

## MISTERTON PARISH COUNCIL

### NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2009

#### People

- We're pleased to welcome Steve Taylor on to the Parish Council, as replacement for Alan Stead who recently resigned.
- Norman White has retired from the Parish Council after a total of approximately 32 years' service. Following publication of the Notice of Casual Vacancy, 18 electors have requested a bye-election which, if contested, will be held on 4th June, 2009, together with the District Council and European Assembly elections.
- Congratulations to Clerk to the Council, David Wright, who completed ten years' service on 1st March.

#### **Council Tax: 25% reduction this year!**

This year the Misterton Parish Council Tax on an average Band D property is £65.52. It amounts to 4% of the Council Tax levied, shown below:

Misterton Parish Council	4.00%
Fire Authority	4.15%
Police Authority	9.36%
Bassetlaw District Council	9.36%
Nottinghamshire County Council	73.13%

The Misterton figure would be less were it not for the fact that the properties on the south side of Fox Covert Lane are in the Parish of Walkeringham. Although residents of those properties think of themselves as Misterton folk and have Misterton addresses, their Council Tax goes to Walkeringham Parish Council. This results from the parish boundary line being drawn along Fox Covert Lane – probably as long ago as 1894. At the next parish boundary review we'll be pressing for the boundary to be altered to reflect the reality of the situation.

#### **Neighbourliness**

We've established a working party to produce a good neighbour scheme, to help with things such as security marking of vulnerable people's property, checking that such people are OK in snowy, etc. weather, and provision of five alarm systems for elderly people to use if they feel threatened. These alarms will not replace the A1 Housing 'healthcall' system.

#### **The Misterton Centre**

Audit Commission Inspectors recently visited us, accompanied by senior District Council personnel, to carry out an Access to Service Inspection. They were very

impressed with the Centre, its partnership working and commitment to the community.

### **A new Community Centre?**

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, Langley Homes Ltd., has been given planning permission to build on the Club site with no requirement to contribute towards a replacement building, and intends closing the Club early next year. We're working with the Club to find it a new home, and, if obstacles can be overcome, there's an opportunity to make more wide-ranging provision. It's been part of our plans for several years to establish a new community centre – the sort of place where wedding receptions can take place, concerts, mobile cinema, indoor sports, etc. The obstacles to establishing a community centre (incorporating club facilities) are not insignificant, but, a village the size of Misterton deserves and needs something like this. Watch this space.

### **Improvements**

We've replaced the old concrete path in the sports field with a new tarmacadam one, improved the surfacing of the skate/bmx park and provided drainage in the car park. We intend to replace the old wall along the northern boundary with a modern fence. We've provided a tarmacadam path to the Church Meadow play area. We're going to provide a further dog waste bin, this time on Fox Covert Lane.

We've successfully lobbied the County Council to provide a new salt bin at the junction of Fox Covert Lane and Grange Avenue, and are awaiting a decision on similar provision at the junction of Soss Lane and Station Road.

We're still awaiting a decision from the County Council regarding our request for a pedestrian crossing facility on High Street.

Following a further spate of road traffic accidents caused by icy weather conditions, we continue to press the County Council to put Fox Covert Lane, Gravelholes Lane and Grovewood Road on to the routine gritting schedule.

Although traffic flows don't meet the necessary criteria, we continue to press the County Council to provide an interactive sign in the Newells Terrace area.

We've not given up on Community Speedwatch, and are trying to resolve the question of insurance cover for volunteers. If we resolve it, we'll be advertising for volunteers to receive training to use the speed indicator devices to monitor traffic speeds.

An improvement we've not yet been able to achieve (as it is outside our jurisdiction) is demolition of the old bank on Station Street, which is a festering eyesore in the centre of the village. You may rest assured, however, that we lobby the District Council on a regular basis, and are pleased to report that the Head of Planning Services is working on the matter.

### **Dog Fouling**

Complaints about the amount of dog mess in the village have been referred to the District Council's dog warden. Residents are reminded that it is an offence not to clear up after your dog where the speed limit is under 40mph – and that includes the canal towpath. Dog owners are liable for a fine up to £1000 if they fail to pick up their dog's poop. The Parish Council has provided 11 dog waste bins, with a 12<sup>th</sup> to be installed on Fox Covert Lane – but bagged dog waste can be left in any waste bin.

### **Citizen of the Year**

We've selected our 2008 Citizen of the Year (no junior award entries this time), and the award will be presented by Ms. Ursula Lidbetter, Chief Executive of the Lincolnshire Co-op, at the Annual Parish Meeting at the Church Room on Tuesday 12th May at 7.30 pm. The meeting is open to all electors of Misterton.

### **Rumour Buster**

A small number of residents continue to boycott The Misterton Centre because they believe, or are led to believe, that the cost on the Parish Council Tax is excessive. We'll try to debunk that rumour by pointing out that the average annual cost per Misterton dwelling in 2008/09 was £7.60, or 15p per week. In terms of residents (2001 Census), it was an average of £3.28 for the year, or 6p per week.

Much more seriously, a very nasty rumour is circulating to the effect that we've been involved in foul play over our recent co-option. It will be helpful if we first explain the process. When a seat becomes vacant, Notice of Casual Vacancy is published, giving a minimum of 10 electors 14 days in which to request a bye-election. If there's no request, we're free to co-opt. We then advertise the vacancy, inviting offers to serve as a co-opted member. Persons expressing an interest are invited to attend our next meeting, at which a brief, informal interview takes place, when they have the opportunity to expand on their letter and answer any questions put by councillors, followed by a secret ballot.

The pernicious rumour circulating is that, prior to the latest co-option, a secret decision was reached about who would be co-opted. That is a cheap and scurrilous suggestion. It is also very serious, as it impugns the good name of Misterton councillors and suggests that the formal decision reached was illegal. All three candidates had something to offer the village; the two unsuccessful applicants both said that they would be willing to offer themselves for co-option at a future date. We've had the opportunity so far to ask one of them about the rumour, and he tells us he knows nothing about it.

Will the person(s) behind this fictitious rumour have the grace to own up? No doubt they won't, but it would be of great assistance to us if anyone privy to the rumour could tell us what they know.

### **Parking at Marshall's Yard**

Residents are reminded to take change to Marshall's Yard as car parking now costs. Parking charges are 50p for an hour and £1 for up to four hours.

## Signed Off

With so many issues in the village, we thought it would be a good idea to update readers with finished business, so we'll start by reporting that the Village Hall has been demolished by its new owner, and landscaping has begun. He and a neighbour have already provided a nice wrought iron gate with wording reflecting the site's history.

## Last Word

The next newsletter will be out in the summer, in which we'll give a full update of developments since this newsletter, but a wide range of information and advice is now available at The Misterton Centre. You can also use the contact details below. We try to keep everyone up-to-date with significant developments using Parish News. You can also read agendas and approved minutes of meetings, etc. at The Misterton Centre, Library and Post Office, pubs, club, various shops and cafes and on the web site: [www.misterton-notts-pc.gov.uk](http://www.misterton-notts-pc.gov.uk).

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