

Denstone Parish Council

Annual Report 2006-7

The report is split into the following sections:

- Planning
- Progress on the Village Plan
- Conclusion

Planning. I will first summarise the situation of the development of the village regarding new dwellings. There are 20 new houses which have been substantially completed over the last 12 months. These include:

4x 4 bed Croftsteads, Marlpit Lane, 5x 4 bed Tavern site, 7x 5 bed old Garage site, 1x 2 bed Bennion Grove, 1x 3 bed Stubwood, 1x 4 bed Stubwood and 1x 3 bed Alton Road.

There is Outline Permission for another 11 dwellings:

- 2x 4 bed Croftsteads, Marlpit Lane,
- 4x 3 bed Marlpit Lane in place of 2 prefabs
- 1 bungalow on the jct of Alton Rd/College Rd.,
- 1 x 3 bed College Rd
- 1x 3 bed Stubwood,
- 1x 2 bed Bennion Grove.

The 21 houses that will be completed this year brings the total number of dwellings in the Parish to 389. Taking into account the Outline Permissions, it is likely the total will reach 400 dwellings in the next two years, which is an average growth of under 3% per year.

The current Local Plan for East Staffs valid until at least 2009 tightens up on the Development Boundaries for both Denstone and Stubwood. The only land currently available for Development in Denstone is within the curtilage of existing Dwellings and in Stubwood there is not even that as it is now classed as open countryside.

Progress on the Village Plan. The seven programmes in our Village Plan on which we have been active and progress through our monthly Vital Village meetings are:

- 1 Play areas
- 2 Communications
- 3 Community Transport
- 4 Appearance of the Village

- 5 Availability of Local Produce
- 6 Improvements to the Old Railway Track
- 7 Traffic Problems

1 Play areas. Following on from the provision of the Toddler's play ground in the centre of the village last year, Planning Applications have been approved for a small area on the Railway Track north of the platforms and also for an open space on land between the Lady Meadow Estate and Oak Rd. Our current thinking is that these two sites are complementary; the one on the railway line being an enclosed area including suitable play equipment that the teenagers could feel is their place. The open area on the Oak Rd site would be available as a kick about area and general use. The TBMST and the DYF have recently published a joint statement on these two projects, supporting one another's endeavours. The two areas are considered complementary because with the extension of the Bridleway down the Railway Track into the village it was considered ball games and horses were not compatible in the same area. Both these schemes are currently being worked on, on the Railway Track it is a question of obtaining approval from the SCC for the type of equipment the DYF want to install. On the Oak Rd. site, the requirement for a suitable access is under negotiation by the TBMST and the SCC.

2 Communications. Good communication within the village and the more dispersed areas of the Parish is a very necessary ingredient for the maintenance of the community spirit and the general well being of the village. In this regard you will notice we now have two new well used notice boards in front of the Village Hall, kindly provided by Willy Ratcliffe. We are now working hard on improving the Village Web site with the help of Rupert Evans and other IT minded individuals with the aim of making it more comprehensive and easy for the individual associations in the village to update the content.

3 Community transport. This scheme is working well. Over the last 12 months, 67 journeys have been made, mainly carrying the elderly to local Doctors Surgeries and also Hospitals in Derby, Stafford and Newcastle. This scheme is being run by Dennis Parker and Wendy Forrester with the help of about 20 volunteer drivers. Additional volunteers to help provide this very useful service are always welcome.

By sheer coincidence the Dove Valley Community First Responder Group were also called out 67 times in the first three months of this year alone, to render first aid in an emergency, 4 of these calls were in the Denstone area. By intensive Fund Raising Cliff Bailey has been instrumental in now having a purpose built emergency response vehicle stationed in the village and we are indebted to him for the tremendous efforts he continues to make in providing this service.

4 Maintaining and improving the appearance of the village. Our team of voluntary litter pickers co-ordinated by Nancy Turner continue to do a good job, and the village in the main is kept tidy. We will be entering the Best Kept Village competition again this year and judging will take place between the 30th April and the 22nd of July. Please take a note of these dates and make a special effort to make our village as presentable as we can. The judges take an interest in all the gardens they can readily see and well kept gardens helps to give them a good impression of the village.

