



SHARLSTON Parish Council



ANNUAL REPORT 2010

SHARLSTON PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009-10

INTRODUCTION

Once again Sharlston Parish Council has undertaken to provide an annual report, to give residents an update on its business and activities over the previous year.

Residents are also welcome to attend Parish Council meetings and can keep track of the Council's activities through the website. A monthly report also goes into the Parish magazine.

At the time of this report our final accounts for the financial year 2009/10 are being audited and an outline of these accounts is printed in this report.

Parish Councillors give of their time on a wholly voluntary and unpaid basis. They recognise the importance of channels of communication between the Parish Council and residents allowing both sides to have a clear view of what is needed and how it is best achieved.

We hope you find this report provides a further insight into our business and activities over the year 2009/10.

As a new clerk, I must take this opportunity to thank the Parish Council, the residents of Sharlston and the previous clerk for their help and friendship which has made my first year so much easier and enjoyable.

Please feel free to contact me on any issues through the details given below.

Janet Hull

April 2010

Tel: 01924 255628

e-mail: janetehull@aol.co.uk

THE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish councillors are available to be contacted with any problem or issue which local residents may wish the parish council to discuss.

MEMBERS

June Cliffe	33 Clifton Road	862018
Alexandra Devey	3 The Green	860862
James Goodfellow	41 Eastville Road	865197
Peter Loosemore	54 Weeland Road	864339
George Balaam	35 Long Row	860407
Madge Pearson	100 High Street	860486
Dee Ranson	5 Heather View	860633
Kath Shingles	99 Grime Lane	862040
May Ashworth	The Granary, The Green	862616
Sheila Ward	205 Weeland Road	864717
Bruce Berry	34 Fernside	07967095025

Chair Councillor Alexandra Devey

Vice Chair Councillor June Cliffe

CLERK

Janet Hull	1 Sandal Hall Close, Sandal, Wakefield	01924 255628
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The Parish Council holds eleven meetings a year (there is no meeting in August). Notices of meetings appear on the notice boards and members of the public are always welcome to attend.

PARISH COUNCILLORS POSITIONS ON COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Planning Committee

Cllr. June Cliffe Cllr. James Goodfellow Cllr Peter Loosemore
Cllr Alexandra Devey

Finance Committee

Cllr. June Cliffe Cllr. Peter Loosemore Cllr. James Goodfellow
Cllr. Alexandra Devey

Parish Plan Working Group

Cllr. June Cliffe Cllr. Peter Loosemore Cllr. Alexandra Devey Cllr. Sheila Ward

Church Magazine Contributor

Cllr. June Cliffe

Yorkshire Local Councils Association Representative

Cllr. June Cliffe Cllr. Alexandra Devey.

S.A.N.S. (Sharlston and New Sharlston Development Group)

Cllr. June Cliffe Cllr Sheila Ward

Sharlston Community Centre Representatives

Cllr J Goodfellow

Sharlston Community Partnership

Cllr. June Cliffe Cllr. James Goodfellow Cllr. Peter Loosemore

Town and Parish Council Liaison Group (Wakefield MDC)

The Chair The Clerk

West Yorkshire Rural Transport Partnership

Cllr Sheila Ward

Sharlston Colliery Liaison Committee

Cllr Alexandra Devey Cllr George Balaam

Featherstone Road Safety Committee

Cllr. June Cliffe Cllr George Balaam

Representation on School Governing Bodies

Sharlston Community School
Normanton Freeston Foundation

Cllr. Peter Loosemore
Cllr. June Cliffe

STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

Sharlston Parish Council is a second-tier local government authority within the Wakefield District. Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (MDC) is the unitary authority for the area.

There are some 2750 people residing within the parish boundary¹ of which 2129 are registered as electors².

The Parish Precept is collected on the Parish Council's behalf by Wakefield MDC. For the fiscal year 2009-10 it was set at £17000. This equated to a sum of £13.94 per year for a Band A dwelling up to £34.85 per year for a band G dwelling³.

Out of the 24 Town and Parish Councils in the Wakefield District, Sharlston ranks 18th lowest in terms of how much it costs per dwelling to pay for the services provided. (see the table at the end of this report).

The main responsibilities of the Parish Council are:

- Representing the parish with the District Council, central government and various local, regional and national bodies.
- Promoting local projects
- Dealing with residents' concerns
- Supporting local groups and organisations
- Maintaining the Weeland Road playing field
- Maintaining the footpath round Sharlston Dam
- Monitoring and commenting on planning applications and proposed developments
- Promoting the Parish Plan
- Acting in partnership with Wakefield MDC to deliver services
- Improving the quality of life and the environment for residents

¹ Source: Census 2001

² Source: Electoral Register 2008.

³ Source: Wakefield MDC: Parish precept levy per band 2008-09

THE MUNICIPAL YEAR UNDER REVIEW

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

I have had the honour and pleasure of serving as Chair of Sharlston Parish Council for the last 12 months, as well as getting to know and working with our new clerk – Janet Hull.

