

PARISH COUNCIL INFORMATION

There are several major issues at the moment. As a result, we have decided to add an extra four pages of Parish Council information as a "pull-out" for you in this edition of the TORC. Please take a few minutes to read this through – we do try to keep you informed as much as is possible! As ever we do value your feedback, but we need this to be directly to us, and including names and addresses, to ensure that you are residents of Snettisham, and that we can reply directly to you!

Major Developments in the Village

With the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, and Council being aware of a potential developer, it became clear that the Village may possibly acquire a lump sum of money specifically for infrastructure, and an area of land adjacent to the new housing. The proposed donation of land, which many of you will have seen at the developers' presentation recently, will mean no more house building within that entire area.

Council wished to focus on plans relating to the Sports Area (Pavilion, MUGA, a re-purposed Memorial Hall), the Village Centre (parking, improving attractiveness) and a new Community Centre, suitable for the needs of an expanding village. Villagers have recently been lamenting the loss of facilities (such as the Post Office) and this last could provide a location for these.

We have been talking to the Memorial Hall Trustees about producing a range of gold standard facilities, and to other groups and businesses. Hall Trustees have been included in our group meetings. The aim has always been to produce a coherent and complete plan. We believe that no responsible Parish Council should consider piecemeal development or renovation, when there is an opportunity, with funds and space, to look at the bigger picture.

Negotiations have reached a difficult phase, given the size and complexity of possible plans, but Council is determined to bring this to a successful conclusion.

All proposals – and nothing has been agreed yet, despite rumours to the contrary – will be presented to the public for them to have their say; the Annual Parish meeting will mainly be given over to a presentation of this. This will take place on Wednesday, May 8th at 7pm in the Memorial Hall, with some information available beforehand from 6.30pm.

It must be remembered that Council has to adhere to rigid procedures in how it makes its decisions; all of these are made in public. Details will be available in the TORC over time, and this is also available online.

Finally, we believe that Villagers will understand that we have to take extremely good care of public money, especially when a one-off windfall is possible – with the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is likely this will be the last such major contribution for the next fifteen years. We must ensure that it is spent wisely and with maximum effect.

How are things decided?

For those who do not deal with Local Government on a regular basis, it can be confusing; people often refer to "The Council" as if it is a single entity, but there are separate bodies. In general County deals with Highways, Footpaths, Education, Emergency Services (partly through the Police and Crime Commissioner); the Borough deals with Housing, Bins, the Environment, Planning; the Parish deals with small amounts of land which we own (the Common, Market Square, Lodge Walk being the main ones), street lights except Lynn Rd, Play Areas (but not the one at Poppyfields), Street Cleaning in the centre, Dog Bins, Benches, War Memorial and so on. We have no responsibility for the Memorial Hall and Playing Field which is set up as a separate charity.

Our income comes from the precept, the Parish part of the Council Tax; there is information about this in the Clerk's notes. We also now have access to a stream of funding called the Community Infrastructure Levy. This is related to the floor area of most new housing in Snettisham, and we receive 25% of the total.

CIL is a contribution to community infrastructure, and has to be spent within a limited time. If a large development takes place, this will contribute a very significant figure - it is this that has prompted Council to look at possible spending avenues.

All decisions are made at Council meetings which are open to the public. Agendas of those meetings are available on our website, as are the minutes, so all decisions are recorded. Hence, unless there is a record of something being agreed, it has not been. There is, therefore, a huge difference between an option (one of a range of things being considered), a proposal (a specific idea which is being looked at) and a decision (something which is agreed, is funded, and will happen). If you hear that the Council "plans" to do something, it can be an idea to check whether it has made a decision or not; the distinction is critical!

ELECTIONS

There will be two separate elections on 2nd May. The first is for one Borough Councillor to represent the entire Parish; following changes last year, we no longer have two councillors covering Snettisham, Ingoldsthorpe, Fring and Shernborne.

The second election is for the thirteen available places on the Parish Council. Qualifications for standing in this election relate to residence, right to vote, owning land or businesses, and working in the Village. Should thirteen or fewer candidates stand, those nominated will be deemed to have been elected, as has happened in most such elections in recent years. Fourteen or more candidates require an election, which is good for local democracy.

The process is, as you might expect, not entirely straightforward, but to begin with, should you be interested in standing, you will need two people to sign your nomination form. This form must be delivered to the Borough Council between **March 18th** and **April 3rd**. It is therefore worth starting to think now about standing, and finding out as much as you can about the process.

The term of office is four years, and there are no specific requirements other than those relating to qualification as above. The role of a Councillor is rewarding and varied, and it is important that local people make decisions affecting them and their neighbours. Training is provided free; there is no payment for the role, except for the refund of reasonable or agreed expenses.

The Office can help provide forms and advice – please consider taking this opportunity to take an active part in the life of the Village.

Clerk notes – Spring 2019

Since the last edition of the TORC, two major projects have come to a conclusion.