5 Local produce. The conversion of the Dairy buildings at Denstone Hall Farm to a Farm Shop which will sell a large range of local produce is progressing well and is planned to be up and running this year.

6 Improvements to the Old Railway track Notice Boards outlining points of Historical and Natural Interest in the Churnet Valley have been produced and erected on the Track, where they can be easily seen by visitors. Plans to install equipment to form a trim trail for adults have been put on hold at present until the Teenage Area has been completed.

SCC have just completed improvements to the drainage and surface of the old railway track and have improved conditions for walkers and cyclists on this amenity, cyclists will be particularly pleased that it has now much easier to access Lord's Bridge at Dimmings Dale than it has been previously. At last weeks Vital Village meeting it was decided to consider a suggestion that more seating should be provided on the platforms particularly for the older folk who find it difficult using the seats of the picnic table.

7 Traffic problems. There is no doubt the amount of traffic through the village at school starting times is our major concern and one of the most difficult problems to resolve. You will recall last year a working group of Councillors investigated all the areas where you the parishioners had expressed concern in our survey for the Village Plan, these findings were presented at last year's Annual Parish Meeting. The requirement for a footpath along College Rd was the top priority item of the very many problem areas. Your Parish Council together with the SCC have put a lot of effort into trying to obtain land for a footpath on the North side of College Rd. from the Garage site to the corner at the Junction with Alton Rd. I regret to report we were unsuccessful in our efforts in that the landowners involved were not prepared to give up the small amount of ground that was required. So we are once again concentrating on what can be done on the South side of College Rd. to make it safer for children travelling to school.

A meeting was held here in Denstone last month with Philip Atkins together with Clive Thomson and Richard Rayson the senior Highway Officials from the SCC. It was agreed that we would jointly pursue the provision of a footpath on the South side of College Rd. This is something that cannot be done quickly, for two reasons, again landowners consent to give up land is required and also the SCC are in budget difficulties and the necessary funding is not likely to be available within the next three years. In the interim we are pressing the SCC to approve the painting of white lines to delineate a foot-

Summary of Accounts (Subject to audit)

To 31 Mar 2006	Receipts	To 31 Mar 2007	To 31 Mar 2006	Payments	To 31 Mar 2007
6,800.00	Precept	7,450.00	2,200.00	Staff costs	2,500.00
625.00	Lengthsman	508.70	1,712.14	Administration	1,811.87
500.00	Vital Villages	0.00	210.45	Section 137	126.73
160.00	Insurance claim	0.00	419.59	Post Office	1,090.89
3,000.00	WASP	0.00	814.21	Lighting	78.90
1,267.50	Other grants	40.00	489.95	Garden	554.83
68.93	Interest	95.23	577.50	Lengthsman	585.09
313.42	VAT	317.05	403.34	Old railway line	930.40
£12,734.85	TOTAL	£8410.98	417.00	Village Hall	426.00
			1,469.43	Vital Villages	241.00
6375.55	Balance at 1 April	5850.75	1,000.00	Play eqmt grant	0.00
12734.85	Add Receipts	8410.98	2,273.00	Bowls/Tennis	0.00
19110.40		14261.73	902.95	Other	406.09
13259.65	Less Payments	8950.32	390.11	VAT	198.52
			£13,259.65	TOTAL	£8,950.32
£5850.75	Balance at 31 Mar	£5311.41			

Denstone Parish Council – Contact Details

Clerk – Bob Beaumont, 14 Narrow Lane, Denstone, ST14 5DR Tel: 01889 590554

Email: bob_beaumont@hotmail.com

Chairman – Cllr John Ashmole, Jarrah, Alton Road, Denstone, ST14 5DH. Tel: 01889 591361

Email: johnashmole@onetel.com

Vice Chairman – Cllr Jenny Richardson, Upper Croft, Oak Road, Denstone, ST14 5HT. Tel: 01889 591762

Email: jennyrichardson@hotmail.com

Cllr Jo Bednall, Brook House, College Road, Denstone, ST14 5HR. Tel: 01889 590175

Cllr Edward Edmonds, Holly Trees, 27 Marlpit Lane, Denstone, ST14 5HH. Tel: 01889 591044

