

## **Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish of Woodborough Held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at 7pm in the Village Hall, Lingwood Lane.**

### **PRESENT**

Clr Whincup, Clr Boot, Clr Charles-Jones, Clr Gough, Clr Hough, Clr Parkinson, Clr Smith, Clr Turton, Clr Wardle, the Clerk, Clr Elliott (NCC), PC Kylie Westlake (part), Mr Steven Tupper (District Commissioner for Scouting, Central Notts, part), 33 residents.

### **AGENDA & WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the purpose of the evening.

### **APOLOGIES**

Clr Berrisford had sent apologies.

### **MINUTES OF THE 2014 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH**

The minutes were approved.

### **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT (Clr Richard Whincup)**

The two significant issues for the council to grapple with remain GBC's planning initiative and the perennial matter of flooding. These will be dealt with separately in the meeting. My fellow councillors continue to be active in their given roles. Their dedication to the village of Woodborough and its inhabitants is to be commended, and invariably goes above and beyond the call of duty. Together we try to make a difference. Every 4 years your Parish Council comes up for election. Several of the current incumbents are standing down and nobody new has come forward. The PC will be looking to co-opt members, so please give a thought as to how you might be able and willing to serve the community in which you live. On a personal note, I have enjoyed, mostly, my years as chairman, but 2 terms in office is enough. My fellow councillors have always treated my position with respect and their conduct has been exemplary. Would that all chairmen were so lucky. I must also praise our clerk, Averil Marczak, for her excellent work and efforts in supporting the council. She has made my job very easy, and always works tirelessly behind the scenes. I wish the new council every success.

### **PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION**

Only 6 nominations had been received, and there would be 5 vacancies on the PC after May 11<sup>th</sup>. The PC would agree its process for co-option at its May meeting; it would have 35 working days to fill the vacancies by co-option, thereafter the parish would be given the opportunity to request an election to fill any remaining vacancies.

### **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE REPORT (PC Kylie Westlake)**

PC Anelay had stepped down from his role in Woodborough due to a bad leg, and PC Kylie Westlake had added Woodborough to her existing responsibilities. She was assisted by PCSOs John Taylor and Kirsty Shacklock. The future organisation was uncertain, with cuts to the number of PCSOs announced already, and further changes likely to follow the general election on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Community Speedwatch was undergoing changes to become Community Road Safety, with a dedicated vehicle, and extra signs that could cover a long stretch of road rather than one point.

Q: There seems to be an increasing number of heavy vehicles flouting the weight restriction. A: PC Westlake will forward to her colleagues for monitoring. Details will be followed up, and offenders can be given points and fines/offered a training course for which they have to pay.

Q: Can we have patrols by a police car as a deterrent? A: This does happen already, but the request was noted for future action.

### **NEW SCOUT HUT/COMMUNITY BUILDING (Steven Tupper, District Commissioner for Scouting, Central Notts)**

Mr Tupper acknowledged the sensitivity of the topic. His role as District Commissioner included ensuring that there were safe places for the Scout groups to meet, and also embedding Scouting in the communities where it exists. He had personally acted as the leader for the new build in Lowdham and advised that a new base for the scouts could be achieved in Woodborough *if* the community wanted it. The PCC had decided not to renew the lease and the scouts were now looking at different options. Mr Tupper recommended a community building, not a Scout hut, because (1) it was easier to get funding for the build with a broader user base and (2) a community building would generate more income to cover the building's running costs. The scouts planned to present their options to WPC, with a view to deciding the best route forward by late June. Firm plans were needed by the autumn, as this was the deadline to apply for several grant schemes. Mr Tupper concluded by saying that he would be happy to discuss plans with anyone via email.

