



Notes of the **Annual Parish Meeting**, held Thursday 16th May, 2013
at Rippingale Village Hall, commencing 7.00p.m.

Present: Mr. J.M. Hallas (Chairman), Cllr S. Stewart (Village Hall Management Committee), Cllrs B. Flatters (from 7.25p.m.), B. Cook, P. King, J. Latham, and 15 Members of the Public.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** – Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr M. Exton and Mr. D. Southgate.

2. **Chairman's Report – Cllr J.M. Hallas.**

“We have retained our elected Parish Councillors throughout the year providing us with an experienced and hard-working team. It is only in the last 2 weeks that I have regretfully received the resignation of Councillor Stan Stewart who is moving back to his home territory north of the border. My aim for the year was to provide efficient and effective Council giving opportunities for all residents to have a say in matters concerning the council. This included:-

- ensuring that Councillors continued to receive appropriate training;
- reviewing and updating various policy documents required to be published by the Council;
- continuing to review the conduct of meetings to ensure objectivity and the control of time spent;
- establishing contact with organisations which can provide assistance to elderly residents, such as First Contact;
- improving liaison with the police and council authorities;
- continuing to implement improved methods of communications with the villagers; and
- Implementing a computerised system for the Parish Council accounts.

We have had some success in the above areas as follows:-

1. **Parish Council Meetings:**

The Clerk to the Parish Council is now studying for a Certificate in Local Council Administration, the completion of which will enable the Parish Council to take on additional responsibilities. Her studies have helped to clarify several administrative issues, and have greatly improved the format of the Council minutes.

We have continued to hold formal council meetings every 6 weeks, which has greatly reduced the administrative burden on the Clerk. Additionally, several Councillor working groups have been held and attendance rates by all councillors have been excellent. The attendance register can be viewed on request to the Clerk to the Parish Council.

An open meeting was held to enable residents to give their views on the calculation of the annual precept. Unfortunately, attendance was poor but those who did attend made a valuable contribution. It was with regret that the precept had to be increased for the first time in over three years.

2. **Open Office:**

We have continued to hold public surgeries to encourage members of the public to call and discuss issues of concern to them. These have been held every 6 weeks at the Bull Inn. Public interest has been sparse but we will continue to encourage people to attend the surgeries to discuss matters of concern. The Parish council wishes to thank Sue Atkinson for allowing us to use the premises – and for providing coffee!!

3. **Communications:**

We continue to explore ways in which we can involve the younger residents in village activities, but we have been hampered by legal and bureaucratic barriers, such as the Data Protection Act. We are making progress but it is extremely slow. We hope that involvement of young people in the Village Feast may give us a welcome start.

We have had close cooperation with the First Contact organisation, and we are looking forward to further meetings with them to make older residents aware of the services they can provide.

In March we received the new “Jubilee” notice board, funded from money raised by the Jubilee Committee. This allows more information to be displayed and, together with facilities provided by the village shop, has improved communications greatly.

4. **Liaison with police and council authorities:**

During the year we had several serious cases of anti-social behaviour reported to us, which necessitated working closely with the police and representatives from SKDC. The meetings resulted in satisfactory resolution of the problems and an improvement in working relationships with the police. The Parish Council is now on line to the Lincs Alert system which gives early notice of criminal activity in this area.

5. **Rippingale News and Website**

We continue to make extensive use of the Rippingale News as our main communication with the village, and we are eternally grateful to Mary Morgan's patience in dealing with our last minute contributions. We are similarly grateful to John Warman for his efforts to keep our part of the village website up to date.

6. **Accounting System:**

We purchased a computer accounting system specifically designed for Parish Councils. It has worked well during the year but has created some minor problems in producing the Annual Statement of Account which we will need to resolve prior to inspection by the auditors.

Other areas of activity, including those which are the responsibility of individual Councillors, are reported as follows:-

1. **Grass and Hedge Cutting:**

Grass and hedge cutting has been delayed due the bad weather over the past 12 months, but progress is now being made.

