

IT'S CHRISTMAS!
SUTTON-UNDER-WHITESTONECLIFFE PARISH
COUNCIL NEWSLETTER 2015



The Parish Council
and Father Christmas
invite you
to
sing carols and songs
sip mulled wine
sup hot soup
on

Sunday December 20th
5.00 pm by the Crabmill

with the Royal British Legion Band

There will be a collection for the Royal British Legion
The Royal British Legion is entirely self-supporting so please consider a donation



And you'll need a torch to see your song sheets!

If the weather is inclement, the Village Hall will be the venue

HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM YOUR PARISH COUNCIL!

We hope you find our Newsletter informative. Part of the Newsletter tells you what the Parish Council has worked on during the year, as you would expect. We have dealt with parishioners' concerns, liaison and communication of information, financial matters, new legal requirements under the Transparency Code for Smaller Councils and the required website, planning applications, the appearance of the parish, a proposal for a community defibrillator, surgeries for parishioners, many issues relating to the A170, including the traffic passing through the village and up to Sutton Bank, the Vehicle Activated Signs to support the speed limit, lorries getting stuck on the Bank, footpaths on the main road, other footpaths, dog-fouling and hedges.

Towards the end of the Newsletter, we have also included some background information about the place of Parish Councils, and ours in particular, in the hierarchy of local government in England. Another central government policy has thrown the work of small local councils into high relief. The Localism Act 2011 is an Act of Parliament that changes the powers of local government in England. The aim of the act is to facilitate the devolution of decision-making powers from central government control to individuals and communities. There needs to be a well-organised and strong local council, with training and experience, in place to meet the demands and opportunities of localism as they arise. From the Newsletter, we would like you to see something of the Parish Council's necessary place in the network of power, for the protection and improvement of our local way of life.

You may not be aware but in March the Sutton-under-Whitstonecliffe Parish Council almost ceased to exist. There are six members and the Chairman. For a meeting to be quorate - legally big enough to be able to make decisions - there must be three members present. Only the successful co-option of two new members in March saved the Parish Council and its powers on behalf of local people, otherwise Hambleton District Council would have taken over. There would have been no local body to speak for local people.

At the election in May 2014, the membership of the Parish Council became more solid. There were enough parishioners standing as candidates to fill the vacancies. In the last few months, however, we have once again lost councillors who became unable to serve because of changing circumstances, and so we now have two new vacancies.

There is a lot to know and learn, but a group of Councillors willing to grasp the responsibilities and rights of a small local council can see not just what needs to be done but what can be done for our Parish. If we say nothing for ourselves, someone else will speak for us, whether we like it or not. The more of us who take a turn on behalf of the Parish, the stronger will be our voice in the process of government. We hope the information towards the back of the Newsletter raises your interest in becoming a Parish Councillor, whatever your interests and skills. There needs to be a good mix! If you can see yourself involved, please take a first step - contact the Clerk:

clerk@suttonunderwhitstonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk

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What the Parish Council has been doing in 2015

You can check the Agendas and Minutes of every meeting on the notice board and on the website www.suttonunderwhitestonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk, or come to the Annual Parish Meeting in May, to hear the Chairman's report for a summary of events and actions from the previous financial year. You can see that report on the website too. And of course, you are welcome at every meeting to listen to the discussion as it happens and to speak to the Council during a ten minute slot at the beginning.

Monthly meetings (not August) have some core agenda items. County Councillor Gareth Dadd reports to us from North Yorkshire CC, District Councillor Bob Baker from Hambleton DC and a police representative speaks for the NY Police, and they receive information from us. Sub-Committees report on what they have done. The Clerk reports on actions completed, correspondence sent and received, and passes on information from North Yorkshire CC, Hambleton DC, National Association of Local Councils NALC, and Yorkshire Local Councils Associations YLCA - and elsewhere. The Parish Council representative on the Village Hall Committee makes a report. So there is a two-way communication channel up, down and sideways. Finances are reported and approved; the precept which Hambleton DC collects for us has to be budgeted, discussed and approved. The Parish Council employs the Clerk so employment costs are discussed.

After the routine items, the agenda will list special events for discussion and subsequent review - for example, a village spring-clean or arrangements for singing at Christmas. And if you have put an issue to a Councillor which is to be discussed, that will be on the agenda.

Planning applications are an important agenda item. These come to the Parish Council for consideration and comment. The Parish Council can't pass or veto plans but we make comments on applications with the benefit of detailed local knowledge before decisions are taken by Hambleton DC or North Yorkshire CC. Plans submitted in the Parish this year have included some tree surgery, a new agricultural barn, alterations to dwellings, and holiday accommodation, amongst others.

