

Misterton Parish Council



Democracy and Citizenship

Misterton Parish Council is committed to engaging the public in the democratic process.

We publicise the role of the Parish Council and the democratic process through our various publications.

We act on behalf of the County and District Councils in displaying all election materials.

When we have a casual vacancy needing to be filled by co-option, we give public notice and invite expressions of interest.

The Misterton Centre, staffed by our Receptionist, provides a wide range of public sector information. The Clerk to the Council, District Councillor and MP all have their surgeries there.

We operate Parish Council and community websites, the latter having a message board.

We issue a weekly press briefing on parish affairs, including Parish Council matters.

We write a monthly column in Misterton & West Stockwith Parish News.

We publish an annual report, annual information leaflet and quarterly newsletter.

We publish information on the five village notice boards.

We publish an annual feature in Misterton & West Stockwith Parish News.

Agendas, minutes, quarterly newsletters, annual reports and information leaflets, etc. all supplied to local shops, licensed premises, local libraries, offices of the principal authorities and the media.

The Clerk to the Council has a weekly surgery.

We issue village questionnaires, e.g. future of Misterton Sports Social Club, Parish Emergency Plan, opening hours of The Misterton Centre, etc.

We hold public meetings on key village issues, e.g. future of public buildings, Parish Plan, etc.

We have Public Discussion Periods at all our meetings.

We organise an annual Most Improved Premises Competition, open to the whole village.

In 2003, we introduced our annual Citizen of the Year Awards, with senior and under-18 categories. The awards are made to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to community life. Each year we invite residents to nominate individuals for the awards, with a deadline of 31st December. Councillors receive copies of all nominations, and we have a secret ballot to select the winners.

We introduced the junior award because we wanted to actively encourage young people to participate in community life.

Our Citizen of the Year Awards are an important annual event, well publicised in the media. We always invite a high profile public figure to present the awards at our Annual Parish Meeting each May. So far we have been pleased to have with us our County Councillor (2003), the Lord Lieutenant (2004), the Chairman of Bassetlaw District Council (2005) and the Chairman of Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils (2006).

We liaise with the local police on a regular basis, especially regarding issues relating to young people, where the police talk to hard to reach groups on a regular basis.

Our Parish Plan was published in December, 2003. During its preparation, the views of young people were taken into account in order to achieve a Plan that was relevant to their needs. We did this by discussing their needs with them. Two specific conclusions in the Parish Plan related to Recreation and Sport where it was agreed that (a) there was a need for an inclusive strategy and medium to long term thinking over the provision of both outdoor and indoor facilities and (b) there was a need to make swimming at Misterton Primary School more widely available.

A number of young people discussed with us their wish to see a skatepark/bmx track established on the Sports Field. They conducted a questionnaire exercise to assess the need, and later, when we had the tenders before us, they were invited to advise us on the best schemes. The scheme chosen was their selection, and has proved to be a massive success. The skatepark/bmx track complements our multi court and traditional playground, completed in 2001 and 2002 respectively. Councillors consulted young people widely during the planning of these two facilities.

We remain concerned about the need for our indoor youth and community facilities to be up to 21st century standards and, with that in mind, are currently engaged in a dialogue with Nottinghamshire County Council regarding redevelopment of the existing Youth & Community Centre and Scouts/Guides buildings. We are able to play a leading role in this, as we are trustee of a key building adjoining the site. The aim will be to sell off land in and around the site in order to generate a capital receipt which can be used to bring about necessary improvements.

Our Parish Plan has led to summer open sessions at the Primary School swimming pool. However, this focused our attention on the need for £35,000 to be spent on essential improvements to the changing rooms and showers, without which the pool was in danger of closing. The School could not look for full funding from the County Council, as the pool was originally built by public subscription. After taking legal advice from NALC, we ascertained that we were able to give a significant donation from a recent capital receipt, and we were delighted to give £10,000. Our donation, along with a donation from the County Council, kickstarted the fundraising, with the result that the improvements are now complete. The Head Teacher has confirmed that the project could not have gone ahead without the commitment of the Parish Council.

We make annual donations to various organisations including Ladybirds Playgroup, Guides, Scouts and DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education). In one respect, however, we go much further, in providing financial support to the County Council to maintain the School Crossing Patrol, which otherwise would not exist, as the statutory criteria are not met.

We have a team of young people who distribute our various publications to every dwelling in the village in return for a small monetary reward.

In 2006/07 we represented Nottinghamshire in the Calor English Village of the Year Competition. As part of our effort we organised a children's art competition on the theme: 'What I like about living in Misterton'. It attracted over 90 entries. Two of our young people gave a presentation to the Calor judges on the Competition's Young People Section.

We listen, and act accordingly. A recent example came about after we installed motorcycle access barriers in the Sports Field. We were told that the barriers prevented double buggies accessing the playground, so we provided a pedestrian gate, with keys to be issued to mums with twins.