2. **Allotments Group:**

There is now a waiting list for allotments. The Parish Council has issued the required 12 months notice to its tenant to release a further strip of land to meet the demand. The Council has also inspected the dykes and is proposing work on them to ease the flooding problems on the allotments.

3. **Playing Field:**

The container is now in its final position and work is in hand to organise the interior to allow for greater flexibility in use.

Work on refurbishing the changing rooms has been completed, and the problems with the use of the tennis courts seem to have been resolved.

The Rippingale football team which was formed last season has decided not to continue into the new season. This follows problems with the pitch being unusable for long periods. The Parish Council has budgeted for improvements to the drainage in the current year.

Cllr Stewart reported that a Council Sub-Committee together with play equipment suppliers is looking into refurbishments to the Playing Field, grants are available for sports/youth related projects. Ideally, Councillors would wish to see a Management Committee formed from volunteer residents to implement ideas. It is encouraging to see that the Playing Field is well used by families.

4. **Planning applications:**

Councillors have dealt with 10 applications during the year and no objections were raised.

5. **Rippingale Surgery:**

Regretfully, after over 3 years of fighting, the surgery closed on 31March. Our final appeal to the Ombudsman was rejected, and we have to accept defeat. However, the free taxi service for patients to Billingborough is now in operation, and regular reviews of its activities will take place. Our first meeting will take place on 22 May at the New Springwells Practice. I have also volunteered to sit on the Patients Panel at the New Springwells Practice, to look after the interests of Rippingale patients.

6. **War Memorial:**

After many hours of detailed work by Councillor Latham his application for a grant for repairs to the memorial was turned down on a technicality. This means that he has to start again, and we are concerned that the delay will mean another winter without proper protection for the memorial.

7. **Flood Protection:**

Flooding problems, particularly on the Dovecote, have taken up a great deal of Councillor Flatters' time. We have received cooperation from LCC and work is progressing to solve most of the problems. Local farmers have conducted dyke clearing operations which have eased the problem, and we are grateful for the assistance received from local residents at the height of the flooding problems. Cllr Flatters is obliged to retire from leading the Flood Protection work in the village, but will continue to assist Mr. Ian Johnson who has volunteered to act as Flood Warden.

8. Jubilee Celebrations;

In spite of the weather the jubilee celebrations were a great success, and we are delighted that a committee has been formed to bring back Rippingale Feast in July. The committee is working very hard to ensure its success. The Parish Council extends its gratitude for the work of the committee.

This has been another busy year for the Parish Council and we are grateful for the support we have received from various villagers, particularly those who have had the patience to sit through our meetings. We have tried to listen to what people expect of the Council, and we hope that we have met those expectations.

I must make a personal "thank you" to all the Councillors for their excellent attendance at meetings and their efforts throughout the year. However, I must give particular thanks to our Clerk, Sheila Scholes, without whose extremely hard work much of what we have achieved would not be possible.

I must conclude by extending my personal thanks to Councillor Stan Stewart for his service on the Council and for his work for the village over the past 2 years, and I wish him, and Sylvia, all the very best for the future in their new environment."