### **FLOOD MITIGATION SCHEME (Cllr John Charles-Jones)**

The scheme had first been discussed at a Parish Council meeting in July 2014. The scheme was designed to mitigate the impact of flooding; preventing flooding was impossible. The project would mitigate water flow from the west of Woodborough, but flood water was capable of flowing from other directions. The initial presentation to the Parish Council had been made earlier than was arguably desirable due to the unexpected offer of a £50,000 grant from the Environment Agency (EA) that had to be spent by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015. The original design had allowed for 80,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water to be stored, but latest modelling from the Environment Agency suggested that a storage capacity of 30 to 40,000 m<sup>3</sup> would suffice. The stream would continue to flow at all times, but under flood conditions the ponds would fill, and that water would be released slowly back into the stream when the flood subsided. WPC had not been able to access the £50,000 grant, but the EA remained very keen on the project, and had now offered the PC a small grant to help get the required consents, which were likely to cost £6,000 and were a requirement for the project to progress (an extraction licence, a drainage licence, planning permission, a footpath diversion). The EA had proposed an agreement for WPC sign, but at its April meeting WPC had concluded that the terms were not satisfactory and a meeting would be scheduled to try to draft something more appropriate. It was important to appreciate that if there was a desire and will in the parish to tackle flooding, then this scheme was likely to be the "only show in town". Cllr Charles-Jones noted that flooding had been one of the major concerns raised by many villagers at the planning workshop in March.

Q: What is the EA's new grant offer? A: £4,000.

Q: Will silting be a problem, what maintenance will be required and who pays? A: Some ongoing maintenance will be required and the village, as beneficiary, is likely to foot the bill. The area will contain minimal water for most of the year and can be cleared out during dry periods.

Q: Another beneficiary will be those who want to develop new housing. Are we in danger of throwing away the key lever against development? (This question prompted lively debate and was countered with the opinion that it was imperative to do everything possible to try to mitigate flooding and its destructive effect on the village).

Q: The planning of the project appears to be taking place in secret and the village deserves very full consultation. A: There is no intention to rush or mislead.

### **NEW HOUSING (Patrick Smith, Woodborough Action Group)**

The Woodborough Action Group (WAG) continues to operate with its original 12 members. In July 2014 the government inspector published her report, and specified that the Gedling colliery site should be brought forward for development earlier, and that greenbelt boundaries should be given maximum protection. In September, the ACS was adopted as policy. Patrick Smith had been co-opted as a parish councillor and was now able to contribute to consultations which were open to parish councils, but not to the public. In June and November, the WAG had met with representatives of the owners of Taylors Croft. In early 2015, the WAG and members of WPC had attended 5 x ½ day workshops at GBC, covering transport, housing facilities, climate change and the natural environment, greenbelt, design and heritage. Woodborough had been very well represented at these events. The WAG had produced a leaflet to publicise the workshop run by GBC in March, which

included their new strapline 'supporting conservation, sensitive development and protecting the greenbelt'. The WAG held the view that the housing requirement could be delivered through infill. 348 villagers attended GBC's workshop, which was a fantastic result. The costs of the WAG's activities are being met by its members; WPC declined to reimburse costs incurred producing the leaflet. The legal challenge that Calverton PC had made to the ACS had been turned down; Mr Smith considered this to be a good result for Woodborough, as it gave structure to decision making. In September, the 2<sup>nd</sup> version of the local plan would identify which sites would be recommended for development. In spring 2016 there would be further hearings by the government inspector, and in summer 2016 the plan would be adopted. Information which gave clues as to the sites which might be recommended was starting to emerge, although the greenbelt study had yet to be done. The "Landscape and Visual Analysis" was now available, which classified potential sites using a traffic light system. It was of concern that the large potential site in Lambley had been classified as "red", and this might increase Woodborough's allocation of housing numbers. The WAG continued to be alert to the issues that face the village. Mr Smith concluded by thanking the team of 12, who shared the workload and contributed financially.

