

Dethick, Lea and Holloway Parish Council

Annual report - Chairman's report for 2016/17

This has been a busy and largely successful year in the work of the parish council.

Three major undertakings have been pursued throughout the year. First, and now completed after several delays in past years, the Receiving House at the cemetery has been repaired. This has involved repairs to the roof, the interior walls and a supporting beam, and the reglazing of the windows. New signage has been erected and new cemetery regulations have been made that are displayed in a new notice board.

Repair work has also been carried out on other buildings for which the council is responsible- the shelter at the bottom of the Memorial Grounds and the shelter in the playground at Lea. Electrical repairs have also been necessary in the public toilets on Church Street.

Secondly, in June, the council organised a well-attended public meeting to measure the residents' response to the suggestion that we should work towards creating a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish area. This met with almost unanimous approval from those attending the meeting and a Steering Committee has been formed as a committee of the council, that includes both councillors and other residents to work towards that goal. The work of that committee is reported regularly to the council – the current aim is that we should have completed the task by August 2018. The cost of developing the plan is being met by grants obtained for that purpose.

The Neighbourhood Plan will become a formal part of the planning controls that are applied by the borough council (AVBC) when they are considering applications for development in our parish. At the same time the Local Plan for AVBC is in the course of adoption; this will also play an important part in defining future development.

The third major undertaking, and the one that probably delivers most obvious improvement to our parish, is the work that has been done throughout the year by Cllr. Joan Ward and a small group of other volunteers to improve the Memorial Ground. The Memorial Ground was presented to the parish in 1925 to form a memorial to the men from the 3 villages who had lost their lives in the Great War. It is fitting, therefore, that this work is done now to restore the Grounds in a way that enhances our appreciation of them. The war memorial has been further restored and the grounds have been cleared and replanted so that this spring there has been a marked increase in the flowers to be seen, paths have been improved, and further work is planned. The cost of these improvements have been met from a Heritage Lottery Fund grant that was obtained by Cllr. Ward.

The work in the Memorial Grounds has been done at the same time as a full tree survey was made in the Memorial Grounds and of the other areas for which the council is responsible -the Lea playground and the cemetery. All tree work recommended for those areas and the Memorial Grounds has been completed.

The usual work of the parish council has continued in reviewing planning applications in the parish and applications for tree work in the conservation area and to other matters in connection with the facilities that are owned or operated by the council. As well, this year we have responded to concerns brought to us by some of the residents in the flats in Holme Close. Two meetings have been held attended by the owners of the flats and by the police.

This year I wish to record appreciation on behalf of the council for the work that is done each year by voluntary groups in the villages that contribute to the quality of life here. In particular, I am thinking of the annual carnival run each year at Lea Green and the week of activities that lead up to it. The funds generated by the carnival make a significant contribution to village activities throughout the year. This year I should mention too, the project organised by the local Women's Institute that has provided a defibrillator device that is housed (by permission of the Florence Nightingale Hall committee) in the entrance porch to the hall.

I conclude by thanking all members of the council for their work and support through the year and our clerk and the parish warden for their services this year.

Ian Hooker

Chairman.