

# SADBERGE PARISH COUNCIL

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## **Sadberge Parish Council Chair's Report to the Sadberge Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006**

Sadberge Parish Council (SPC) has carried out its duties in dealing with public issues including the consideration of fourteen planning applications, traffic problems, possible development of the village, care and up-keep of the parish property and land, and other issues brought to its attention by residents, as reported below for the year May 2005 – May 2006.

A further feature of our work this year has been to initiate consultation with residents on a range of issues affecting the strategic development of the village in compiling a Parish Plan, for which we were successful in gaining a grant from Tees Valley Rural Community Council to carry out the work.

### **1. Traffic**

- 1.1 The speed, volume and weight of some of the vehicles using the village roads remain a great concern of villagers. Confirmation that a Grade Separated Junction will be built at Long Newton in 2007. It is hoped that this new junction will alleviate some of the rush hour congestion in Sadberge.
- 1.2 Plans discussed in September to put in a 40mph section to act as a buffer on roads north and south of the village have not yet come to fruition. Following the first of proposals discussed with Darlington Borough Council (DBC), ripple print has been put on these road surfaces, and speed visors have operated on all roads from time to time, all of which have had some positive effect, but, it is felt, have made no significant improvements, and therefore further remedies continue to be sought.
- 1.3 In October, the council was pleased to welcome John Ray and Dave Winstanley, officers from Darlington Borough Council, to help further these discussions (which remain on-going), including parking, especially at the lay by in front of the phone box on the green.
- 1.4 We awaited the results of the Halcrow survey, carried out before the building of the new slip road. When the report finally arrived, on scrutiny, it was found to be misleading in its interpretation of statistics. This document and all of these discussions are now part of the consultation with residents and officers and other interested parties in the Parish Plan project.

### **2. Development**

- 2.1 Local schools - Plans to sell the 'footprint' of Sadberge Primary School (not the playing fields) for residential development have been discussed. Sadberge Parish Council has asked Darlington Borough Council for further consultation on this.
- 2.2 Sadberge Parish Council supported SHARE the action group working to keep Hurworth School open.
- 2.3 Reservoir Site - Sadberge Parish Council was pleased to accept the donation of the beacon from the site. This has significantly, become the logo of the Parish Plan. Current plans are to landscape the reservoir, filling it with material from the site, with no additional material. We await further consultation with Northumbrian Water.

### **3. Care and upkeep of village land and property**

On the Risk Assessment and Annual Inspection of the village land and property carried out by SPC, the following items were noted –

- 3.1 Footpath outside the Three Tuns  
The ownership of this footpath, and therefore subsequent responsibility for its repair, proved difficult to ascertain. It was discussed at length, and all agreed it was in a bad state of repair. Finally, Darlington Borough Council arranged for this to be done at their expense, as a one-off action that did not assume responsibility in the future.
- 3.2 Three cherry trees have been donated to replace the ones that died, and a further two trees have been planted opposite the Buck Inn.
- 3.3 Bushes opposite the Buck Inn have been cut very low, as there was evidence to suggest they were used by thieves for cover to steal from cars parked near Richmond Cottages.
- 3.4 Re: the poor state of the garages opposite Pleasant View – communication between the owner's insurers and SPC as to the cause of the damage to these outbuildings has, to date, not resolved details of responsibility. The situation has made the council very aware of possible future difficulties self-seeded trees may cause, and is currently considering action with the one outside the Buck Inn.
- 3.5 Consultations with tree specialists, private and from DBC, continue regarding the care of trees on the village green, including the central oak tree.
- 3.6 Deterioration of the posts and railings on the path at the rear of the church – these have now been repaired by DBC.
- 3.7 The ditch at Spring Garth has been cleared.
- 3.8 Village benches have been repaired.

### **4. Further Improvements and issues**

- 4.1 Village Green posts - much discussion followed the recommendations from the last Parish Meeting. The main concern of the council was that it should act prudently and according to Best Value principles when dealing with public money. The cost of the new railings was considered alongside the requests from residents, and their apparent dissatisfaction with the appearance of the village, and the budget plan. Subsequently the new railings were installed earlier this year. Plans to put in concrete flower tubs at the edge of the village green adjacent to Hillside View are in hand.
- 4.2 There are more daffodils on village green areas this year, by kind donation secured by Cllr Brian Jones and planted by Alastair Mackenzie.
- 4.3 Improvements in grass cutting have been welcomed.
- 4.4 Dog fouling on pavements becomes an unsightly nuisance from time to time; in response to requests to alleviate the subsequent problems, more dog litter bins have been installed.
- 4.5 Responding to requests from residents, a Christmas tree was erected on the village green. The council received much support for this, both verbally and financially and intends to make it an annual feature.

### **5. Other concerns**

- 5.1 At the Public Enquiry March 2005, the occupant of the caravan on the land south of the village on Middleton Road was given 18 months to find an alternative site for his caravan, as the current arrangement was contravening the planning laws. This will come into force October 2006.

- 5.2 With news of travellers setting up on public land elsewhere in the town, councillors were mindful of the concerns of residents and took steps to prevent this possibility occurring on the Town Farm Field by asking DBC to erect a moveable post at the entrance, preventing vehicular access, but remaining accessible to grass cutters.
- 5.3 In November Arriva dispelled rumours that there were to be changes to the bus service through Sadberge, as we know, that has not proved the case. We have welcomed the positive developments on this vital issue for residents. SPC is grateful to Cllr Jones for his vociferous and tenacious support at DBC as to the plight of rural residents and their reliance on public transport.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Parish Council's clerk, Alastair Mackenzie, has been the leading instigator of the Parish Plan project, which, I believe, is an effective and much needed opportunity to help determine the future of the village, in, what we recognise, are rapidly changing times.  
In this, and in all his work, the council appreciates Alastair's conscientiousness, his vision and skills.
- 6.2 Sadberge Parish plan – a separate report is available.
- 6.3 The council has met fourteen times during the past year - on behalf of residents may I thank Councillors for their attendance and hard work for the well-being of the village.

**Millie Scaife**  
**Chair of Sadberge Parish Council**