3. Statement of Accounts, 31st March, 2013

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
1.Total Balances 1 st April	£ 4,473	£12,684	£13,526
RECEIPTS			
+ 2. Annual Precept	£15,500	£15,750	£15,750
Other Receipts:-			
VAT Refunds	£ 2,392	£ 441	£ 804
Allotment Rental	£ 249	£ 956	£ 600
Grants (inc Annual)(1)	£ 8,106	£ 2,107	£ 2,361
Hospital Car Service	£ 508	£ 67	£ 59
Bank Interest	£ 10	£ 14	£ 19
Playing Field Rental	-	£ 405	£ 195
Sundry/ contra items (2)	-	£ 160	£ 250
Jubilee 2012 & Feasts	-	£ 1,589	£ 2,160
+3. Total Receipts	£26,765	£21,489	£22,198
PAYMENTS			
- 4. Staff Costs	£ 5,455	£ 5,675	£ 5,844
Use of Office Charge	-	£ 500	£ 500
Other Payments:-			
VAT Paid Current Year	£ 467	£ 817	£ 1,055
Print, Stat., Phone (3)	£ 683	£ 1,033	£ 2,188
Allotments	£ 375	£ 80	£ 210
Audit & Prof. Fees (4)	£ 335	£ 335	£ 1,538
Insurances	£ 969	£ 960	£ 1,005
Travel & Training	£ 120	£ 223	£ 379
Subs & Pubs	£ 304	£ 318	£ 298
Hospital Car Service	£ 1,066	£ 779	£ 585
Newsletter, IT & Website	£ 712	£ 319	£ 520
Village Organisations	£ 1,100	£ 1,000	£ 500
Poppy Wreath	£ 35	£ 35	£ 35
Capital Expenditure	£ 205	£ 1,550	£1,507
Grass, Repairs, M'ce	£ 4,881	£ 3,639	£5,387
Jubilee Playing Field	£ 1,847	£ 2,225	£ 767
AGM & Election Costs	-	£ 710	£-
Jubilee 2012 & Feasts		£ 186	£1,795
Sundry & contra items (5)	-	-	£ 64
-6. Total Payments	£18,554	£20,384	£24,177

= BALANCE 31st March c/f	£12,684	£13,526	£11,547
8 Total Cash & Investments	£12,684	£13,789	£11,547
9. Total Fixed Assets	£374,150	£389,750	£378,029
10. Total Borrowings	Nil	Nil	Nil

NOTES:

- (1) Grants: SKDC £1376, LCC £635, Other £350.
(2 & 5) Contra inc. Football Club Loan & Repayment in Full.
(3) Includes Accounts Software £489 & Surgery Advert £185.
(4) Includes Jubilee Playing Field Charity Status Transfer.
(5) Includes adjustments per 2012 Audit.

In reply to questions, the Clerk confirmed that:-

- a) Hospital Car Service costs EXCLUDES the Surgery Taxi Service, which is funded by New Springwells Practice
b) Expenses related to Allotments included maintenance hedging /ditching work carried out by the Council.

4. Approve Minutes of Meeting 17th May, 2012.

Proposed by Cllr Flatters and seconded by B. Cook, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT** the Minutes of Meeting 17th May, 2012 be approved..

5. **Matters Arising from the Minutes** – there were no matters arising.

6. Receive Reports from Village Organisations:

6.1 Rippingale Village Hall Management Committee - Mr. S. Stewart, Chairman.

Mr. Stewart reported on a productive year, with increased revenues. Improvements to the Hall included a new boiler/hot water system, updating the electrical system and refurbishment of the bar. Thanks were expressed to Angela Keen who devotes many hours to organising the lettings and maintaining the hall to a very high standard. Ginger Flatters is thanked for his maintenance work, and special thanks to Angela and Ginger for running the free children's film shows.

6.2 Row Gardens Allotments Group – Mrs D. Hilton, Chairman.

"2012 although not a very good productive year, needless to say because of the weather, we did however have success with the events that we either organised or were involved with, starting with the Pie and Mash Night, Jubilee Treasure Hunt, Ceilidh Evening, Jubilee Weekend, Allotment Open Day, Party on the Plot, Beer Fest, Table Top Sale and New Year's Eve Disco. We have been able to purchase a mower to help maintain the communal areas of the allotments and make donations to Lives First Response, Home Start, Books for the Blind.

2013 – the weather is still playing havoc with crops etc but most people are getting on with it as best they can, let's hope summer improves! We have a good list of people on the waiting list and are looking forward to the new strip of land becoming available so these people can get started. Also once we have this land, it is hoped that with the Parish Council's help that our drainage problems can be resolved by digging a dyke behind the land that is released. Events wise unfortunately the Valentine's Dance was cancelled but we have an involvement with the Village Feast, Beer Fest and will be organising a Table Top Sale later in the year and possibly a dance of some description towards the end of the year."

6.3 Rippingale Hospital Car Service – Mr. D. Diess, Coordinator.

"This brief report shows that the team of volunteer drivers make 71 trips to 16 different locations on behalf of eligible members of the Community. My thanks are due to the team for the support given me as Co-ordinator. I must also thank Sheila Scholes for her help."

