

Beeston Regis Parish –

Annual Parish Meeting 11th. May, 2022

This meeting is a statutory requirement on all Parishes, and is not, as such, a Council meeting; it is in effect a Parishioners meeting.

As we gradually return to normality after the rigours of the Covid-19 pandemic I am sure we are all now looking forward to a lovely summer with plenty of more regular activity.

The Parish Council, has been able to fully recommence our regular in person monthly meetings and have hopefully now consigned Zoom to the past.

We have sadly lost a long standing member in Geoff Dyson and Councillor Anderson has recently resigned. We have filled one of the vacancies and are pleased to welcome Ian Hudson, who was co-opted at our April meeting and I am sure Ian will prove a fine addition to our Council. Therefore we still have one vacancy, leaving us one short of our designated complement of 11 Councillors which can now be filled by co-option. If you, or anyone you know might be interested in filling that vacancy please contact the Clerk in the first instance.

As always, I must thank my fellow Councillors for their efforts - in particular Roy, my vice-chair, who has been his forever stalwart self, and that is not to forget the other members who all contribute valuable input to the Council.

And of course our Clerk, Peter Bullimore, who has, as always, ensured the Council operates within its obligations and that all matters are dealt with appropriately. Although the scheme itself seems to have drifted a little, we still hold the Quality Council status.

I will touch on a few of the financial matters concerning your Council.

As a Parish Council, we operate on a precept basis, collected within your Council Tax. The 2021/22 precept was £12,500, and I am pleased to report that we have, after some sterling budgetary work by Peter and Roy, maintained the precept at that level for the 22/23 year.

You will be aware that around 98% of your Council Tax goes to the County and District Councils and the Police Authority, and that £12,500 for Beeston Regis represents something like 50p per week per household. That level of precept is exactly the same as it was when I first came to sit in this chair eleven years ago, and Beeston Regis still falls well below the average precept on the NNDC list. Of course, faced with continually rising costs, the other authorities just mentioned continue to increase their precepts, often to the maximum allowed within Government guidelines.

We still receive a grant from Norfolk County Council for Safety Cuts relating to grass verges and a small contribution in respect of road sign cleaning. Those grants usually cover our total costs in respect of not only the verges, but all of the grass areas in the Parish and I think Stuart from Secret Gardens does a sterling job in keeping the Parish looking neat and tidy.

We have five dog bins within the Parish which are emptied at our expense– and worthy of note that there are a further nine dog bins both provided, and emptied, by the holiday park.

We have also negotiated a contract with County Highways to maintain some of our public footpaths, the most significant of these being footpaths 16 and 17 which run alongside and pretty much parallel to the railway line between Church Close and Sheringham. Hopefully by taking this in-house we will not experience a repeat of recent instances whereby these paths had become impassable due to overgrown vegetation.

A couple more points to note regarding Finance....

You will be aware that BRPC is responsible for all costs relating to our street lighting. We are still on a fixed contract for the electricity costs which has another year to run; I imagine that we will not be able to enjoy similarly low rates when that comes to renewal.

We also take responsibility in house for bus shelter cleaning; also maintenance and siting of the Vehicle Activated Speed Sign for which I must specifically thank Councillor Nick Wright.

We will as usual circulate full accounts for the year just ended, which will be published in the next issue of Beeston Regis News. Peter will be completing them shortly and I can report that we succeeded in operating within our set budget for 2021/22.

The defibrillator situated at the bottom of Britons Lane has been monitored weekly by Councillor Ralph Smith and as far as I am aware has fortunately not been required over the last year. Ralph has also very kindly created a "pollinator hub" at Daisy Green which seems to be flowering very nicely now, You may have noticed the new addition of a clothing bank on the car park which I hope will prove useful, and could provide the Parish Council with a small income going forward.

Last year I reported on various matters regarding the extension to the Norfolk Gravel quarry in Britons Lane. That extension is now under way, albeit hampered at this moment by an issue over an Aylmerton footpath.

We have continued to interact closely with Norfolk Gravel over various matters and Councillor Wright and I have attended meetings of the Liaison Group. At the time of the application we lobbied strongly against the right hand turn lane proposed at the junction of the A148 and Britons Lane and the application as passed excluded that. We also pushed for amended signage along the A148 and elsewhere in the hope that through traffic could be properly diverted away from Britons Lane. You may have noticed that a plethora of new signs have now been installed, this at very considerable cost to Norfolk Gravel. We have hopes that this will help to divert some of the unsuitable traffic away from the Lane. And on that point, we still remain very supportive of Councillor Judy Oliver's push for a roundabout at the top of Holway Road.

There have been a number of planning applications over the past year, and members have studied these and the Council, as a consultee has responded where appropriate. The most significant one of late is the application to renovate the Beeston Hall Farm area, proposing up to eleven barn conversions. This is yet to be

decided at NNDC and the Parish Council has submitted what we consider to be an appropriate response.

Coming up very shortly are the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and we have organised a few events to mark the occasion, again thanks to Roy for pushing these forward.

On Thursday 26th May there will be a Parish Jubilee Concert at Beeston Hall School.

On Wednesday 1st June The North Norfolk Classic Vehicle Club will have a Classic Car Show on the Church Field at All Saints.

On Thursday 2nd June, in conjunction with Beeston Regis Holiday Park the parish will be lighting a Beacon at All Saints as part of the National Beacon lighting celebration. Details of these events were published in our recent Newsletter and will be reiterated a little nearer the time.

As always, your Parish Council is here to assist in any way it can, and if there are any issues or queries, both Peter and myself are available.

Michael Knowles,
Chairman,
Beeston Regis Parish Council.

11th. May 2022.