One application was from outside the Parish but we viewed it because it could affect us. This was the resubmission of an application for a caravan site at Hollin Barn on the A170 between the village and the turn-off to Bagby. The renewed application was for thirty-four caravans. The proposed site would have a possible occupancy rate one-third the size of our whole Parish, with a corresponding number of cars. The Parish Council objected. The application was refused by Hambleton District Council principally because of the site's position on a fast stretch of the main road.



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Planning Applications in a Conservation Area have special rules. The majority of Sutton-under-Whitestonecliffe lies inside a Conservation Area. You need to know this if you intend to do work on your property, on the house or the garden. A Conservation Area is *an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Buildings and trees within a Conservation Area are subject to tighter planning controls than those outside such an area.* Before you submit your plans, you can get advice from Hambleton District Council by calling the Planning Policy & Conservation Officer on 01609 779977 or emailing planning@hambleton.gov.uk

There are three main sub-committees of the Parish Council. These are concerned with the running of the Council. One is the Employment Sub-Committee. The Parish Council employs the Clerk so we have to know about existing employment law and any future changes to it. The second is the Finance Sub-Committee. The Parish Council budgets and accounts for the precept, the locally-set amount of the Council Tax, collected from us all by Hambleton District Council. The Parish Council receives the money in two stages during the year. The Parish Council can also receive donations for specific purposes.

The third main sub-committee is the Traffic Management Group, formed three years ago. The TMG was set up to tackle the problems to the village caused by 35,000 vehicles a week passing through our Parish along the main A170, including many large HGVs. You've recently had a leaflet to update you, summarising what we have done in 2015 and what we hope to achieve going into 2016. Our main aim is reduce the danger to people and property, the frequent and repeated damage to the road, walls and hedges of parishioners' properties, and the delays caused by congestion. The TMG has a list of all incidents it hears about, relying on parishioners and others to let us know what they have seen. North Yorkshire Police report to Parish Council meetings, providing a list of incidents they attend on Sutton Bank and we add those to our log. We are sure there are incidents that are not reported so the full extent of the problems is probably not recorded.

Please send reports of traffic incidents on the A170, around Sutton Bank and in the Parish. Email clerk@suttonunderwhitestonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk or use the Contact Us form on the website www.suttonunderwhitestonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk, or to the Clerk on 01845 522401. If you were able to see registration plates and or hauliers' names, or if you could suggest the country of origin, please include them.

The TMG would welcome you as a member! You don't need to be a Parish Councillor to serve. Do join us - details from the Clerk.

The Parish Council thanks donors for helping fund the activities of the TMG.

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More road news

The Parish Council has tackled the problem of speeding traffic through the village. Some vehicles break the 30 mph speed limit. We have rented a Vehicle Activated Sign for siting in the village for three periods of six weeks in a twelve-month period. It does work! The average speed goes down. You can help with this. Did you know that you can report a speeding offence that you witness? The Speed Concern Report form is available on the North Yorkshire CC web site:

<http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/25535/Road-safety---speed-concerns>

For a paper copy of a form to complete, contact any Parish Councillor.

The Parish Council now buys grit for the bins by the road. We used to have a contract with North Yorkshire CC to fill them for £75 a bin, but it's more economical to top them up when needed. So if they're low please let a Parish Councillor know or use the Contact Us form on the website.

The Parish Council raised the poor condition of the footpaths through the Parish with North Yorkshire CC, sending a lot of photographs as evidence. We're happy to report that NYCC say the footpaths will be repaired during the financial year 2016/2017.

If you have plants that hang over the footpath or are beside road signs, please keep them trimmed for access and safety.

The Sutton Hall grass verge has had a flowery facelift. The Parish Council has contributed to the planting.

The Parish Council is grateful for the generous donation of a bench for resting aching legs. It will be sited on the grass verge in front of Sutton Hall for all to enjoy.

To the people whose voluntary work keeps the Parish looking tidy, thank you! This has included painting the railings next to the beck on Cross Hills and giving the verges in the area a make-over. Litter has been regularly picked up, and a few people cut the grass on common land. We all benefit from your work and passion in keeping the Parish looking good.



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Useful information

To report any maintenance or safety issues you spot in the Parish, if you are online go to the websites for North Yorkshire County Council, Hambleton District Council, or Sutton-under-Whitstonecliffe Parish Council, which has links to North Yorkshire CC and Hambleton CC at <http://www.suttonunderwhitstonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk> If you are not online and don't use a computer, or if you prefer to speak to someone, inform a Parish Councillor in person or by telephone. Contact numbers are on the notice board. The Chairman's and the Clerk's telephone number are on the back of this Newsletter.

