

Annual Report
West Hallam Parish Council
2009-2010

First of all I would like to report on the untimely death of Cllr. Michael Sherwood last year, Mike did so much work over many, many years for the parish council and he has been sorely missed, we have also lost the valued services of Cllr. John Fildes who after serving more years than he may care to remember, has had to retire due to ill health. Both Cllrs. Sherwood and Fildes have contributed so much to the village and we should record our thanks.

To bring the complement of the parish council up to its 9 members we have co-opted two new members (no elections were called, which in fact was beneficial to the parish council as it saved some money) the new members being Cllr. Alan Draycott and Cllr. Bruce Broughton, congratulations also go to Cllr. Bruce Broughton who did stand for election for Erewash Borough Council and was successful. This means that the three councillors representing West Hallam and Dale Abbey are now Cllrs. Harrison, Hart and Broughton.

The two main areas the parish council have been looking to move on are the Vehicle Activated Signs, in response to concerns about speeding, and a new play area which will hopefully contain equipment to suit most ages including exercise equipment for the more mature. As with everything costs come into the equation. We are awaiting confirmation from Derbyshire County Council as to their reaction to a portable Vehicle Activated Sign which could be moved to different sites reasonably cheaply. They have already agreed to a fixed sign but we would prefer to go with the portable one which could be moved to different sites and which we think would be more effective. We await their response. The play area is also a priority and a sub committee are working hard at finding matched funding and or sponsorship, if all fails we will proceed with a smaller scale scheme which would have to capacity to be extended if and when funding does become available. Quite a lot of funding went towards the Multi User Games Area and I am pleased every time I drive by the facility to see young people making use of it.

We are continuing to work well with our beat bobby, Russell Crookes and his PCSO, James Carroll (although very recently and unfortunately James has moved on to pastures new). Compared with previous years anti social behaviour has not been so bad, there are still a few incidents occurring but in general things have improved, however it is still a priority for us, our residents should not be harassed with bad behaviour.

On the subject of bad behaviour we have recently had a team called Community Pay Back doing some work for the parish council. A group of young people who have been in trouble have been doing some work in the community as a form of retribution. It is a free service, well managed, and the group have painted the inside of the Powtrell Pavilion (we only had to provide the paint) and they have cut back large amounts of undergrowth around Beech Lane Recreation Ground and the Community Centre 6 Acre. Some of these jobs will possibly point them towards a trade and hopefully they will go on to better

things. We also had our first brush with Restorative Justice, a young person was observed causing some damage to the surface under the play equipment at the Community Centre. As the owners of the equipment the parish council were asked if we wanted recompense or an apology. We decided that an apology would be acceptable and this was duly presented. Hopefully this will teach the young person a good lesson.

The Powtrell Pavilion is still being subsidised by the parish council but over the last two or three months there are a few more bookings and hopefully in the not too distant future it will be self financing. One of the problems for groups wanting to use the facility was storage and a new storeroom was completed recently leading off the community room which has helped. A Childrens' Centre is due to open at Scargill School in September/October and to pre-empt this a Mother and Toddler Group has been started and they will be using the pavilion for their meetings which again is good news.

We have had one or two controversial planning applications over the year i.e. TDG Storage wanting 24/7 working on a couple of their units, the Methodist Church wanting a large extension to their premises on High Lane West, applications in and around the Conservation Area which caused upset. What has proved difficult is explaining to residents who complain that unfortunately West Hallam Parish Council is only a consultee in the planning process, I wish it was different and we can only hope that in time this changes, surely local people should know best as to what is acceptable in their area.

Another problem was caused when the barrier at the Dales shopping area was damaged but at least we now know who owns what at the Dales which will make things easier if anything else should happen there.

We called one public meeting in the year. This was to do with the application for a pharmacy in West Hallam. Although short notice was given around 80 people turned up and were very supportive of the doctors. Unfortunately things do not look good at the moment and the decision has been given against the doctors, however we are hopeful that there will be an appeal.

The Remembrance Day Parade and Service had an excellent attendance and it was a pleasure to see Bramble Lodge residents put a wreath on the Mapperley Memorial. The Christmas Light Switch On was also well attended although this must have been one of the worst evenings possible with heavy rain, but that did not deter our residents turning out which was great to see.

Could go on about dog fouling, Rural Housing Needs Survey, bus shelters etc., but we could be here until midnight suffice to say that the parish council always welcome input from our residents, whether it be in the open session before every parish meeting, via our web site www.westhallam-pc.org.uk or by personal contact with either the clerk or your councillors

On a very last note but probably the most important, West Hallam Parish Council would find it very difficult to operate without a hard working dedicated clerk who is always willing to go the extra mile and we have that person in Peter and I know I could certainly not carry out my duties as Chairman without his valued support and also of course we must not forget Lynne Broughton our assistant clerk who works with Peter to ensure everything runs smoothly, many thanks to both of you.