6.4 Rippingale Jubilee 2012 Committee. – Mr. L. PARNCUTT, Chairman.

“Just under a year ago the National celebrations for the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee were enjoyed by all during the specially extended Bank Holiday weekend at the beginning of June. Here in Rippingale, the main event for our celebrations took the form of a Grand Picnic and Sports day on the Jubilee Playing Field on the Sunday (3rd June). The preceding months saw the staging of a host of other activities and events including quiz evenings, a walking treasure hunt, a guided village history walk, a ceilidh in the village hall and of course the manufacturing prowess of the Bunting Babes. All of these events were supported by excellent publicity including BBC Radio and Television and all combined to successfully achieve the two main objectives

- (a) to stimulate awareness and interest in the weekend celebrations, and
- (b) to raise sufficient funds for the celebrations to be self financing.

After some 12 months of planning the big day arrived ... and it rained, it continued raining for most of the day and, if memory serves me correctly, it rained for most of that summer. Notwithstanding, those that did come to the Playing Field seemed determined to enjoy themselves despite the atrocious weather and many viewed it as a bit of a challenge. It was heartening to hear the children (and their parents) asking when they would be able to enter the race events ... and they did, with much enthusiasm and vigour, coupled with a fairly liberal interpretation of the basic rules. The washed out version of the day’s events and the rather splendid afternoon teas on offer in a rather damp and muddy marquee enabled the village to press on and enjoy celebrating the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. Ironically, we had already shelved some previously planned water-based activities due to the regional drought order imposed upon us.

It took a tremendous amount of goodwill and co-operation to bring the celebrations to fruition and the perfect legacy for all of these efforts will be the lasting memories of Rippingale having a good Jubilee with lots of fun and many new friendships being firmly established. In this respect thanks go to the committee members and everybody that helped in any way and we must also be mindful of the generous financial assistance received from many individuals, local organisations and businesses that enabled our plans to be actioned.

Financially, the combination of fund raising and donations left us with a surplus of £1,767.71 and, in the absence of any mandate to make a profit, the following recommendations were formally submitted to the Parish Council for consideration

- (i) donations of £75.00 each be made to the local Scout Group, the Cheeky Monkeys Play Group and the Bunting Babes.
- (ii) a sum of £1,000 be allocated towards a commemorative village Notice Board to be sited on or near the Village Green in conjunction with the planned replacement of the existing Parish Council board.
- (iii) a ‘Community Chest’ fund is established in the sum of £542.71, to be used exclusively towards promoting and organising future annual ‘one day’ celebrations in the village - with the proviso that the funds be replenished each year by targeted fund raising.

I am pleased to report that these recommendations were subsequently accepted and implemented by the Parish Council - meeting minutes 2012.5.2 & 3 refer.

So, in the immortal words of Mel Blanc – ‘That’s all folks’.”

6.5 The Chairman expressed the Parish Council’s thanks to the representatives of the reporting Committees. Their efforts and contribution to village life by setting up, organising and supporting the Rippingale community are greatly appreciated and enhance the local community.

7. Rippingale Feast 2013 – Report supplied by Mr. C. Petz.

Following the success of the Jubilee celebration weekend in 2012, some money was allocated from the venture to be specifically used for an annual event of a similar nature.

This was, mainly, due to requests from participants that we should have “something like this every year.” The Parish Council decided that an attempt to reinstate Rippingale’s Feast would be in order and I was asked to lead the project on the council’s behalf. Sheila Scholes, Clerk to the PC, was to be the secretary/PA acting, also, as the “go-between.”

Forming a Feast Committee was no problem; we have maintained a large enthusiastic group of villagers who are all keen to make contributions to the success of the re-instated Feast.

It would be fair to say that, in contrast to many committees on which I have served and attempted to generate ideas, the opposite exists here and suggestions have outweighed the time and space to incorporate them all. We are already beginning to say, "That's a good idea – we'll use that next year." Our most recent committee meeting was just two days' ago; it was at this meeting, where logistics for the weekend were finalized, that the concepts of our plans were coming off the paper and moving into the world of reality – scary !!

