was withdrawn.

Your Council will continue to do its best to serve the interests of residents of the parish in the coming year