#### **SPEEDWATCH (Mrs Laura Wardle)**

Following Alison Blinston's resignation from WPC, I have taken over as the co-ordinator. One or two sessions have been run this year but due to my other commitments, I have not been able to get full schedules organised yet. Now that the lighter evenings and warmer weather are with us I can hopefully get the team together on a structured programme again. There have been some very exciting developments with support from the local Police Road Safety Partnership. There is a dedicated vehicle which contains a number of cameras and several large interactive speed indicators which are erected in series along a stretch of road showing drivers their speed. Training for this equipment is being organised and I am hoping to set up our first session with the new equipment shortly. Kylie Westlake, our Police Beat Manager, is as you have just heard, very proactive in this programme and I look forward to working closely with her and her PCSOs. You will have noticed the new interactive speed sign which has been installed on Lowdham Lane. This road has been notorious for speeding vehicles. We do need new volunteers so if you know anyone who would like to get involved who can spare just one hour a month please ask them to contact us.

#### **PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS**

##### **ALLOTMENTS (Cllr Richard Whincup)**

The allotments were running successfully and were fully let, with 2 new tenants this year. Thank you to Geoff Baggaley for carrying out maintenance jobs around the site.

##### **CEMETERY (Cllr Richard Whincup)**

The cemetery continues to provide a haven of tranquillity visitors and wildlife. The extension is still coming to maturity, but will not be required for several years yet. Some preparatory work has been done by me on the promised noticeboard and we have now purchased the actual border structure. I have been remiss in not pursuing the end result with the necessary vigour and intend to see the project completed in the next couple of months. Thanks to Cllr Wardle who arranges the grass cutting and has refurbished the water box, and also to Cllr Charles-Jones who is winning the fight against Japanese knotweed.

##### **FOOTPATHS (Cllr Richard Whincup on behalf of Cllr Paul Berrisford)**

Footpaths and way markers are all in good general repair. The tree which fell in the winds over footpath 14/15 was rapidly dealt with by GBC and Paul Berrisford. The re-routing of bridleway 6 to run along the driveway to Manor Farm, instead of bisecting the field, is still being objected to by the Ramblers Association. I understand that MP Mark Spencer is aware of this, and advises that the law of objection to the re-routing of foot paths/bridleways will change at the end of April 2015. We await details of how this will affect Woodborough. If any footpath/bridleways are found to be obstructed, in need of repair, or any way markers are damaged, please report them to the PC or NCC's Rights of Way team.

### **PLAYING FIELD (Cllr Richard Whincup on behalf of Cllr Paul Berrisford)**

The pavilion continues to be used by the Woodborough cricket and football teams. For a short time the field was also used by Arnold Town Ladies whilst they renegotiated their use of facilities at the ground on the A614. Woodborough Woods School allow access to the caged area adjacent to the school to all the village whilst using the playing fields for their football, cricket and athletics programme. The following works were carried out: repair to the collapsed dyke in the corner of the playing field, verti-draining or slitting of the playing field to aid drainage, legionella checking. Income from the playing fields and tennis courts was £860. Access to the playing fields is available to all. Walkers must remember to walk around the field and not diagonally across the pitch. Dog walkers are reminded not to allow their pets to foul the pitches, but to use the dog waste and general waste bins.

### **GOVERNORS' FIELD (Cllr Charles Wardle)**

Last year I reported on the fact that a group called Woodborough GREAT (Governors' Field Recreation Equipment Action Team) was forming to investigate the options for renewing the play equipment on the Governors' Field. This group has been beavering away talking to different suppliers, involving the school in consumer workshops and sending out funding letters. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Andy Pearson and his committee for doing this vital ground work. We will now be following this up and I would ask anyone who would like to get involved in this project, please make themselves known to either myself or the Clerk. We have started the refurbishment of the railings and hope to complete it this summer. New sandstone blocks are being replaced where necessary and all railings will be soundly secured and painted. We now think we have arrived at almost the optimum distribution of the Christmas lights which are at least the equal of any other surrounding villages. Geoff Parkinson and I have been involved with these for, in my case, the last 8 years and Geoff even longer but we have now decided that it is time to hand over our part of the job to the professionals. I will certainly miss our hours of gossip whilst doing this job but not the freezing hands! Once again we are indebted to the Hursthouse family for allowing us to plug the lights into their mains supply.