Last year's Jubilee Weekend was kept "on the boil" in preceding months with a series of quiz nights. We decided to repeat this exercise for the Feast. Although our quiz nights have been successful, one can have too much of a good thing so, if anyone has suggestions for an alternative way of leading up to future Feast weekends, I would be pleased to hear of them.

The actual Feast will begin with a grand parade from St Andrew's Church, leading through the village and onto the field.

The Feast will be opened by Martin Hill MBE who is our County Councillor, and Leader of Lincolnshire County Council. He will be assisted by the newly elected Rose Queen. The process for choosing the Rose Queen is already in motion.

Throughout the afternoon, there will be displays, competitions and all the usual Feast/Summer Fete activities.

The entire community we hope, will bring afternoon picnics to help create a grand "Party in the Park" atmosphere. The Feast is on Sunday 21 July.

Saturday 20 July is going to be a busy day – it has been named "Erection Day" because that is when all the marquees etc are to be erected. We are inviting all able bodied people to come to the field at 10:00am to help lighten the load. Refreshments will be on hand.

On Saturday evening we have the first taste of the Feast with a barn dance and Pie & Mash supper in the Village Hall.

The Feast concludes on Sunday evening with a special Feast Service in St Andrews Church.

A lot of publicity is making sure everyone knows about The Feast. There are regular updates in the parish newsletters, flyers are distributed around the village and up to date information is on the Village Website as well as Feast Draw Tickets being touted by committee members at every opportunity!

There three key questions:

1. Is there room for something as large as The Feast in the annual calendar?
2. Will there be a Feast next year?
3. What happens to the money generated by The Feast?

Firstly, I made it very clear at the beginning of the project, that there are many successful organisations in the village offering entertainment and enjoyment eg The Allotments Group, The Beer Festival, The WI. I did not want to encroach upon the successes of these groups and saw The Feast as a means of bringing these groups together. I have received no comments alluding to the fact that The Feast is taking away potential for success and sincerely hope this is not the case.

Secondly, will there be a Feast next year?

I believe there will simply because of the number of ideas already bubbling away for the future. I am, forever, the optimist; however, if an appraisal of the situation after the big weekend casts shadows of doubt then a re-think might be necessary.

Lastly, what happens to any profits? The money generated falls under the auspices of the Parish Council, to whom the Feast Committee can make recommendations. These funds

are held in a separate account and a “roll-over” sum retained specifically for subsequent Feasts - bigger and better?.

All that remains is for me to apologise for not being present at this meeting – a previous commitment took priority – but Sheila Scholes has provided tremendous support and advice through the advent of this Feast and, I am sure, will be able to answer any questions.

I look forward to a successful re-instatement of Rippingale’s Feast and look forward to seeing the entire village enjoying themselves together over that weekend. Good weather has been ordered.”

8. Questions from the Public:

8.1 “ Emergency Planning” Rippingale Business Breakfast Club – Mr. Neil Jervis.

The Breakfast Club has looked into the matter of what arrangements are or could be put in place in the event of a national or local emergency. Members considered issues of what we locally could do and identified main risks to the village as exceptional weather causing flooding, electricity and power failure. The Club believes that the Rippingale community is changing and that the information gathered could be helpful in preparing a contingency plan. “Self Help” for example - training First Aiders, providing Defibrillator for the village, ensuring the Village Hall as an emergency shelter is fit for purpose.

The Business Breakfast Club would like to make the information gathered available to the Parish Council for consideration and implementation.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Jervis and the Breakfast Club members for highlighting risk areas and the document supplied will be considered by the Council at a future meeting.

Mrs. A. Adams (public) advised that Nigel Adams is qualified to undertake First Aid training on behalf of LIVES.

8.2. Vote of Thanks:

Mrs. P. Cotton (public) expressed thanks to the Chairman and Councillors for their work on behalf of the village.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.10p.m. and refreshments were served.

S.M. Scholes,
Clerk to Rippingale Parish Council
26th May, 2013.