

## **KILHAM PARISH COUNCIL REPORT TO THE ANNUAL MEETING - MAY 2016**

My report is intended to give an overview of the work your council has carried out on behalf of the residents of Kilham this past year, to identify work that is still to be carried out and reveal the plans for the coming year. If you require more detail you should go to our website and peruse the minutes of our meetings.

We started last May 2015 with the return of John Girling which left us with just one vacancy. This vacancy was eventually filled by the co-option of Jane Humphry in October. Trish Walker's resignation was received in February 2016 and we welcomed Lorraine Scarth to the council in March. With people living such busy lives it is pleasing to note that we have managed to maintain a full compliment of 13 council members in Kilham. There is a fair gender balance and a reasonable age mix with councillors representing a wide range of interests, backgrounds and experience. They all share a love of our village and I feel they are well placed to represent your views and concerns.

We have representatives who liaise with the Village Hall, Neighbourhood Watch, Youth Club, Local Transport, Kilham Playing Field Association & Kilham School. These direct contacts ensure the council is well informed about what matters, and where appropriate, offer whatever support it can. We also have residents contacting us through our website, by email and by telephone. But the most effective contact by far is by meeting people in the village and having a chat. In the last 12 months more folk have attended our monthly meetings and I hope those who spoke to the council found the experience worthwhile and not too intimidating, although I concede that you might be forgiven for looking forward to the experience as much as you might a visit to the dentist. Your involvement is vital to the effectiveness of the council. So however you choose to get your message across it is always welcome, even (through gritted teeth) the criticisms and complaints.

With such limited resources we can never satisfy everyone. It is worth noting that since 2009 the annual income to the council from the residents of Kilham has remained unchanged at £20,000. This has been supplemented in some small way by receipts from burials and allotments and to a greater extent from grants for projects, although these are increasingly difficult to find. The work involved is considerable and we are lucky to have in Claire Boston a very persistent clerk who has found funds for the replacement village map in Church Street, the restoration work to the War Memorial and the purchase of the village defibrillator.

We are fortunate to be given the remaining funds of the now disbanded First Responders Group. This sum of money is to be used for the sole purpose of maintaining the equipment and buying consumables. We have recently taken delivery of this equipment and expect to have it in situ very soon. Following the repairs made to the War Memorial in 2014 it was decided to clean the masonry and maintain the inscriptions. This work has been delayed while waiting for funding but is expected to be carried out quite soon.

One notably successful decision the council made was to accept the offer from Gill & Kevin Smallwood to publish the Kilham News. Gill has worked extremely hard to publish 9 issues of a much refreshed look newsletter. The smaller booklet format and use of colour has been very well received and we are grateful for your positive feedback. The additional production costs were considered worth it if readership increased and with more readers we thought local businesses might advertise and offset some of these costs. So come on

you reluctant local business owners give Kilham News your support.

After serving the village for more years than he cares to recall, Mark Wilson decided that he could no longer commit to cutting the grass. We are indebted to him and with grateful thanks wish him well for the future. Vince Sykes has won a 3 year contract to cut the grass and, although unknown to many of us, he comes highly recommended for the quality of his work for Langtoft P.C. A former builder, Vince has also been given the contract to repair the cemetery boundary wall and repaint the railings and gates. This repair work is unexciting but very necessary as it will arrest the deterioration of the wall and avoid huge costs in the future.

This year Councillor Gerard Conlin started a follow-up survey of all the graves in the churchyard and cemetery. This work is building on the rigorous safety survey made last year to provide baseline data. Thanks are due to Gerard and also to Councillor Christine Snowden who has been actively involved in this work. They have also agreed to research the D'Arcy Trust and Elizabeth Knowsley Trust. For many years both trusts made provision of small bursaries to students in the village, but in recent years they have become defunct. As both trusts were designed to help the young people in Kilham the hope of the council is that the monies held in these charitable trusts can be released and donated to our school. Gerard is also responsible for revising the asset list of the council, and this in turn has led to a review and revision of our insurance cover.

Councillor Denise Hayhurst has continued her strenuous, one might even say heroic, efforts to improve the provision of public transport. She has consulted widely, written numerous letters and attended many meetings. This has been an uphill battle all the way. The future of the limited service we currently have remains precarious and it very much depends how much it is used. To encourage more use Denise has published the current bus timetable in the April/May Kilham News.

More recently Councillor Jane Humphry has been greatly involved gaining a better understanding of the implications and issues raised by the granting of licences to explore potential fracking sites in our area. She is concerned about the risks associated with this process and she is very aware that there is considerable alarm among residents. The council is eager to get a balanced view from both sides and is committed to communicating what it learns with you, the residents.

As in the past few years, £300 was again donated to the Twilight Bus facility for Driffield School students who wish to remain at school after hours. The council was pleased to support Kilham School by granting £200 to buy one of the football strips needed for their very successful football team. This year the council budgeted £4,000 for supporting Kilham Playing Field Association, £1,000 is paid to ERYC for the land rent, and £3,000 as a grant. This sum is sufficient to pay for the essential running costs of rent, insurance, toilet hire and water rates. The council believes that the Association will be better able to maintain public support for its money raising events if some tangible improvement or development to the site can be seen and enjoyed by the community.

Although there has been some slippage in the completion of some projects this year there has been much behind the scenes work which, if not already, will soon result in the following:

- an update of Kilham's Emergency Plan;
- the installation of the village map and information board;

the cleaning and restoration of the War Memorial;  
repairs to the cemetery wall and the painting of railings and gates;  
the resurfacing of the cemetery access road;  
the refreshment of signage in the cemetery;  
the replacement of three bench seats;  
the installation of the village defibrillator;  
the continued development to the website and newsletter;  
the refreshment of signage in the village hall Play Area;  
the release of funds from the D'Arcy and Elizabeth Knowsley trusts;  
and the monitoring of fracking related developments in our area and the communication of what we learn to you.

Finally, my thanks to councillor Gerry Horner who continues to improve the content of our website. Please Google 'kilham council' if you have not viewed this site. It is still 'work in progress' but it already contains useful and interesting information as well as providing you with a means of communicating with us. I am sure Gerry would be interested to hear from if you have photographs old and new, or interesting articles about Kilham life and would be willing to share them online.

Geoff Seward

Chairman, Kilham Parish Council

May 2015 - May 2016