

MANCETTER PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Report 2004/2005

Welcome

I would like to present my report as Chairman of the Parish Council of Mancetter for the year 2004/2005 under the following headings:

A	Financial Statement
B	Traffic Issues and Police
C	Cemetery
D	Allotments
E	Environment including footpaths
F	Amenities
G	Grants
H	Planning
I	Future Targets
J	Close

A Financial Statement

Balance of Reserves at the start of the year £23,824.63

Balance of Reserves at the end of the year £31,177.16

These figures have been reached after accounting for creditors and debtors, as shown in the annual accounts.

The accounts are available for inspection by Parishioners interested but are un-audited externally until the audit takes place later in the year. Accounts have been subject to audit during the year by the Parish Councils auditor, as recommended in current legislation. The precept for the coming year has again been held to the minimum necessary for the Council to competitively carry out its development in the coming years. This was fixed at £21,000.00.

B Traffic

The Parish Council is pleased to report an improved working relationship with the new beat officer, PC Finney, who has made positive contribution to the Parish Council meetings he has attended.

Recent reports indicate a fall in crime within the Parish - possibly due to a greater presence of an officer or a Community Support Officer.

There are still frequent comments about vehicle speeds along some of the Parish roads including Nuneaton Road, Harpers Lane, Purley Chase Lane, Pipers Lane and Ridge Lane. Several areas just outside the Parish boundaries are subject to more stringent regulations of speed limits and it is perhaps time some element of stricter regulation came within Mancetter Parish boundary.

The closure of a section of Pipers Lane for road rebuilding gave cause for concern. Fortunately, after considerable pressure from the Council, the two-week closure was reduced to two and a half days. This allowed H.G.V. traffic to revert to the correct routes in a relatively short time scale.

The quarry management continue to be supportive is specific issues relating to lorries working from the quarry that are reported to them along with vehicle type, time and if possible a registration number.

C Cemetery

A new two-year contract for cemetery and churchyard maintenance has been agreed with the contractor previously holding the responsibility. The opportunity to tender for this work was answered by two other contractors but the Council felt that the existing operator offered best value.

Further debate has taken place during this year on the way in which graves have been "decorated" with personal memorabilia and the final draft of the new requirements and criteria for the care of monuments has been submitted to a printer for reproduction.

Although promised in last year's report, safety checks have still to take place for all monuments in the Cemetery and Churchyard, every effort will be made to trace the relatives of the deceased and to ask them to carry out any necessary repairs - in the strictest interpretation such repairs are the responsibility of the deed holder to the grave.

In the past remedial work on a number of graves has been carried out to improve the appearance of the Cemetery but this should not have to be the case in the future, such costs could become positively expensive.

The Council would like to thank Gerald Guild and Len Cooper for their general day-to-day tidying duties. We would also wish to thank Len Cooper for approximately five years service to the parish. The Council are now in the process of finding someone to take up appointment for handyman/woman duties in the cemetery.

D Allotments

All allotments at the Ridge Lane Site are let. A rise of 50p per allotment was agreed to be fixed for two years.

Development at the brewery adjoining the allotments has meant that the approach roadway to the allotment gate is almost all hard surface. There have been some concerns expressed about the brewery back filling a ditch, which could lead to complications with drainage in the future.

Mr. F. Hands gave up a considerable amount of time to repaint the allotment gate, which was re-hung to open in the opposite direction following the fencing of the adjoining field. Modesty prevents me from reporting on the person making and fitting the new hinge brackets/latch.

E Environment

After much debate and discussion on design a new bus shelter has been installed at one of the old sites. It is the intention of the Parish Council that other shelters in the Parish will now be replaced to the same design.

Fly tipping continues to be a nuisance, particularly Steppy Lane. There are still some litter "hot spots" particularly near to the brook.

I will ask John Arrowsmith to give a brief report on footpaths and footpath literature.

F Amenities

The Community/School Room has continued to be used for all Parish Council meetings and some special meetings such as the Quarry Liaison Group are held here.

Funding had been allocated to Ridge Lane Methodist Church to help develop the Church for combined Community use, which appears to be proving a popular activity venue.

G Grants

The Parish Council continues to fund and support the Memorial Hall and Ridge Lane Centre as appropriate to the value of £4500.00.

No further approach to support youth activity in the Parish was made during this year.

H Planning

Planning issues in the Parish have been commented upon when appropriate. At the present time the most controversial applications have been for the caravan site near Hartshill and the application for out-of-hours operation at the quarry. At this point in time the Council understand that there may be appeals submitted for both of these applications, which have initially been refused.

There has been much rumour about the development of the former school playing field area and that of the shops. The Council have suggested that a Public meeting be called to assess to the proposal and stop the ensuring rumour.

I Future Targets

- 1 The Parish Council will continue to pressure for improvements of services within the Parish.
- 2 Support for Community Hall provisions to the value of £4500 per year will continue.
- 3 Youth support will continue when and where appropriate staff is available.
- 4 Development of the cemetery including the provision of a second cremation plot area.

- 5 All monuments in the cemetery and churchyard will be tested (this proved difficult to instigate in the previous years)
- 6 Support for the maintenance of footpaths.
- 7 The provisions of further bus shelters at previous shelter sites.

J Close

The following functions/meetings have been attended by members of the Parish Council during the previous year.

- 1 Area Forum East Meetings
- 2 Warwickshire Association of Parish Council Meetings
- 3 Annual meetings of the Parish Council and N.W.B.C.
- 4 Quarry Liaison Group
- 5 Standards Committee
- 6 Other appropriate training sessions.

The Parish Council continue to be pleased with the improved contact with Borough Councillors and the improvement in Police attendance at meetings.

The Parish Council still wish for better contact with the County Councillor and have asked for a report to be given to the Council Meeting if the Councillor is unable to attend.

To this end the Parish Council has continued to afford quality time at the start of meetings for discussions with these agencies or public requests to raise matters.

Sincere thanks are offered to the Vice Chair Jean Marshall and my fellow Parish Councillors, who have been active to support and help parishioners at their own personal cost. We have at last aspired to 'full strength' with Mr. Harold Blackburn being co-opted during this year.

I sadly record the death of a previous long serving Parish Councillor, Mr. George Rathbone, who served as a reminder to us to have the interest of the Parish at heart at all times.

Jim Aldred remains our representative for the Grammer Cottages Charity. Cliff Albrighton, although now retired for the Parish Council, remains our Memorial Hall Committee representative. Harold Blackburn gives us a link with the residents group. I thank Julie Lester an on going and developing asset to the Parish.

This concludes my report for my thirteenth year in office as Chairman.