### **MAINTENANCE (Cllr Charles Wardle)**

Geoff Baggaley, our Village Caretaker & Lengthsman, has continued to do sterling service. It seems that the litter picking and fly tipping are becoming ever more onerous and sometimes we despair at how unthinking people can be. He continues to patrol the streets checking on blocked drains. His welding experience is a vital element of the Governors Field railing refurbishment. Unfortunately, Geoff, like the rest of us is not getting any younger and he is hoping we can find a successor in due course or at least find someone who can help share the burden.

At the village hall the major item of the year has been the refurbishment of the Ladies and Gents toilets. We are pleased at all the positive comment that has resulted. A few months ago it was suggested that we create a door from the car park straight into the bar for loading and unloading for events. This was met with universal support from everyone who had ever had to traipse stuff through the hall on the trolley. This has now been installed and is just days from completion. We have a new panic bar on the exit from the hall. We also have a new dishwasher in the kitchen. In the next few weeks all the internal doors will be replaced with light coloured ash ones and we are planning the refurbishment of the bar.

I reported last year that we had been awarded a grant by the Nottinghamshire County Council LIS scheme to re-point the churchyard wall. The work was carried out by Bonsers of Newark who did an outstanding job – at no expense to the Parish.

Finally, I would like to record our thanks to Geoff Baggaley and also to Tim Tritton who continues to look after our grass areas and hedgerows keeping them neat and tidy. It is all too easy to take their work for granted.

### **VILLAGE HALL (Cllr Geoff Parkinson)**

The hall continues to be the focal point of community life. It runs at virtually full capacity, and is used by a variety of different organisations and bodies. The PC has a policy of subsidising between 25%

and 33% of the running costs out of the precept. Excluding the cost of the toilet refurbishment (£13,548), income has exceeded expenditure. This is why there was no need to increase the hire rates for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running. There is a Village Hall working party, comprising 3 councillors, 3 members from regular user groups, Colin Fraser (sound and lighting), the caretaker, and the parish clerk. We meet about every 2 months to make recommendations to the PC on the management of the hall. I would like to thank Colin Fraser for all the hard work he has put in setting up the sound and lighting for hirers. He has improved the equipment and made its operation much simpler so hirers are now able to operate the equipment themselves. Colin is retiring from his position and the PC is looking for someone to take over. If you are interested or know someone who may be interested, please ask them to contact the clerk. I would like to thank Cllr Wardle award for all the hard work he has put into the hall. He saves the parish a huge amount of money. We have undertaken the following improvements: the refurbishment of the toilets; the refurbishment of the bar area, including an external door; a dishwasher; new internal doors which will shortly be fitted. The problem with the failure of a few chair backs appears to have been resolved by the supplier replacing all of the chair backs. The Village Hall, built in 1974, has been renovated and I hope that you will agree that it is now looking very smart and is as attractive as any hall in the area. The parish council is very proud of the hall and welcomes any ideas on how it can be further improved.

### **PLANNING (Cllr Jan Turton & Cllr Patrick Smith)**

Cllr Turton: planning is a regular agenda item and varies from straightforward minor extensions to major, contentious and challenging issues. The PC can only comment on the plans presented. Our observations and recommendations must come within planning law and are forwarded to GBC, who make the final decisions. We hope that Gedling are listening more. A reminder that no one has a right to a view, unless they own that view. The planning group have attended and spent many hours/days at seminars regarding the ACS. Any of the SHLAA sites could be developed at any time prior to the adoption of the ACS, if a developer submitted an application through the normal planning procedure. Latterly, I have been in communication with David Spencer, the enforcement officer for Gedling. He is investigating building work to the rear of 101 Lowdham Lane, which has taken place without planning permission. Work has stopped while discussions take place. The Nags Head have felled trees in the conservation area without permission. I am informed that new trees will be planted, but this doesn't help neighbours who have lost their privacy for now. The old Co-op site: I have contacted GBC who have proved to be most unhelpful in not wanting to take enforcement action. The owner of the site has been contacted and asked to make the site secure and tidy, but has played for time and passes some blame onto the occupants of the cottages, who dump their building materials/rubbish on the land. GBC do have the power under the Enforcement in Respect of Untidy Land (section 215 notices) Town and Country Planning Act 1990. They could prosecute for non-compliance, carry out the work and recover costs up to £1,000. They are reluctant to do this, so the site remains derelict. As your parish council, we are now following the legal path of complaint, firstly to the Chief Executive and then if no action to the ombudsman. Stop press - today I have heard that GBC plan to take action – watch this space!

