

LANGAR CUM BARNSTONE PARISH COUNCIL - ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

INTRODUCTION

In line with previous years, the members of the Parish Council have worked hard and dealt with many issues in the last 12 months. Having spent countless hours with local planners, architects, fundraisers, contractors, and others connected with the field project, Councillors are delighted to announce in the annual report that just a few days ago we achieved planning permission for the new Village Hall on the Community field at Barnstone. With a combination of cash held, Public Works Loan Board funding, and grants already secured, the PC have c£425,000 towards what we expect is a build cost of £550,000.

The remaining £125,000 is proving stubbornly difficult to achieve and if we are to reach our target, and we have to do that by December in order to be able to draw a £75,000 grant from Wren, then the PC are going to need members of the community to get involved. We are at the point where we cannot leave this to 7 people (who already give up time to be councillors) to get the job done now, we need to have more people on board and attack the funding with some vigour. This is no time to be shy, please contact Claire Pegg – 01949 860123 or theclerk@theparishcouncil.org to let us know how you can help.

Councillors have also applied themselves to “Plan B” and looked at the existing Village Hall and what might be done with that, plus some more basic changing facilities at the field to allow the continued development of sport and activities. We have yet to have a properly formulated plan B, but in part that’s because we are rather hoping the community will get behind the field project and help us with the fundraising to make it a reality.

PAST YEAR’S ACTIVITIES

Football Field

- **New Community Hall**

This has taken much of our time. Planning is conditional on us meeting criteria which we know are within our ability and so with funding in hand, this project is ready to go. It would be a significant disappointment if the community do not take the opportunity to get involved at this stage and it fails for want of a bit of enthusiasm.

- A **MUGA** is being used and we have received some enquiries during the year as to its availability. We hope to extend its use as the development of the field progresses

Police

- The local police have done a great job for us in the villages, most months now anti-social behaviour is recorded as zero. At meetings with local people it has been confirmed that the main directions for the Police will be the four key priorities, speeding, seat belt offences, drink driving, and the use of mobile phones. With it now proven that being on the phone whilst driving impairs your ability to the same level as being twice over the drink drive limit, none of us should be accepting of that behaviour from those around us on the road, and certainly not within our villages although it is still an all too common sight.

Activities

- The Parish Council have continued to support “The Cushion Club” which it is intended will become the main focus of village social events. The films shown are reasonably well supported and we have quite full turnouts for things like The Kings Speech and Skyfall, but support on a monthly basis is variable and we would like to see social activities increase. Some plans are afoot to make this happen but the Parish Council can’t and really shouldn’t drive these things all the time.
- The Vale Market Café is a continuing and a rip roaring success with around 100 people attending the monthly event, and it’s entirely due to the efforts of the volunteers who organise it. We need to spread some of their success into other local activities and will direct some of our attention in the coming year to exactly that.

Community Support

- Within the year the Parish Council have supported a number of local projects. The budget for that support in the 2012/13 year was fully exhausted by donations to the following:
- The Bowls Club, to support their work to establish toilet facilities on site with disabled access; we have continued to support the Village hall with a significant proportion of the costs of the caretaker;

St Andrews Church also benefits from support towards grounds maintenance; and we have ensured football at the field is able to continue with support to Barnstone Celtic FC to help them with their expenses.

- The Parish Council have also worked in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council Highways which has seen the footpath widened on the corner of Main Street, Langar, ensuring pedestrian access is a little safer, and especially for children walking to school.
- After what seems like an eternity of trying, and it has been many years in the making, it seems that we are also about to achieve a long held ambition to see the speed limit on Musters Road reduced to 30mph. In addition to the speed limit reduction there will be a village gateway scheme installed and we are told, almost immediately thereafter, an interactive speed sign which as in many other locations, should hopefully embarrass speeding motorists into slowing down.
- Speedwatch will be out and about on Musters Road once the new limit is in force to encourage motorists to respect the limit and the safety of our residents.

Communications

- To some extent we have lacked an integrated communications strategy for the Parish Council and villagers. Whilst we have made our communications as good as we think we can individually, there has been no connection between them. All that is about to change with the launch of a fully integrated system. A new Parish Website is about to be launched, the blog will be integrated into it, residents will be able to subscribe to the web site so it feeds information to you as it is released. Further, and bringing us right into the 21st Century, the blog and site will feed into new pages on Facebook and Twitter and vice versa. Apart from keeping residents right up to date with what is happening, there are other advantages. A couple of months ago, the Police broke off from dealing with a local break in to deliver their monthly report to the Parish Council. They had some information on vehicles being used etc and with an immediate upload to Facebook, and linked in to residents, we could have had information out within minutes of an incident occurring and people looking out for suspicious activity.

I suspect in reality residents have not too much idea of how much time Parish Councillors give up to try and make a difference in our villages. We get the odd complaint when things haven't gone quite according to plan, and even less frequently we get comments around the budget and the way it is spent (which is incidentally, in the public domain at every meeting and published every year – if you want to see it you only have to ask !) but overall, I hope we enjoy the support of local residents and I also hope that you can and will see the difference we make – if you noticed the grass verges were cut today, then it's only been done because the Parish Council make those routine things happen.

Rod Whitehead
Chairman
Langar cum Barnstone Parish Council

14 May 2013