Traditionally Parish Council meetings are held the first Monday of the month at Sharlston School but this has often not been the case this year as so many first Mondays have fallen on Bank Holidays.

Sharlston Parish Council members are invited to serve on several groups in the Wakefield area, including transport, school governors and road safety. Councillors are also invited to represent Sharlston at presentation nights for Old Sharlston Cricket Club and Sharlston Rovers Amateur Rugby League Club, as well as attending Sharlston Male Voice Choir's patrons' concert, the British Legion Remembrance Service at Wakefield Cathedral, Normanton Carnival, Normanton Christmas Lights switch-on and several other civic and mayoral events around Wakefield.

This spring has seen more bulbs flowering in the Parish. 200 crocus bulbs were planted near The Wheel at New Sharlston and at the junction of Wood Street and Netheroyd Court. These were paid for by the Parish Council.

After many years of trying, the old library/clinic site, in the very centre of the Parish, has been tidied up. We are still awaiting work on the access road from Weeland Road to the doctor's surgery to begin and do frequently bring this to the attention of WMDC.

The UK Coal Reclamation on the former pit site at New Sharlston has now been completed bar some tree planting. We will all benefit from this, none more so than the New Sharlston residents, who as a reward for coping with the reclamation work now have open views and for many, sunlight in their kitchens for the first time in over 100 years.

Road improvements have been carried out at the junction of Cow Lane and High Street in New Sharlston and some patching of potholes. The Parish Council continues to fight for repairs to the subsiding footpath on Cow Lane that results in "ponding" every time it rains, and the repair of the many potholes, several of which existed prior to the snow and frost of this last winter.

The snow was a delight to many of our younger parishioners who took advantage of school closures to sledge on The Green and build snowmen throughout the Parish. It was great to see the friendly spirit in which everyone rallied round to assist neighbours who were struggling with the inclement conditions. One of our Parish Councillors was involved in helping organise the impromptu "winter BBQ" that featured on the local news and put Sharlston on the Yorkshire Map.

The Parish Council's most important acquisition during my term of office has been the purchase of land to maintain as allotments for the Parish.

We have said goodbye to two Parish Councillors this year, Keith Wager and Gary Oldroyd and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their time and effort over the years. We also welcome three new Councillors, May Ashworth, George Balaam and Dr. Bruce Berry, and they are already involved and active in the Parish Council.

Sadly a former Clerk and Parish Councillor of many years, Geoff Smith, died recently. Geoff put in many hours for Charlston and our condolences go to his family.

Janet took over from David Siddans as our Parish Clerk and has done a sterling job in familiarising herself with a mountain of files, rules and regulations, who to contact in WMDC and coping with the Parish Council.

May I thank all Parish Councillors for their support and help over the past 12 months, much of this being done outside of the Parish Council Meetings.

The Parish Council Open Day is to be held on Tuesday 18th May this year, from 2.30p.m. to 7.00p.m. with an Open Forum from 6.30 p.m. onwards. This will enable residents to meet all the Parish Councillors and bring up any matters of concern.

It is my pleasure not only to live in, but be able to serve such a wonderful Parish.

On behalf of all the Parish Councillors can I extend our best wishes to all of you.

My regards,

Cllr. Alexandra Devey

Chair of Charlston Parish Council

April 2010

BRIEF SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Annual Parish Open Day

The Open Day was held last year on the 12th May. This continues to be a successful format and gives local people an opportunity to see what is happening in the Parish, to give their views and talk to Councillors.

Local groups and organisations are encouraged to provide displays.

This successful format will continue in 2010 with the addition of an "Open Forum" when all the Parish Council will be in attendance and residents can put forward any issues which are causing concern.

Bulb Planting

The Parish Council has this year paid for some additional planting. 2000 crocus bulbs were planted at The Wheel in New Sharlston and at the junction of Wood Street and Netheroyd Court.

Bus Services

The Parish Council continues to support the provision of an improved transport network between Sharlston and neighbouring towns/parishes.

Christmas Lights

Christmas illuminations in local villages have to be paid for by the local community and this cost is met by the Parish Council. The display for 2009 was particularly successful and the Parish Council have also committed funds for the provision next year of a Christmas Tree for New Sharlston.

Community Centre

The Community Centre is run by the Management Committee with representation from the Parish Council. The Parish Council continues to support this important local amenity and is, at present, discussing ways of offering finance towards the repair/replacement of underground pipework at the Community Centre.

District Councillors

The Parish Council continues to have a good working relationship with the District Councillors representing Ward 6. As a routine, one or more of the District Councillors attend Parish Council meetings to support our efforts on behalf of the local community.

Floral Displays

As in previous years, the Parish Council has paid for hanging baskets throughout Sharlston and New Sharlston. Where these hanging baskets are situated depends on suitable lighting columns but each year the Parish Council strives to provide an attractive display throughout the area.