Cllr Smith: WPC has had an opportunity to nominate “local green spaces” within the village and has included Taylors Croft paddock within the list of spaces that we would like to see preserved, provided landowners are in agreement. The PC is in correspondence with GBC regarding the conservation area, which was defined in 1974 and extended in 1999. No management plan has ever been produced for Woodborough, and the PC believes that the conservation area appraisal and management plan must be in place before the 2<sup>nd</sup> iteration of the Local Planning Document. The Woodborough TPO is very out of date and enforcement action is not taken due to lack of up-to-date information. GBC know that this is not an acceptable position. WPC is in discussion with GBC regarding the joint funding of the conservation area appraisal and has asked that the TPO be included within this remit, to be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

### **FINANCIAL SUMMARY (Clerk)**

WPC is in a healthy financial position. This year we have run at a surplus. Income is up by 19%, the key drivers being cemetery fees and grants. At the cemetery, we received payment for 3 plots and 2 interment fees from people who had moved away from the village and these are charged at a higher

rate. The PC successfully attracted grants from NCC's Local Improvement Scheme for the churchyard wall restoration (£12,912) and the lengthsman scheme (£1,200), under which the parish takes on more responsibility for its own highways and verges. Expenditure increased by 32%. I will highlight the areas where there is a significant variance year on year. Allotments: profits from the allotments are paid to Woodborough Charities and we rarely incur significant expenditure. This year tree works were required for safety reasons (£450), and we also upgraded the parking bay (£302). Churchyard –the restoration to the wall was covered in full by the NCC grant (£12,912). Subscriptions and donations – these include the PC's donation to Woodborough in Bloom, the WCA, the poppy wreath and also membership of NALC and SLCC. This figure is down year on year, as last year we made an additional donation to the WCA for defibrillators. The PC made substantial savings by moving its insurance policy to Zurich this year. Playing fields: this year we spent £1,662 starting the refurbishment of the railings, and also carried out works to repair the dyke on the playing field (£735). Village Hall: this year expenditure increased due to the toilet refurbishment (£13,548). We have also spent £1,606 on the purchase and installation of a dishwasher, and £1,421 to order new internal doors. Woodborough Charities: last year we forwarded 3 years' worth of contribution to the Charities. The money had been held back since 2011 while the trustees changed. We finish the year end with £80,000 in the bank.

### **COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT (Cllr Boyd Elliott)**

Cllr Elliott thanked Cllr Whincup and the Woodborough members for their work and support. Following inadequate gritting on Boxing Day, Cllr Elliott had ensured that the number 47 bus route was now on a priority list. Cllr Elliott could fund two new blue grit bins, but the parish would have the responsibility to keep them filled. Q: more waste bins were needed in the village.

### **DISTRICT REPORT (Cllr John Boot)**

After May's election, Woodborough would be represented as half of the new Dumbles Ward, and Cllr Boot hoped that the new level of representation would be satisfactory. The work done by Patrick Smith and the WAG is truly remarkable, getting to grips with highly technical information, and helping to get the public involved. GBC regard Woodborough very highly. With regard to progressing the conservation area review, GBC appear to be on the verge of appointing someone. The greenbelt assessment was due shortly. Cllr Boot concluded by urging all villagers to be vigilant with regards to development.

Cllr Whincup thanked Cllr Boot for his long service as a borough councillor, first for Woodthorpe, and latterly for Woodborough.