The first was the **Snett45** project to commemorate those Villagers who gave their lives in World War One. As well as a fascinating insight into their lives gained by new research – still available online at snettisham-remembers.co.uk – there was a wonderful sense of community spirit at the events on Remembrance Day itself. The final sum raised by the Project for Scotty's Little Soldiers and the Poppy Appeal was £16,651.55, an impressive sum for a Village of our size. Well done to all!

At the end of November, the Neighbourhood Plan was supported in the referendum. In times when the Government seems to be pushing harder and harder for more housing, this does give the Village more control than it might have without such a plan, and also a larger financial compensation for development.

Other matters:

The Bridge on Footpath 18, by the River Ingol, became unsafe due to wear and tear, was repaired, but then subject to vandalism. Unusually, this footpath seems to be the responsibility of the Parish Council – given this, it has taken some time to work with NCC to get a replacement ordered. This has now been

done; though the bridge will arrive in around four weeks, we are dependent on NCC engineers for the actual fitting.

Large expenses such as the Bridge, the need to do extensive work on trees over the past few months and the loss of £5,000p.a. in grant income over five years, have put pressure on Council's day-to-day finances. We have managed to keep the precept static for the last five years (a Band D property in 2014/5 was £74.42, last year it was actually lower, at £73.33). We have had to increase this figure for 2019/20 to £82.02, but would note that this has still risen less than inflation over the last five years. Our accounts for the approaching year-end will, as ever, be in the Annual Review in the next TORC.

There are always a few niggles in the life of any village; as ever dog mess is a regular source of complaint – see the notes from the PC Chairman, Ros Pugh. We would urge you not to feed the chickens, which are a considerable nuisance to other residents, or drop food from cars. On the Common, recent tree-cutting produced large amounts of wood; the rules are clear that felled/fallen wood on the fuel allotment (to the right of the path roughly parallel to Common Road) may be taken by residents. Wood left on the Common itself, however, is not to be taken; it may have been left for conservation purposes – it is valuable for many threatened species. We had several complaints of people removing large quantities from both areas, which was felt to be unfair, as well as wrong in the case of the Common.

There have been instances of petty vandalism and fly-tipping around the Village; please do report these – vandalism to the Police and fly-tipping to the Borough Council.

The fete will happen on Sat. 20th July, from 12 until 4. As ever, we are seeking volunteers to help with this - even if only for an hour, this can make a real difference; if you would like to run a stall, or have ideas for possible events, please contact the Office.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

You will know that the Neighbourhood Plan was approved at the referendum in November. This means that the Policies in that Plan are considered along with National and Borough ones when planning decision are made. You may recall that the Plan Team were upset that the Inspector removed two items in particular from the proposed Plan. We managed to get one put back (the need for additional benefit from larger developments), but the second homes issue was more complicated. We had clear evidence of concern over the growing number of second homes, but needed more specific information. We have therefore produced the questionnaire on p.4, and would ask you to complete it and return as soon as possible. You can cut it out and send a hard copy, or copy/photograph it and email it.

Dog Fouling

There have been many complaints regarding irresponsible owners not clearing up after their dogs, not only at the Common but in Lodge Walk and indeed on some of our foot ways around the village. This remains the most complained about issue with Councils all over the country and is unacceptable.

I would respectfully remind the minority of owners responsible that dog faeces is unpleasant and can be dangerous to the health of our children. It is unlawful to leave your dog's mess ANYWHERE that is open to the public. This includes the Common, parks, amenity areas, woodland, footpaths, the beach and coastal park. It is not acceptable to leave it to "nature" to break it down, this does not happen and is harmful to the soil structure. The only people who are exempt from fines are those that are registered blind.

If you see anyone not clearing up after their dog it can be reported to the Borough Council, they have been most helpful with previous complaints. We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful village, please help keep it clean!

Ros Pugh, Chairman

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

This consultation will provide evidence to support Snettisham's Neighbourhood Plan. It asks for your views on the impact that second homes have within our community. A second home is one that is not occupied by the owners as their usual place of residence. It may be used by them at the weekends, as a holiday home, or on occasion rented out to other. The questions do not relate to the purpose-built holiday accommodation at the caravan parks.

Please circle the appropriate response – 1 strongly disagree; 2 disagree; 3 neutral; 4 agree; 5 strongly agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about second homes ownership in Snettisham.

It has a positive influence overall	1	2	3	4	5
The number of second homes is excessive	1	2	3	4	5
It is good for local services	1	2	3	4	5
It means that fewer people are actively involved in the community	1	2	3	4	5
It has increased house prices	1	2	3	4	5
People are less likely to know their neighbours as a result	1	2	3	4	5
It means more homes are now needed for local people	1	2	3	4	5
It creates employment and jobs in Snettisham	1	2	3	4	5
It causes problems, like bins not being put out on collection day	1	2	3	4	5
Some residents feel isolated as a result, as adjacent homes are empty for long periods of time	1	2	3	4	5
It causes general disturbance to residents as second home owners or their visitors are more likely to stay up late or make noise	1	2	3	4	5

If you have any comments that explain your answer please provide them below:

We will protect your data, but to help us analyse the results, the following information is important; again, please circle:

I am: a resident a landowner a business owner a visitor

I am: employed not working retired

I am: 0-24 25-44 45-64 65-74 75+