



Neighbourhood Watch

Bill Gambold, the Village Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, is leaving the village at the end of September so the Parish Council is looking for someone to take on this vital role.

The task of the Village Co-ordinator is not onerous – all the local neighbourhood co-ordinators have computers and Internet connectivity and so information from the police to the village co-ordinator can be passed on very quickly.

The Earswick Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has 21 Coordinators for the 360 houses. All residents' benefit from being in a village with a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme by enjoying a very low crime rate and, in many cases, a reduction in their house insurance. It would be a shame if all this were put at risk if the village could not find someone to take over from Bill.

If you can help please contact Bill direct on gambolds@hotmail.com.

Boundary Hedges

Now is the time to cut back your boundary hedges alongside footpaths and grass verges. There are areas in the village, which have had an unusual increase in their growth this year, especially overhanging footpaths.

If you have a hedge beside the footpath please make sure it is cut back in line with the back of the public footpath. The required width of footpaths is 1.4metres or to the back curb of the path running alongside roads. This is a Highways requirement and could be enforced as it provides for blind and partially sighted or wheelchair/pushchairs to travel freely along the footpaths. Hedges cut hard back at this time of year will not damage the shrubs and they will grow more thickly next year

Huntington Burial Authority

The collaboration between the Parish Councils of Huntington, New Earswick and Earswick to manage the Cemetery at New Lane, Huntington has now come to an end.

This means that residents of

Earswick will no longer be able to purchase burial plots at a reduced rate.

These changes will not affect any plots that have already been pre-purchased by Earswick residents.



Who Wants To Be A Parish Councillor?

Parish Councils, we all know, are hotbeds of corruption, passion and intrigue. Those who sit on them, a colourful mixture of oddballs, bullies and idiots. Or so one might think if television is to be believed.

In **JK Rowling's The Casual Vacancy**, scheming characters are pitted against each other on a fictional Parish Council. This follows **the long-running Vicar of Dibley**, a BBC sitcom that painted a frequently hilarious picture of parish councillors. Funny, but often wildly inaccurate.

I should know. For the past 9 years I've sat on **Earswick Parish Council** – eight of those as chair. There was no hard-fought election or cut-throat campaigning to win my seat. Like 2 other members, I

was voted in unopposed whilst the most recent 2 members were co-opted. We recently advertised for 2 more residents to fill the vacant posts on the council but no-one applied. Sadly that's the reality of how most parish councils operate.

As for corruption, well, given that the biggest recurring expenditure we are responsible for is for cutting the grass on the public open space there's not an awful lot of scope for back-handers. Our budget is only £18,000 each year, much of which goes on looking after the public spaces, maintaining the fabric of the village hall and keeping Earswick tidy.

Passion, well the threat of 2,000 extra houses being built in a village of only 360 homes is enough to get anyone worked up.

Intrigue? Hopefully by now you want to learn more about what's involved in becoming a Parish Councillor so please read on!!

Why become a Parish Councillor?

By becoming a parish councillor you become someone your community will look to for help, guidance and support? A community leader with the power to influence decisions for the benefit of the people you serve. Seeing your community change for the better, as a result of decisions you have helped make, is something that can give you a sense of achievement and pride.

What decisions do Parish Councils make?

Parish councils make all kinds of decisions on issues that affect the local community. Probably the most common topics that parish councils get involved with are planning matters (they are statutory consultees), crime prevention, managing open spaces and campaigning for and delivering better services and facilities.

It's true to say that on their own, parish councils have limited powers to make decisions. But they do have the ability to negotiate with, and the power to influence, those other organisations that do make the final decisions (such as the city council, health authorities, police etc).

In this respect parish councils are extremely powerful. The organisations that make the final decisions know that a parish council gives the best reflection of how a community feels about something, and its views will be taken seriously.

How much time does it take up?

Earswick Parish Council meets once a month (except April, August and December) for the council meetings, to which members of the public are also invited. Meetings last no more than two hours, depending on the agenda set for the meeting to discuss. In addition to the regular meetings, councillors are required to attend other meetings representing the council for example acting as a representative on an outside body, community activities or helping develop a new project for the

community. Such meetings won't happen every day, so it's not going to take over your life.

How long does a parish councillor serve for?

Once elected, parish councillors sit on the council for a maximum of four years. If they then want to stay in the post they can stand for re-election.

What powers do parish councils have?

They have a wide range of powers which essentially related to local matters, such as looking after community buildings, open space, allotments, play areas, street lighting, bus shelters, car parks and much more. The council also has the power to raise money through taxation, the precept. The precept is the parish council's share of the council tax. The precept demand goes to the billing authority, City of York Council, which collects the tax for the parish council.

Parish Duties

Earswick Parish Council has 7 councillors (currently there are 2 vacancies) who stand for election every four years. The duties and functions of a parish council are many and varied. The Council meets monthly and considers planning applications and any other matters referred to it by local residents, City of York Council and by central government. All meetings are open to the public and there is a forum before the start of the meeting at which members of the public can raise concerns and ask questions. There is also an annual

meeting that all parishioners are invited to attend. All meetings are advertised on the council notice boards. Residents can bring to the attention of the parish council anything that concerns them, either directly or through the clerk. If matters raised are not the responsibility of the council, the clerk can bring them to the attention of the proper authority.

Don't take our word for it!

The best way to find out what it's like to be a parish councillor is to talk to someone who's doing it now. Come along to a parish council meeting, or speak to one of our councillors and find out what they think of the job.



Cllr Derek Jones – Chairman, 41 Earswick Chase – Tel: 01904 767767

Cllr Sian Wiseman – Vice Chairman, 10 Shilton Garth Close – Tel: 01904 761010

Cllr Pat Leveson – 9 Shilton Garth Close – Tel: 01904 764344

Cllr Barry O'Connor – 36, The Village – Tel: 01904 76602

Cllr Andrew Bell - 3, Lock House Lane – Tel: 01904 764189

Mrs Joanne Fisher – Clerk, 24 Lock House Lane – Tel: 01904 758615



All Council meetings take place in the Village Hall at 7.30pm and are open to the public.

A public participation session also takes place between 7.15 - 7.30pm when members of the public can make representations and give evidence to councillors on any issues that they wish to raise including items included on the agenda.

Meetings will take place on: 15th October 2018, 19th November 2018.