### **WOODBOROUGH IN BLOOM (Mrs Jan Turton)**

Elizabeth, Jane and I enjoy our work for W in B and wish to continue along with the help and support of the WCA and the villagers to maintain the high standard achieved when we won the Best Kept Village Competition. Last summer our colour scheme was white for peace and red as we commemorated the start of World War I. Sadly, many of the big red geraniums were stolen. This was clearly theft, as they were removed carefully not just vandalised, so disheartening for those who had done the initial planting. The winter was mild, the white heathers soon established and early spring saw the bulbs peeping through, and the pansies in full colour. The towers outside the Village Hall were great fun as this year the preschool children helped me, no designer planting as they chose their own colour pansy. Financially we are in a more secure position after an appeal last summer to the organisations, clubs and groups in the village who are most generous with their response. W in B is fully supported by the parish council, without whom we would not be able to maintain such a colourful and beautiful village. The bowser is now 10 years old and will need attention, the planters are beginning to rot and some will need replacing next year. Graham Weatherall can be seen around the village with the Cuprinol, as he carefully maintains the planters. Thank you Graham. Thanks also go to Rob Dixon and Cllr Charles-Jones who manage to place the heavy hanging baskets on the brackets and remove them at the end of the season. The bowser will be out again from June 1 after its annual service by Robert Hanson, watering the summer bedding under the guidance of Paul Reed. Please be understanding of the team as the bowser isn't the easiest of objects to manoeuvre and the plants do need water. It may block the road for 5 minutes, but please be patient. We are always

looking for new people to add to the rota and if your car has a tow bar and you would be willing to help please contact Paul. An enormous thank you to all who help.

This year, Woodborough in Bloom is 10 years old and we held a very successful cheese and wine evening to celebrate. We raised £700 and a special thank you goes to Paul Reed and John Hoyland.

### **WOODBOROUGH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (Mrs Laura Wardle)**

If you listened to what I said this time last year, you probably wouldn't expect me to be here presenting this report. My intention was to resign at this year's Community Association AGM – purely because after nearly six years as Chairman I felt it was time for new blood. Nobody has offered to take up the challenge so I am still here! The events of this past year have been pretty much as usual. The over 60s coach trips are doing really well with trips last year to The National Arboretum and Lichfield in May followed by a most enjoyable Tour of the Derbyshire Dales. This year's first planned trip is going to Cromford and Buxton and includes a boat trip down the canal. The Autumn trippers will go to Oxford. Carol Tansley manages these trips really well and my thanks go to her for all her hard work. Heroes and Villains was the theme for last year's Scarecrow week. We had some very imaginative entries featuring a Childcatcher – the favourite, a few Spidermen and James Bond to name just a few. Our thanks go to Stewart and Liz Nicholas for their help and imagination and to Ken and Michelle at the Nags Head for their support. It was their final event of the year as Landlords at the Nags Head. This year, the Nags Head, under the new management of Clive and Kim Wisdom, have been more proactive with the event, incorporating it into their Easter programme. There was no particular theme but everybody's inventiveness came out with some great play on the word "Scarecrow". My personal favourite, which was also the winner, was the "Crowbar" on Main Street. It was very amusing especially the detail of the bar menu. The downhill skier on a roof on Shelt Hill made me jump too – very scary on a dusky evening! You can see images of all the entries on our website. At this point I will put in a plug for Eric Simpson who keeps the website updated with all our events.

Street Market was wet! A real shame as, although people came, they didn't stay long. It is, however, one of our main fundraisers so it was good to know that we raised over £500. The Bouncy Castle was popular though Kate and Bob Newton spent a lot of time mopping the water off it. We introduced a Fun Dog Show too which in spite of the contestants looking like drowned rats, was a great success. There are one or two extra features planned for this year – traditional sword dancers and a Tai Kwando display so we hope the event will go from strength to strength. Our August Pig Roast at the Nags Head followed – and again the weather didn't go our way – it was cold and dull. Tim and Stewart spent the day cooking the pig and were joined by a stalwart team of servers. We didn't make a loss but it wasn't the usual success which is a shame because it was the first WCA event involving Clive and Kim at the Nags Head.

