

BICKERSTAFFE PARISH COUNCIL AUGUST 2008 NEWSLETTER PARISH COUNCILLORS

Bickerstaffe Parish Council has a full complement of councillors and they were each elected for a four year term from May 2007.

The Parish Councillors have a very strong commitment to the community affairs of Bickerstaffe and they sustain a very high record of attendance at meetings. They undertake their respective roles as Parish Councillors totally on a voluntary basis which includes not claiming any travel or incidental expenses when on Parish Council business.

DONATIONS

At their meeting on 14th July 2008 the Parish Council decided to make the following donations :-

Bickerstaffe Pensioners Social Fund	£100
West Lancashire Crossroads Caring for Carers	£25
MENCAP West Lancs	£25
Alzheimer's Society (Formby, Southport and West Lancs Branch)	£25
Victims Support Lancashire	£25

AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 2007/2008

The internal audit has been completed and the required documentation has been submitted to the external auditors BDO Stoy Hayward. The external audit exercise will be completed by late August 08 and a report will be made to the Parish Council meeting scheduled for September 08.

QUALITY STATUS

The Parish Clerk has completed the portfolio for Quality Parish Council Status and it has been submitted to the Lancashire Association of Local Councils. A Quality Status Panel will consider the portfolio against the quality scheme criteria and the outcome will be known early August 08.

STOP PRESS – We have been informed that our submission has been successful. This means that Bickerstaffe Parish Council is one of 22 Parish and Town Councils across Lancashire and Merseyside who have achieved Quality Status. As there are some 225 Parish and Town Councils within Lancashire and Merseyside we can now proudly say that we are in the ‘Premier League’.

VENUE FOR PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The regular venue for Parish Council meetings has for many years been the Four Lanes Ends Mission. At a recent Parish Council Surgery held at the Stockley Crescent Meeting Room parishioners attending suggested that the Stockley Crescent Meeting Room should be considered as an additional venue for Parish Council meetings. At their meeting on 14th July 08 the Parish Council decided to designate the Stockley Crescent Meeting Room as an alternative venue for Parish Council meetings and the meeting scheduled for 9th March 2009 will be held there. There will be no change to the commencement time of the meeting which will be 7.45pm.

ORIGIN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL LOGO

Local historian, Owen Taylor, has provided an interesting insight into the origin of our Parish Council logo.

In May 1971 the Parish Council held its first election in 47 years. This resulted in the national press taking an interest with a headline in the Daily Express reading “ Politics have finally reached the secluded village of Bickerstaffe”. The election resulted in four sitting councillors being replaced by four new candidates.

One of the new councillors, Jim Headings, suggested that the Parish Council should have a logo and following consultations with Owen Taylor the present logo was adopted following permission being granted by the Lancashire Records Office. Many thanks to Owen Taylor for the interesting report.

WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT

The proposed scheme of work has now been approved by the Heritage and Environment Manager from West Lancs District Council. The scheme of work focuses on the overall cleaning of the war memorial and the re-blackening of the inscriptions. The project is being undertaken by a specialist stonemasonry, restoration and conservation company, Stone Central, who are based in Prestwich, Manchester. Stone Central's clients include the North West Regional Development Agency, Balfour Beatty, Carillion, Manchester City Council and Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. The work will commence during August and will take approximately one week to complete.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The May Newsletter included a feature on capital projects with parishioners being given the opportunity to respond to potential projects and also to put forward any other ideas for additional projects. There was a closing date for responses of 30th June 2008. From the five responses received from the parishioners the project which was most popular was the provision of speed deterrent indicators with Liverpool Road and Church Road being favoured locations.

At their meeting on 14th July 08 Parish Cllrs. decided to make two of the projects which were circulated for consultation as a priority. The projects designated as a priority were the provision of speed deterrent indicators and an extension to the parish field car park. Cllr. considered that both projects would have an impact on enhancing road safety particularly in relation to the speed of vehicles and problems of parking in the vicinity of Bickerstaffe School.

The Parish Clerk was asked to prepare a feasibility report in respect of both projects for the next Parish Council meeting on 8th September 08.

ROAD ISSUES

- (i) The levelling and resurfacing work at the junction of Church Road and Liverpool has been completed following the Parish Council taking up the matter with Lancashire County Council.
- (ii) Work on the road surface along Lathom Road and from Lyelake Farm to the Four Lane Ends is to commence in the near future.
- (iii) Large potholes approaching the Stanley Gate from Ormskirk and along Lathom Road prior to the traffic lights have been reported to Lancs County Council.
- (iv) The rutting of the road surface along Ben Lane approaching Church Road has again been reported to Lancashire County Council. The rutted surface presents a serious hazard to pedal cyclists and motor cyclists.
- (v) The need for a right turn filter at the Stanley Gate Traffic Signals has been raised by the Parish Council with the Highways Agency. Because the A570 is about to be detrunked the responsibility for any road related issues for this will be transferred to Lancashire County Council. The Parish Council will continue to pursue the need for a right turn filter with the Signals Engineer at Lancs C.C.
- (vi) The request from Stockley Crescent residents for 'red triangle' elderly people crossing signs along Church Road has been referred to Lancashire County Council.

THE HGV PROBLEM

The Parish Council have continually made representations to the Highways Department at Lancashire County Council and the Lancashire Constabulary. A recent report received from the Police focussed on the outcomes of a multi-agency operation during June 08 which resulted in 35 vehicles being stopped and consequently the issue of 7 prohibition notices.

RURAL BEAT MANAGER

The position of Rural Beat Manager for Bickerstaffe, Simmonswood and Westhead is to be advertised. This follows a period of over 12 months without a Beat Manager being in post due to sickness. The Parish Council very much welcomes the decision to advertise the post in that whilst wider operational cover has been provided there is no doubt that the parishioners have missed the presence of a Beat Manager.

The Parish Council very much looks forward to establishing a meaningful working relationship with the new Beat Manager. At the same time the Parish Council conveys their best wishes to Gary Southam and a thank you for the contribution he made as the previous Beat Manager.

BOUNDARY SIGN

Thanks to the diligent work of Parish Councillor Albert Webster the boundary sign coming into Bickerstaffe from Rainford has been refurbished.

The sign has been in a poor state of repair for many years and somewhat obliterated by trees. The cutting back of the respective overgrown trees and the re-painting of the sign in the original colours of black and white will appropriately raise the profile of our parish. Once again many thanks to Councillor Albert Webster.