The Dam & Common

The Parish Council manages the contract for the maintenance of the footpath and car park area, which includes grass cutting, trimming back vegetation and keeping the path weed free.

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to thank the volunteer warden for the Dam and Common, Mr. D. Lees, for his excellent work in keeping the Dam the asset it is to the community.

Sharlston Angling Club have now safeguarded their use of the Dam by entering into a 5 year lease with Mr. Cooling.

Former Library and Clinic Site

Despite the best efforts of the Parish Council, the new road and landscaping has not taken place due to lack of funding.

However, a compromise has been reached and the library site has now been tidied, levelled and seeded and the Parish Council will continue to push for the originally planned access road and landscaping.

Grants to local groups

The Parish Council has continued with its policy of awarding grants. Any local group can apply by completing an application form available from the Clerk or at the Post Office. In 2009/10 the following have been awarded grants to support their activities:

Sharlston Male Voice Choir

The Luncheon Club

Miners Welfare Club

Sharlston Playgroup

Fly Tipping/Litter/Dog Fouling/Potholes

These are all important issues affecting the quality of life of all residents. Following a recent Audit Walk with representatives from various departments in WMDC, the Parish Council were able to highlight areas of concern and instigate action to address these problems.

Parish Council Charter

Sharlston Parish Council along with all the other town and parish councils in Wakefield District have been involved in discussions with the District Council which have resulted in a draft Parish Council Charter being drawn up. This sets out the way in which both levels of authority will work together to achieve the effective delivery of services to the community.

Parish Council Web Site

The content of the Parish Council's web site: www.sharlston.gov.uk is now included within the new Wakefield Community Online site. wdco.org contains a vast range of community based links and is well worth visiting to see what is going on in the district. The Community Online address is www.wdco.org but the Sharlston site can still be accessed through the original address.

The site gives all the contact details for the Parish Council as well as minutes of recent meetings, this annual report and a downloadable version of the Parish Plan.

During 2010 the clerk is hoping to add more features to the website, including a "Whats On" section. Suggestions on how we could improve the website would be welcomed by the Clerk.

Playing Field

The Parish Council owns and maintains the playing field on Weeland Road. During 2009/10, following discussions with Sharlston Rovers ARLFC, we have drawn up and signed a longer term lease to the club. This will give the club greater security of tenure on the site and longer-term stability for the Parish and enable the club to fund ongoing improvements to the facilities.

The Parish Council will continue to support the club by financing the continuing ground maintenance.

Purchase of Allotment Land

During 2009/10 the Parish Council undertook to purchase land for use as allotments.

It was felt that this land should be safeguarded as allotments for the benefit of the village.

Netheroyd Court

The Parish Council are deeply concerned about the possible loss of this amenity and, together with a District Councillor, have had meetings with Wakefield District Housing Association over the issue.

The Parish Council continue to monitor plans so that the best possible result can be obtained from the redevelopment.

PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES, 2009-2010

The income we received

Parish Council Precept (via Council Tax)	17000
Bank interest	18
Insurance refund	707
Rates	16
PWLB	16975
TOTAL	34716

How we spent the money

Staff costs and expenses	6488
Hanging Baskets	1923
Insurance	1353
Maintenance of playing field	1126
Lease	300
Subscriptions	700
Training and conferences	744
Newsletters and website	792
Telephone and broadband services	289
Grants to local groups	495
Fees for auditors	353
Councillors' expenses	96
Annual Open Day	89
Bulb planting	143
Business rates for playing field building	68
Publications and other purchases	145
Boundary signs	928
Allotment valuation	86
Allotment searches	300
TOTAL	16418

NOTES PWLB – Public Works Loan Board

Unaudited accounts for 2009-10 will be available to the public in June 2010 and the audited figures will be available in October or November 2010

COMPARISON WITH OTHER PARISHES

Precept 2009-10 in order of Band D charge

		Precept	band D
1	South Kirkby	607500	196.60
2	Hemsworth	464000	119.50
3	South Elmsall	201789	107.79
4	Havercroft	51388	88.30
5	Ryhill	45470	53.18
6	Ackworth	126000	51.09
7	South Heindley	26600	47.00
8	Upton	100000	46.49
9	Badsworth	13350	38.47
10	Woolley	16000	33.33
11	West Bretton	5800	29.00
12	Warmfield	9000	27.78
13	Thorpe Audlin	8000	26.76
14	Normanton	165000	26.49
15	Walton	30000	26.02
16	Crofton	47825	25.87
17	Nostell	2100	25.00
18	Sharlston	17000	20.91
19	Sitlington	40000	20.00
20	Featherstone	71533	15.68
21	Darrington	9119	14.01
22	Crigglestone	38500	12.48
23	Notton	3945	9.35

Source: Wakefield MDC Council Tax 2009/10 summary



Spring bulbs

Danger – Thin Ice

The Hall in Snow

Sledging

The Wheel

Photographs taken by Mr. D. Lees, Volunteer Warden.