Our plans for the Autumn Community Cinema film night were sadly foiled by the providers of the film equipment and we had to cancel. The projector and screen are now back being managed by Newark & Sherwood Council and stored at Lowdham so hopefully our forthcoming events will not suffer. Our Spring films were "How to Train Your Dragon II" in the afternoon – a disappointing turn out – and in the evening "The Imitation Game". This was a full house. We don't as yet seem to have the knack of choosing 2 popular films at once.

I love fireworks! Last year's display was better than ever. Monty and Eric set them up and let them off with great efficiency. One of the spectators asked why she had bothered going all the way to Disneyland when our fireworks were much better! It was an excellent turnout but without the frightening crush of the previous year and everybody gave generously to the very successful bucket collection. That coupled with the contribution from the Four Bells meant we easily covered our outgoings. Thank you to all who help on that night.

We welcomed Revival back to the village in December but with a slightly smaller audience than usual. But the music and dancing was still excellent. Many have asked if we can have a return visit from Hot House, the Youth Big Band, and we have booked them for this coming December.

Carols round the Beacon was lovely. It was a dry and cold night with a clear star filled sky – perfect for the event and there was a good turnout of carol singers, ably accompanied by Ellie Pearce. We dished out mulled wine and mince pies which were very welcome. Thank you to the team who set up the gazebo and sound system and to a certain gentleman dressed in red.

The Annual Over 65s' New Year Party was well attended this year. We are indebted to Margaret Briggs and her team who look after the catering. The guests sang along to numbers from the 60s ably accompanied by Ellie Pearce. They were then tested by a quiz and the evening ended with the raffle draw. This event is sponsored by the Samuel Eden Trust and we are very appreciative of their support.

Although we were not allowed to enter the Best Kept Village competition last year we still organised a team to spend some time cleaning and weed killing in the village. We are grateful for the small but willing group of volunteers for this. Due to a rule change, we are unexpectedly eligible to enter Best Kept Village this year so, following an early session of weed killing – many thanks, by the way, to John Charles-Jones for supplying the weed killer and to Graham Weatherall and Bob Taylor for the dispensing of same, it will be all hands to the pump for the great village tidy up which is planned for May 9th - we would welcome more volunteers. I think the village is looking in good shape apart from the few obvious places – we may be able to pull it off again.

I am disappointed that we are still without a village shop and Post Office. It is an important focal point for the village and many of our event ticket sales were handled through that facility. We didn't produce our annual calendar this year because of that. There is a Steering Committee waiting in the background as soon as the green light is given by the purchasers and we are just keeping our fingers crossed that something will happen soon. Thank you to the village businesses; the two pubs who help us host our events and, like the other businesses, TSW, Timmermans, Woodborough Hall, Challenge Training and many others outside the village, donate raffle prizes.

I would like to say a special big thank you to the committee members and officers who have worked alongside me this year. Liz as Vice Chairman has been unfaltering in her support and her measured advice. Graham has been a brilliant Treasurer. Anna has been a massive help with the minutes. We are delighted to welcome Ros Holford to our team as our new Minute Secretary.

Financially, the Community Association is in good health but I am concerned that we have welcomed very few new volunteers to our ranks in spite of regular appeals for more help. The general opinion among us here is that if a sub-committee could be formed for each individual event then less effort is required to put them on. That is without doubt the best way forward but we need people – young people – to come forward to help us with this. The Association has now been in existence for 50 years and it would be a great shame to see it die but die it will unless we have new, able volunteers.

This really will be my last address as Chairman – I have done nearly 6 years now. Unless someone comes forward this could be the last year of Woodborough Community Association.

#### **QUESTION & ANSWER/OPEN SESSION**

- Could new village signs be funded? A: the new PC can review.
- A community minibus, funded by the Samuel Eden Trust, is available and use of it can be booked through the school.
- I really hope that the District Commissioner's comments will be supported, and that the uniformed groups can once again have a proper home in the village.
- Thank you to the parish Council on behalf of the village, for giving up so much time, their efforts are not always appreciated, but I am grateful.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm by thanking all in attendance.