

ROSSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

FOR 2010/11

It is with mixed feelings I present this years annual report, a report that the retiring parish council can be proud of regarding the achievement of objectives that benefit the residents of Rossington.

Parish Hall Facilities

Upgrading of the parish hall over the past two years has created facilities which are greatly appreciated by a number of organizations and individuals at a time when there is a contraction of services elsewhere. It is significant that the services available have not only been improved, but sustained at charges that are affordable to all user groups. This principle is no longer a priority in a situation where a culture of personal greed has thrived to the detriment of mutual respect and equal opportunity.

Good Neighbours Meals Services

Just over two years ago this service after over 44 years of providing both meals in the hall for the aged, and to the less physically mobile residents of our community at home, was lost due to circumstances beyond control of the Good Neighbours. Fortunately as a result of the Good Neighbors determination, strongly supported by the parish council, the service recommenced just two weeks ago on 27th April 2011, much to the delight of past, present and new users of the service.

Miners Wheel

The erection of the wheel earlier this year and the formation of the Miners Memorial Garden has taken place within the parameters of the parish hall on land donated to the mining community initially, and now for all residents of Rossington, as a visual recognition of our mining past, which ceased prematurely as a result of free market competition which continues to destroy economic and social stability throughout the Doncaster area and the rest of Britain.

Environment

As a result of investigations by parish council members, sewage contamination in Holmescarr Wood was identified as a serious threat to public health. The parish council contacted the appropriate water and environmental agencies as a matter of urgency, and following consistent pressure from the parish council the organizations concerned accepted their responsibility to rectify the problem. The current situation is that the source of contamination has ceased and residual contamination is declining as nature takes its course.

The parish council, in collaboration with Rossington Environmental Association and Neighbourhood Services of DMBC have been improving the

visual amenity in and around the village with flower displays. The parish council has also supported the Rossington Environmental Association in restoring hedgerows, so vital to wildlife habitat and the natural environment.

Flood-Plain Developments

Following the floods of 2007 in which almost 30 homes had to be vacated in Rossington, the parish council established a joint committee with flood victim representatives to mitigate threats of future flooding. Following the recommendations of the report submitted by Sir Michael Pitt on behalf of the government it was recommended that proposed developments should take account of threats in areas prone to flooding. Parish councils, rich in local knowledge along with Drainage Boards should be directly involved in measures to protect against potential flooding due to climate change.

The Torne Valley is a flood risk area which Rossington Loversall, Wadworth and Tickhill parish councils supported by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England raised concerns about the proposed Inland Port development. Unfortunately, Doncaster MBC representatives and the developers never raised any questions or even challenged any of our concerns and the planning application was approved with no debate and not even a site visit as promised.

Waddy Bridge

After 18 months Waddy Bridge has been finally replaced following its hasty demolition by Doncaster MBC and following numerous dates of restoration failing to materialize. Once again pedestrians and cyclists can enjoy access across the Torne, between Rossington and Wadworth.

Public Libraries

The proposed closure of Rossington Community Library has been vigorously opposed by the parish council. The Library was opened in 1940 at a time when the country was at war. It is ironic that in 'peacetime' such a dedicated service is not considered necessary and should be transferred to inferior premises with fewer professional librarians employed, to serve a community which has already experienced a significant loss of public services over recent years.

Allotments

The parish council, in response to a rising waiting list for allotment plots have been in consultation with Doncaster MBC Neighbourhood Services to secure land for more allotments.

Public Toilets

Following the freeze up and resulting burst pipes the public toilets were closed last December. Following representations by the parish council the toilets have now been reopened but the quality of this provision is now a matter for attention.

Accusations of Disrepute

On January 13th this year I was again subjected to false allegations by former

members of Rossington Parish Council of bringing the parish council into disrepute, and brought before the Doncaster MBC Standards Board. As on the previous occasion, on the 6th April 2010, the case against me was dismissed. Both cases cost thousands of pounds to Council Tax payers, which it seems was of no consequence to the three individuals concerned.

I have served as an elected parish council member for 16 years, the last 4 as Chairman, and a period in which I have been proud and privileged to work with most parish council members in circumstances of mutual respect.

It is with regret I have to express my commiserations to retiring members of the parish council that sought re-election but lost their seats. The election period was dominated by a political conflict between the Coalition Government and the Labour Opposition, which relegated the important role of parish councils in promoting community interests and priorities.

I believe the parish has lost valuable councilors who did not deserve to lose, just as some of those who replaced them, did not deserve to be elected.

In spite of a hysterical and abusive campaign by the Labour Party, I was honoured by the electorate to secure the highest vote in being returned to the parish council, but that is small consolation compared to the loss of five valuable parish council members.

I have been actively involved in the social and political activities of Rossington all my life, and will continue to do so on behalf of the community in which I was born.

Yours sincerely

Ellr. Terry Wilde

10/5/11