

Notes from the parish meeting for the parish of Rathmell

25 February 2014

The meeting was held in the Rathmell Reading Room at 7.30pm. Thirty-six parishioners were present, together with David Rawsthorne and Rosemary Rees, parish councillors for Rathmell. David Clarke, parish councillor for Wigglesworth, chaired the meeting.

1. **Apologies:** there were no apologies for absence.
2. **Rosemary Rees** was nominated as note-taker for the meeting.
3. **Notes** from the previous parish meeting, held on 01.10.13 were circulated.
4. **Matters arising:** there were no matters arising from the previous meeting not covered by the agenda for this meeting.
5. **Presentation:** David Clarke gave a power-point presentation of the results of the parish plan survey. These outcomes, and comments and recommendations made during the meeting, will be fed into the parish plan, which is being updated. Parishioners made the following points:
 - The parish church needs considerable refurbishment: the roof, heating, windows and electrics all need attention and the provision of toilets is a priority. A lottery grant (£150,000) is being sought, but the funding application needs to show how the church could be used by the community and not just by worshippers. It was felt that the church could be used for large concerts, exhibitions and possibly as an indoor children's play area. This would depend on adequate insurance cover and would have to be in conjunction with the Reading Room because of the need for access to kitchens and toilets.
 - It was confirmed that there is no plan to end the lease on the Reading Room in the foreseeable future.
 - Housing development within the village should be small scale, mixed, and in keeping with the existing village architecture. It was pointed out that through the draft Local Plan developed by Craven District Council that a proposal of some three dwellings per year over the next fifteen years had been suggested. A parishioner presented information which suggested that these figures perhaps should be questioned when the draft Local Plan is presented for consultation.
 - There was strong feeling that any new housing development should be attractive to young families; clarification was sought as to what was meant by 'affordable' housing and whether there would or could be any restrictions on resale prices. These questions would be put to planning officers at a future Parish Council meeting.
 - A plea was made for consideration to be given to the vertical landscape of the village (i.e. that dwellings are and should be single or two storey) and to maintain the green landscape with a requirement for trees to be planted to replace those taken down.
 - It was emphasised that not all development should be viewed negatively: the village demography is skewed towards the upper age range and in order to live in a viable community with support for the village primary school, families and young people must be encouraged to buy or rent here. There should, too, be encouragement

for local businesses, and efforts should be made to attract new businesses to the village.

- It is anticipated that the draft Local Plan will be published in the next few months. Based on the comments made regarding housing development, the Parish Council will take the opportunity to respond fully to the consultation on the draft Local Plan.
- There was strong support for the village website and it was felt it could be used to attract young people and small businesses to the area.
- Concern was expressed about the safety of pedestrians in the village: with no footpaths and no street lighting, speeding vehicles and large tractors could be a serious hazard. It was noted that few children walked to school because of these factors.
- There was some discussion about the need for outdoor play areas for children, a community shop, establishing if mains gas was planned or possible for the village, and access to faster broadband connections. These issues will be explored by the Parish Council as part of the Parish Plan.

6. **Hesley Moss**

- Parishioners were informed that the adverse possession claim on Hesley Moss had been withdrawn.
- It was noted that a 'Friends of Hesley Moss' group has been formed. A brief summary of the aims of the group was provided, these include:
 - preservation of the moss as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) for the benefit of the local area
 - exploration of the opportunities to work with local School to enhance the provision of fieldwork activities within the science curriculum
 - working with the Parish Council and Natural England to undertake volunteer work in support of management of the moss.
- The group agreed to provide more information on the Friends of Hesley Moss and publicise this via the Rathmell Village website.
- The applicant who had made the adverse possession claim outlined his reasons for making the application and commented on other matters relating the historical use and management of the moss. A request was made for involvement in any future discussions regarding the management of the moss.
- It was reported that the Parish Council will now proceed with its discussions with Natural England as to the appropriate ongoing management of the Moss. This may be through a Stewardship agreement. Further legal advice was being taken to determine whether the Parish Council should consider an application for first registration of the moss.
- A request was made for a map of the moss and its boundaries to to be made available both in the Reading Room and if possible on the Rathmell Village website.
- The Parish Council will seek to involve in any discussion on the future of the moss all interested parties, including parishioners who own land surrounding the moss.

The meeting ended with a pie and pea supper, provided by the parish council and organised by David Rawsthorne with support during the evening from Val Rawsthorne and Elaine Illingworth. Grateful thanks are due to all three!