



Welcome to Walton Parish Council's first newsletter of 2024

Parish Council Matters

Parish Precept – At its February meeting the Parish Council approved its budget and precept (the amount of tax that residents pay to the Council) for the coming year. The total precept for 2024/5 will be £45k which equates to £36.47 for a band D property (an increase of £4.99, i.e. 16%). We have managed to hold the precept at £39k for the previous 3 years (by running down our general reserves) so we hope residents will understand that some increase is now necessary to meet inflationary costs since 2021.

The Parish Council is obliged to decide the precept in early February so that Wakefield Metropolitan District Council (WMDC) can include it in the council tax demand. At the time, we were anticipating a potential cost of almost £5000 for safety inspections of the lamp posts in the village so that we could continue with our much-loved hanging baskets and Christmas trees. Half of the precept increase was intended to cover this cost. Since then, we have had welcome news from WMDC (see elsewhere in this newsletter) but it was too late to change the precept. The additional money will help strengthen reserves and meet future commitments (including ongoing lamppost inspections!).

In addition to the precept, we anticipate receiving about £24k of income from other sources, most significantly the hiring of the village hall.

How does the money get spent? During the last 12 months we have spent £13k more than expected on necessary tree surgery and ground works in the park and Jubilee Fields; we are also investing £5k in the refurbishment of the heritage fingerpost at the junction of The Balk and Shay Lane. Compensating savings elsewhere and better than budgeted receipts mean we still expect to outturn within the overall budget. Looking forward to the coming financial year we expect to spend about £59k running the Council and maintaining our facilities (the park, the village hall, public benches, etc.). That covers the staff we employ, insurance, fuel, grass cutting, bin emptying, minor repairs and so on. As in previous years we have budgeted for extra police patrols around Walton, giving small grants to local organisations, the printing of this newsletter and the floral/Christmas lamppost displays (over and above the generous sponsorship we get from residents), a little over £14k in total. We have also budgeted £26k to progress the development of the old tennis courts and replacing the basketball hoop in the park. Finally, we continue to put aside £8k each year to add to earmarked reserves for eventual replacement of the play equipment in the park and repair of the village hall roof.

Work on Jubilee Field - Work took place last year on Jubilee Field to return it to playing field status suitable for playing sports. This is a piece of land which was donated to Walton village by Yorkshire Water when they finished using it for water treatment. The path and track leading to the field from the allotments track has been cut back and the beck running alongside has been cleared and new drainage installed to reduce flooding.

Coronation Garden (old tennis courts) update - We have reported in previous newsletters our plans to convert the old tennis courts into a community garden. The community consultation process began in October with a paper/online questionnaire completed by 176 residents. This was followed up in November with a face-to-face meeting in the village hall where the students shared their initial draft plans/ideas for the garden with residents. The students took onboard comments and suggestions at this meeting and since then have been refining their designs. In December they presented the Coronation Garden working party with the final two proposed garden options. These documents can be found on the Parish Council website at: <https://www.waltonparishcouncil.org.uk/tennis-court-development/> The Parish Council are now working up a proposal for further consultation with residents to finalise a design, before moving on to seeking funding and obtaining planning permission.

Meet the Councillors We are delighted to introduce our two new Councillors Denise and Bryan

Denise Brooke



Hi, my name is Denise Brooke and I've lived in Walton for 20 years with my husband. I am really pleased to be co-opted on to the Parish Council. We have enjoyed bringing our two daughters up in the village and utilised all it has to offer which for us is a friendly, safe and green environment. I am proud to live in Walton and would like the village to continue as a community where residents can join in all it has to offer whatever their age. My interests lie in road safety and planning matters to ensure that our village is protected. I have recently retired from my role as a Personal Assistant at Wakefield MDC and prior to that I have worked as a Judges' Clerk in the Civil Service and also as a Para-Legal in a large city solicitor's firm. I now plan to be a valued Parish Councillor. I love being outdoors and being so close to our beautiful countryside. I'm usually found walking and cycling around the village or playing golf at a local club.

Bryan Kaushiva



Hello, I'm Bryan and I joined the Parish Council last year. My family and I have lived in Walton for fourteen years. In addition to the wonderful village life, we also enjoy the easy access to the outdoors that our location provides. I am a member of a few working parties including those of the Environment, the Park and the re development of the tennis courts.

We do still have one vacancy for a Parish Councillor. We do expect prospective councillors to have attended at least one Parish Council meeting. So, if you haven't been to a meeting before, please come along to the next one (meetings are normally held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Village Hall Committee Room). If being a Parish Councillor is of interest to you, then please contact the Clerk (details in the panel at the head of this newsletter).

Hot topics from recent Parish Council meetings



Floral Displays - The Parish Council has once again ordered summer hanging baskets which brighten up the village. There will be a slight increase this year for sponsorship which is now £120 for both the summer basket and Christmas tree. If you are interested in future sponsorship, we can add your name to our waiting list if others become available. Another option would be to place your name on one of the four large planters located around the village. Please contact the Clerk if you are interested.

Village news

Walton Community Library- Following on from the success of last year's event we are now planning our 2nd Annual Fun Run on Bank holiday Monday May 6th. Check out 'Legging it for the Library' on racebest.com and get details of the early bird entry. For those budding photographers, don't forget our Photo Competition continues throughout the Spring and Summer. Closing date for entries August 31st. The winning photos will be featured in the Walton Calendar 2025. We are always looking for volunteers and if you would like to join our friendly team please get in touch. Find out about all these events and more from our library at Charles Waterton House, 6 Almond Avenue (top of The Grove). Tel: - 01924 917627

Walton Open Gardens will take place on Sunday 7th July 11am to 5pm. This is a perfect day to bring along family and friends to visit some great gardens in our lovely village. All proceeds support the library.

The Friends of Waterton's Wall- In March we plan some 'groundwork' to an area north of the lock on the disused canal adjacent to the golf club house. On Saturday 11th May Waterton Park Hotel is hosting an event for us as a part of Wakefield Council's WordFest. '**Swapping Stories - Memories of Walton Hall**' is designed to collect, preserve and share memories of living near, working at and playing in Walton Hall and its grounds. Please come along and share your stories. Following this there will be a workshop on using Lime Mortar (date to be confirmed) and in the summer we will lead a number of walks around the historic parkland. Look out for further details of all this and more by subscribing to our newsletter friendsofwatertonswall@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook.

Working for Walton- Walton's 7th Annual Classic Car Show will take place Sunday 14th July 10am-4pm. There will be live music, Silver Band, Dance Troupe, hot food, licensed bar, pop up café, tombola and raffle. Along with many stunning classic cars Terrapod will be an addition again this year. This is a fundraising event for the village and spectator entry will be by wrist band £2 per adult. Children under 16 are admitted free and should be accompanied by an adult.

Friends of Walton Colliery Nature Park- We are a group of volunteers who help to preserve the beauty and enhance the natural environment of the Nature Park. We work alongside Wakefield Council Countryside Team and hold volunteer work sessions monthly. We look forward to welcoming new volunteers and our next two volunteer sessions are Sunday 24th March and Friday 12th April, meeting in Shay Lane car park at 10.30. Refreshments are provided. Why not join our Facebook group and share your experiences/photos of the Nature Park.

Walton United Juniors FC- will be hosting their 3rd annual football gala at Walton Sports and Social Club. It will take place across the weekends of the 29th, 30th June, and the 6th, 7th July, starting at 9am until 4pm. Along with the football gala, we also have bouncy castles, various stalls, and a BBQ. Everyone welcome.