Problems with roads, potholes, drains, footways, kerbs, trees or hedges, go to North Yorkshire CC's website. Click on the Report It button or go to <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/28237/Report-it-online> You can also use <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/30550/Public-notice> for road works information. NYCC are planning to add weather-related closures, if a road were blocked by snow or flood. You can find out about which roads will be gritted and by what time in the mornings, and about grit bins, live weather cameras and community self-help at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/27279/Winter-service>

Problems with street lights, rubbish collections and recycling, emergencies like lost and found dogs, and roads go to the <http://www.hambleton.gov.uk> home page. The link for faulty lights is http://www.hambleton.gov.uk/info/20148/lighting/301/street_lighting If you are able to get near the faulty light, make a note of its number and add that to your report.

There is a Village Oil Club. Membership of the Oil Club is free, and current members save about 10% or more on their heating oil. Deliveries are from Tate Oils. To save on oil costs, contact Brett Edgeworth on swc.oil@yahoo.co.uk

You can receive local police information from Community Messaging. If you would like to be on an email list to receive updated information about police activity in our area, please let the Clerk have your email address. If you don't use email, please ring the Clerk to arrange a telephone link with someone who receives the emails.

Rubbish collections by Hambleton DC will change in March 2016. Extra materials for recycling will be collected from your house. You have had some information about this from HDC. A third wheelie bin, black with a blue lid, will be distributed to all homes during February. When that service is introduced, the recycling banks behind the Whitstonecliffe Inn will be removed. Private charity textile banks will remain.

Congratulations to Thirsk Tourist Information Centre on winning the White Rose Visitor Information Award. As the only completely self-supporting Information Centre in the county, their achievement is even more admirable. Denise Sparks and Blanche Carney, two village residents, are part of the winning team.

Thanks to Ian Woodhead for the donation of the Christmas tree.

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Parish Council proposal for a village defibrillator

The Parish Council have investigated with the assistance of Yorkshire Ambulance Service the possible benefits and costs of buying and installing a defibrillator for the Parish. A cPAD, a Community Access Defibrillator, is a device to help someone who may have had a heart attack. Perhaps you have seen the yellow wall cabinets in villages by the road, in shopping centres and other public places.

Defibrillators may save a life as part of basic first aid, before paramedic help arrives. Yorkshire Ambulance Service instigated a plan to install a hundred in the County. There are now about three hundred in place. We are told that seven or eight of them have been used. When the emergency ambulance is called on 999, the operator, who has the location of all cPADs, will first despatch the ambulance, and then talk the caller through collecting the defibrillator and using it. There is no danger whatever of hurting either the user or the patient, nor can anyone put themselves at risk of prosecution.

Sutton-under-Whitstonecliffe is not remote from a town, but it is in a special situation along the A170, where there can be obstacles to the rapid arrival of an ambulance. Early and efficient first aid is always essential, and a defibrillator is an extra support in an emergency. Both parishioners and passing traffic could benefit from access to a cPAD.

The Parish Council proposes installing a defibrillator on the west-facing wall of the Whitstonecliffe Inn, kindly agreed by the owners, where passing drivers could see it easily. Anyone collecting it could safely park their car.

It will cost in the region of £1,615 plus VAT to buy the equipment, have it installed and to pay YAS for an awareness session for around twenty people. There are some low maintenance costs, of around £10 a year, which we propose would be met from the precept.

We hope you agree that this is a responsible community project. May we have your suggestions about funding this community asset? Perhaps you can offer fund-raising activities. We would welcome donations. Sponsorship might also be a funding option. Pass your ideas to a Parish Councillor or to the Clerk:

clerk@suttonunderwhitstonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk



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Who is on the Parish Council

There are five people currently serving on the Parish Council. The Local Government Elections were held in May 2015 at the same time as the General Election.

It has been a year of change.

In January Catherine Lascelles resigned and John Goodall retired after thirty years service. We wish them well.

We say thank you to retiring Councillor Jan Smith for her nine years service, Councillor Jean Winter, who stood down at the election after six years, and Vice-Chairman Brett Edgeworth who was re-elected but then had to resign owing to changed work commitments.

We said hello in March to new Councillors Barbara Sharp and John Sharp, and in May to Jim Dickinson, Alison Pollard, and Gill Thomas. In November we welcomed Blanche Carney.

With regret we have said goodbye to John and Barbara Sharp who are moving house. We note particularly John's work on the Traffic Management Sub-Committee.

Chairman Caroline Artingstoll was re-elected for another term.

Clerk to the Council Iris de Wet continues to steer and record Parish Council proceedings and we thank her warmly for her careful work.

In this period of changing membership the steady presence of Clerk and Chairman is particularly valuable.



Would you like to serve a term on the Parish Council?

