

RUSHTON PARISH COUNCIL
Annual Parish Meeting – 2016/2017
Held Tuesday 16th May 2017

Chairman's Annual Report

Please note that the official Annual Report with photographs will be posted on the Parish Website

Cllr. Jade Plumbley - Chairman, presented the annual report.

Communications

- The website is continues to be developed by the Parish Clerk.
- The Parish Newsletter continues to go out quarterly to all dwellings in the Parish and via email to circa 120 "Friends of Eaton". Thanks to our team of distributors. The Newsletter being professionally printed with the cost shared between the Parish Council and the Village Hall. After 6 yrs as Editor, Mike Wilson handed over to Phil Allcock for the November 2016 edition. Phil has put his own style into the Newsletter and added photographs. Compliments have been received.
- A Parish Publicity "Office" was agreed at the October 2016 meeting with Mike & Mary Wilson co-ordinating the publicity that goes out by flyer & email for the Parish Council and JH Village Hall.
- Superfast Broadband – Cllr Neil Thompson has looked at ways of trying to speed up the introduction of superfast broadband to the Parish. Representatives from BT & Connecting Cheshire, attended the February 2016 Council Meeting to give an update. Whilst more areas are being covered, Rushton Parish has to wait until more money is released to allow our rural area to be upgraded. A further update will be given in September 2017.
- Rural Parishes meeting – 2 meetings took place in 2016 of rural parishes within the Tarporley Ward. Common issues were discussed and some benefit derived..

Environment and Development

- The Red Lion Site is finally being developed by new owners "Apex Developments" of Tarporley. Their representatives helped to co-ordinate an "Open Meeting" for residents at the March Council Meeting. Some 30+ people attended and Apex showed the likely layout and design of houses. Comments were taken (& discussed) and Director Emma Leslie attended the April Parish Council Meeting to give an update on how the site was being planned taking into account the comments raised.
- Eaton Primary School Expansion is now well underway with an increase in pupils from circa 105 to 210. The Parish Council have asked that parking and the volume/speed of vehicles is looked at and meetings with Highways representatives and school are on-going.
- The 2015 new initiative of co-ordinating hedge cutting for residents on busy roads was successfully repeated in 2016
- The curb to edge the village green to stop the grass being churned up by vehicles, has been designed and quoted for. We wait for further funding for this project which we hope to complete this summer.
- Oulton Mill Picnic Area was purchased from CWaC by the Parish Council in 2015. An Awards for All (Lottery) grant of £9,900 was applied for and awarded. After extensive discussions between the Council with input from local residents, work started in Autumn 2016 with clearance of dead wood and undergrowth. A Working Group of volunteers has been formed. In Spring 2017, further work was undertaken to add a properly curbed layby plus ground levelling. 110 donated "whips" of various small trees/bushes have been planted around the wooden entrance fencing and new sloping ground has been grass seeded. Further work is planned during 2017 with a circular path, wild meadow area, orchard etc in the scheme. More funding is being applied for and this will include a project to be run with Eaton Primary School.
- The leaf collection on the village green was repeated on the first Saturday in December and again circa 30 volunteers turned out with refreshments supplied by the "Burgons".

- Mary Wilson continues as “litter picker co-ordinator” and the Council would like to thank all volunteers
- The Telephone Box on the Green has had another facelift with resident John Freeman creating an information centre inside. This was preferred over books etc which tend to suffer from damp.

Road Safety for All

The Eaton Road Safety Working Group with Mike Wilson as Chair, have met during the year and are pursuing the following objectives:

- 20mph speed limits on Lower Lane, Edgewell Lane and Winterford Lane. This was installed in January 2017. However the group have complained to Highways (CWaC) with regards to the quality and extent of the installation. This matter is currently being progressed.
- Traffic calming measures on Eaton Lane may be helped due to the Red Lion site development. Apex, the developers, are working with Highways to do a risk assessment of the entrance to this new 5 building site.
- The Cross: Again accidents and near misses have occurred at this junction. The Working Group are looking at improved signage and road marking to reduce the risk. Restricted parking around the play zone.
- The possible walkway to the Village Hall has not been resolved as an agreed solution between residents, Highways and the Council could not be reached.

Services

- New sub-station – installed 2015/16 appears to have settled down with no issues raised. The new lamp posts are still outstanding with financial cutbacks being given as a reason for the delay.

Youth and Social

- The annual fun day was cancelled last year after 6 successful events. An appeal has gone out in the May 2017 Newsletter for volunteers to help take over this event for 2017 from Mike and Mary Wilson.
- The youth club is going from strength to strength with over 40 juniors attending on many weeks. A rota of helpers under the management of Cllr Julie O’Shea was needed to keep the club running. This is a very successful feature of our village initiatives.
- The Play Zone and MUGA installed and opened October 2015 have settled down to be a popular and attractive part of our Village. A team of 52 helpers look after the inspection / maintenance of the facility with resulting in someone going down every day when on their duty week. During the past year, sleepers and quality borders have been installed together with a further bench. Currently some of the equipment is being upgraded after suggestions from the youngsters.
- After a year off, the Village Golf Day (another PC initiative) will return on Sat. 19th August

Finances

With increasing needs due to projects etc, the precept was raised in January 2016. This works out at an extra £3.60 tax per annum for the average household. The accounts are shown at the AGM which follows this meeting.

Help & Volunteers.

Over the past 5 or 6 years, the Parish Council have been pleased to arrange and promote projects etc which enhance the village. Youth Club, Play Zone; Picnic Area; Road Safety are all relatively new initiatives. However they do entail quite a lot of work and an increasing need for volunteers. We are lucky & grateful that many do come forward but often it is the same people and the Council would like to see even more volunteers who perhaps have not been involved before. Contacting our Clerk Lindsey is the best way to start helping.