Cllr Chris Podmore, Eyes Farm House, Dove Lane, Rocester, ST14 5LA. Tel: 01889 591197

Cllr Ann Ratcliffe, Kendal, Hollis Lane, Denstone, ST14 5HP. Tel: 01889 590405

Cllr Simon Ratcliffe, Filkins, Hollis Lane, Denstone, ST14 5HP. Tel: 01889 591339

Cllr Caroline Salt, 10 College Road, Denstone, ST14 5HR. Tel: 01889 590236

Cllr Bob Wright, Marlpit Cottage, Alton Road, Denstone, ST14 5DH. Tel: 01889 590113

East Staffordshire Borough Council – Churnet Ward

Cllr Philip Atkins, Abbey Fields, Mill Street, Rocester, ST14 5JX

Email: philip.atkins@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire County Council – Uttoxeter Rural

Cllr Philip Atkins, Abbey Fields, Mill Street, Rocester, ST14 5JX

Email: philip.atkins@staffordshire.gov.uk

Member of Parliament for Burton

Mrs Janet Dean, Suite 13, First Floor, Cross Street Business Centre, Cross Street, Burton upon Trent, Staffs. DE14 1EF. Uttoxeter surgeries – see notice board by village shop

path as has been done in some of the villages in Derbyshire, Youlgreave being a good example. Another approach we are pressing for is the introduction of a 20mph speed limit throughout the village. This is something the SCC has been very reluctant to introduce in the county as a general policy, but again it has been successfully introduced in other counties. However this last year several other East Staffordshire villages have joined our campaign aimed at persuading the SCC to change their minds and we do know the SCC Cabinet is actively considering it. The village has now acquired a speed gun to enable us to actually measure the speed of traffic through the village. Currently six volunteers are awaiting Police training in the use of this device. This type of action has a very real deterrent effect in general and also enables persistent offenders to be identified to the Police. To supplement the efforts of the Parish Council you the Parishioners have recently formed an Action Group, now known as the Denstone Traffic Calming Action Group. Action Groups such as this can sometimes achieve results that the Statutory Bodies cannot, particularly when the questions of Publicity, Grants and Funding are involved. This group working in conjunction with the First School have already held a very good demonstration of a Walking Bus aimed at getting children to school safely. There is more work to be done in getting a walking bus full approval but I hope the new Council will support and work together with this group in their aims of making the village a safer place for us all to get about.

Conclusion. I would say the most important factor in making this village tick is not the Parish Council albeit, we do our bit, particularly our conscientious and very hard working Parish Clerk, Bob Beaumont, but the work you the Parishioners put in, by fund raising and maintaining the various interest groups and associations within the village, be it the Church, the School, the Village Hall, the Sports Trust, the DYF, the PTA, the Preschool Play Group or any other of the many associations within the village. It is this factor that results in the tremendous

community spirit we enjoy and makes Denstone a very good place in which to live. A good indicator of how active the community is, is the fact the total money raised in support of the various institutions and projects in round figures is in excess of £80,000 most of this is obtained by pursuing grants, but at least £22,000, is money raised by fund raising events within the village throughout the year, very hard work for those involved at the sharp end but certainly appreciated by the community as a whole.

I would like to end this report on the same note as I did last year and that is to ask you all to use the Post Office and Village Shop just as much as you possibly can, they are an important part of our way of life for many of us, and need all the custom we can give them in these changing times, the old adage "If you do not use it you will lose it" certainly applies.

Read by Cllr John Ashmole (Chairman Denstone Parish Council) to the Annual Parish Meeting on 23 April 2007

Denstone Voluntary Car Scheme

This scheme has been operational since April 2006. It is for residents without access to a private car and who are unable to use public transport because of infirmity, age or disability. Passengers pay a fare to the driver in accordance with set charges based on mileage and roughly in line with public transport costs.

If you need to get to the doctor, dentist or optician or need a prescription form a chemist it can help. It will also try to cover hospital visits whenever possible but at least 48 hours notice would be required unless it is an emergency. The scheme is supported by the Parish Council, County Council and Borough Council. It operates between 8.30 am and 6 pm weekdays only. **First** contact is **Dennis Parker 590005** or if there is no reply and you are unable to leave a message **Wendy Forrester 590728**