There are now two vacancies on the Parish Council. Even if you have never thought of yourself in such a role, you can be sure you will have something to contribute, as you have the good of the Parish at heart.

If you are interested to take part in local government and wish to stand, please contact the Clerk.

clerk@suttonunderwhitestonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk

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What the Parish Council has done to fulfil new legal obligations

The last Coalition Government's policy of decentralisation from Westminster expands devolved powers to local regions. This has cascaded down to us in two main areas for action.

The Localism Act

In 2011 the Department for Communities and Local Government published A plain English guide to the Localism Act. The foreword explains: *The Localism Act sets out a series of measures with the potential to achieve a substantial and lasting shift in power away from central government and towards local people. They include: new freedoms and flexibilities for local government; new rights and powers for communities and individuals; reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective, and reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally.*

This means us!

The Transparency Code for Smaller Councils

From 1st July 2015, all smaller Parish Councils have had to publish certain information on a designated website. The Coalition Government published the Local government transparency code 2015. The Code supports government policy to place more power locally into citizens' hands to increase democratic accountability. It will make it easier for local people to contribute to the local decision-making process and help shape public services.

This means us, as well!

The Parish Council has set up a new website, replacing the website you may have accessed via the Hambleton District Council, which includes all the information the law requires. We have in a timely manner extended our already efficient recording and reporting into a clear and transparent website format. Our official website name reflects the status of parish councils as the first tier of national government. The website is active and running well. Do make yourself familiar with it, as a first port of call for information about what your Parish Council has done, what it proposes to do, for budget information, for news of Parish Council activities, for Councillor contact information, for links to Hambleton DC, North Yorkshire CC, the Village Hall and to contact the Parish Council.

www.suttonunderwhitestonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk

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How the Parish Council fits in the pattern of local government

The Parish Council is the first tier of government in a national structure. Our role is to protect and improve the quality of life in the Parish of Sutton-under-Whitestonecliffe.

The Parish of Sutton-under-Whitestonecliffe extends beyond the main settlement of the village of the same name. You can see a map of the Parish on the Parish Council website.

The Parish is a civil parish, distinct from a Church of England parish - which has a parochial church council.

The population of the village of Sutton-under-Whitestonecliffe at the 2011 census was two hundred and ninety-seven. In the Parish there are one hundred and twenty-eight properties. In the Parish currently there are in the region of two hundred and sixty-nine electors.

Parish Councils have powers on the same tier as town councils, even though town councils may operate in larger communities.

Our Parish is one of seven hundred and fifty-six in North Yorkshire. Most of these have parish councils, but not all. Some just have parish meetings. Others, where parishioners have not stood for election, have let their local powers lapse. The parish tier of government then passes to Hambleton, the District Council.

The North Yorkshire parishes are divided into Districts: Craven, Harrogate, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough, Selby, the two National Park Authorities - North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales, York City Council, and our own Hambleton District Council.

We are one of twenty-five villages in the Bagby and Thorntons Ward of Hambleton District Council. Bob Baker is our Conservative Hambleton District Councillor. He reports to our meetings.

The next tier of government is North Yorkshire County Council, based at County Hall in Northallerton. Gareth Dadd is our Conservative County Councillor and Deputy Leader of North Yorkshire County Council and he also reports to our meetings.

At Westminster our representative in the House of Commons is Conservative Member of Parliament for Thirsk and Malton, Kevin Hollinrake.

Our representative in the European Parliament, based in Brussels, is Timothy Kirkhope, Conservative MEP for Yorkshire and The Humber.

There is a "sideways" network of support for the Parish Council from NALC, National Association of Local Councils, and YLCA, Yorkshire Local Councils Associations.

Our Parish Council is a civil local authority. It is an elected corporate body representing parishioners' interests at District and at County level. Our Chairman is Caroline Artingstoll, and our Clerk is Iris de Wet.

**SUTTON-UNDER-WHITESTONECLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL
NEWSLETTER 2015**

You are welcome to attend

Parish Council Meetings

2016

in the Village Hall at 7.15

with ten minutes at the start set aside for you to speak to the Council if you wish

January 11th
February 8th
March 14th
April 11th
May 9th
June 13th
July 11th
August - no meeting
September 12th
October 10th
November 14th
December 12th

and occasional "surgeries" in the Village Hall to coincide with Saturday coffee mornings, if more convenient to you

Contact

Chairman Caroline Artingstoll 01845 597347

Clerk Iris de Wet 01845 522401

clerk@suttonunderwhitestonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk



You can also read this Newsletter on our website
www.suttonunderwhitestonecliffeparishcouncil.gov.uk

Happy



Christmas,



Everybody!