

# Darrington Parish Council

## Annual Chairman's Report.

2018/19

In the past year a number of annual events failed to attract sufficient support to help organise them and consequently had to be cancelled. The Christmas preparations also suffered. Though the Carol service did take place, the lighting was not as good as before due to a shortage of volunteers to put the lights up. The Christmas tree which had been selected, had to be replaced by a smaller one, as only three of us turned up to collect it. (The previous year there were seven volunteers and we still struggled to put it up.) Without Philip Morrell and his tractor we would not be able to manage at all, so thanks to him for all his help. My thanks also go to the ladies who helped to decorate the Reading Rooms.

The major success of the previous year was the project to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the air crash at Chapel Hill. I should like to express particular thanks to Councillor Tagger for managing this project and to the rest of his team who organised a potentially difficult project without a hitch. Thanks also to the Golf Club for their participation and assistance.

Unfortunately once again I have to report that the ongoing planning dispute at the east end of the village has still not been resolved and is now into its ninth year. We are informed that the matter is still in the hands of the planning office's legal department and entirely out of our control.

The Tithe Barn information board project will hopefully be completed in the spring.

At long last we have seen the completion of the defibrillator project, but I don't feel that we can be smug about it, having taken so long to achieve. Thanks to everyone who donated to the project. It has already been deployed on two occasions, fortunately it was ultimately not needed.

The Parish Council remains in a sound financial state with funds of around £20,000. As a consequence the decision was taken not to increase the precept above the level of inflation this year. A full statement of our accounts will be published in due course. The current state is reported at each meeting and posted on our website once it has been ratified at the following meeting.

I would like to remind all residents that our monthly meetings (second Thursday of each month) are open to anyone who wishes to come along and comment on proceedings.

Finally I would like to remind all residents that 2019 is an election year. Every four years the whole parish council is required by law to resign and reapply if they wish to be re-elected.

Elections will take place on Thursday the second of May. Darrington parish council are entitled to have nine members. We presently have only eight, as Cllr Wilkins resigned a couple of months ago. I should like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Wilkins for his efforts over the many years that he has served. For most of his tenure Kelvin has served as unpaid Clerk to the council and he has been exceptional in that role. Fortunately, when he resigned he passed the responsibilities of Clerk on to Cllr Thompson, who has been equally efficient in the role. Unfortunately, Cllr Thompson has now informed the council that he has no intention of re-standing in the forthcoming elections. This will be a difficult position for the council to fill competently. Two other councillors have informed the council that they have no intention of standing at the next election and consequently there will be at least three vacancies to fill. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Cllr Johnson and Cllr Hoyle for their service, in John's case over many years. I believe he was the longest serving member of the council. It has been a pleasure to serve with all three of the outgoing councillors.

Most of the parish council are of a certain age (not you Fi), and it would be good for some new blood to come and stir things up a bit, but don't forget that there is work to be done. Two of the leavers, leave two of the most difficult and onerous jobs vacant. The position of clerk and minutes secretary are positions that we must fill from our first meeting, which will be on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May.

Anyone wishing to stand would be well advised to come along to our next meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> April to get an idea of what goes on.

Application forms may be had from our present clerk, Cllr Thompson, or contact WMDC, directly.

Michael Britton ` Chairman DPC.