



Easingwold Town Council



2017

Autumn Newsletter



Our Millfields
Wildflower border



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A Message from Council Chairman Peter Nottage

In our last newsletter we provided a summary of the vision ETC has created to guide its work. As Nelson Mandela said “*Vision without action is just a dream*”; so, with the renewal of the council programme in May, we have taken the opportunity to restructure the council and its committees; to help make our vision a reality.

Firstly, we decided that the Council should delegate more of its operational work to its committees and working groups, thus enabling it to concentrate its time on town management and a more visionary approach. Only the Neighbourhood Plan working group will continue to report directly to the council. We also decided that our committees should have a combination of councillors and non-councillors, so that we have extra, skilled resources available to us to enable the work to be done.

For the committees, we have combined the Finance & General Purposes Committee with the Town Centre Committee to create an Operations Committee. It will concentrate its work on making sure our day-to-day actions are effective, and deal with the physical aspects of the town centre and our conservation area. It will also be the home for the anti-social behaviour, parking and cobbles working groups.

We have combined the Recreation and Open Spaces committees, as their work often overlapped. So now our public spaces will be focused in one team. They will also be home for the Millfields working group.

These combinations have given us the opportunity to create a new Social and Events Committee. We see this as important because, as Easingwold grows, it is imperative that all our people, new and old, feel welcome and happy here. We want Easingwold to

be a great place to grow up in, live in, work in and visit. This is a big change for the Council as, for the first time, we will give equal weighting in our work to operations, physical Easingwold and social Easingwold. We are looking forward to seeing the progress we can make towards our vision and more details on new committees can be seen inside this newsletter.

EASINGWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Contact: Town Clerk

Easingwold Library, Market Place

Easingwold YO61 3AN Tel: 01347 822422

Meet Our New Councillor

Many of our readers will know that Councillor Phil Grainger recently left us as his career moved him to a new home and we wish him every success in his adventures 'down south'. In response, we are delighted to say that a new councillor – Panda (Amanda) Gledhill has been co-opted into our team. We are pleased to welcome her to our group and believe that her special skills will add hugely to our ability to realise our vision and especially its social aspects.

Panda is well known in town as she went to Easingwold School and has lived here for over 30 years. Probably, despite all her other voluntary work, Panda is best known for her contribution to local youth work, helping to found and run COZIE. Panda works as a youth development worker for North Yorkshire Youth and will be a powerful voice for our younger citizens and their needs.



Town Centre Update



Easingwold's town centre continues to thrive and has hosted many events over the summer. Our markets enliven it, Rockin' all over the Wold vibrated it, Council flowers and 'Easingwold in Bloom' illuminated it, and soon the annual fair will fun it up. Council permission has enabled our tearooms and hostelrys to extend their outdoor space – adding sociability and a lively feel to the place at a minor cost to parking. We have jointly sponsored a defibrillator outside the George. The town library is now voluntary in conjunction with the NYCC Libraries and proving more popular than ever. It is continuously expanding the range of activities as our volunteers find their feet. Hearts Boutique has brought new life to the former NatWest bank premises in the town square. The Easingwold Business Forum (set up by our town centre businesses) is expanding its membership and making a strong contribution to increasing the popularity of Easingwold as a commercial destination with its 'Wold-class' marketing initiative, which has the full backing of the Council.



Millfields Vision Update

The Council is still working hard via its Millfields Working Group on its vision for this exceptional public open and recreational space. Some of its work is coming to fruition as the new skate park (opened in June) is proving hugely popular with our young people; the drainage of the recreation area enables it to be better used; and the wildflower border along the footpath has come into full bloom during late summer. At the same time the community orchard is getting established, and we have been refreshing the footpaths, bins, seats and picnic tables to enable better use. We are looking at several other projects to add further resources to both the open and recreational spaces and are working with the experts and consultants to prepare an exhibition of our thoughts for a public consultation in the near future.



From the Council and Our New Committees...

Town Council



Rockin' all over the Wold presentation



Town Centre defibrillator presentation

The vision work of the Town Council is beginning to reach fruition with its recent reorganisation. To compliment this and show our support to the new volunteer led Town Library we have moved to a larger office within the library building. We have also refreshed the Council website to make it more easily navigable, and to provide better access to other public service information.

Over the course of many months the Council has been refurbishing the Gentlemen's public toilets in the town centre. This work is gradually drawing to a close and we apologise for any inconvenience that has been caused. We hope the renewed facility will be a relief! We will be working on the Ladies and Disabled facilities soon.

The Town Council is concerned at any instances of anti-social behaviour in the town. This includes occurrences of rowdiness and thoughtless behaviour in Millfields, the Memorial Park, Chase Garth Park and the Butter Cross. There has been littering, and some dog owners are not clearing up after their pets. Those involved know who they are and we should be grateful if they would stop and please be considerate to the rest of us who share the town with them. We are working with the Police and other agencies to address these matters. Council volunteer groups have been clearing footpaths and removing waste, and we have been increasing the availability and access to waste bins. Please use them or take your mess home.

By creating the new operations committee ETC not only combined its prior Finance and General Purposes Committee with its Town Centre Committee, but brought a renewed focus on the effective delivery of the council's operational activities.

With regard to finance, the Council decided that for the 2017-18 Council year it would hold the precept at its previous level. This has been successful to date and we have tried to do more with the money we have. Not only this, we also resolved to gradually use our reserves to help execute some works in the town that improve the facilities on offer for everyone. The most significant beneficiary of this has been the provision of drainage in the Millfields Park recreational area. We have also increased the supply of bins, benches and picnic tables around the town.

The Council regards the town centre a vital resource for the continued vitality of Easingwold, especially as it grows. We believe that Easingwold should be a truly vibrant market town and have been delighted to see the increase in use of the town square over the summer. We would encourage all our local organisations and clubs to talk to us about their ideas for bringing excitement and events to our town centre area.

The whole town centre and conservation area is important to Easingwold and we wish to keep its visual amenity at the highest level whilst improving its utility and adapting it to modern times. For example we are investing in WiFi across the central space. Time brings attrition and wear and tear, so a significant part of our budget goes on bringing these spaces back to good order. We are investing in electrical sockets to improve our ability to install festive lighting and support events. Nothing is perfect however, so we seek to conserve the best and improve the rest. We have working groups studying how we might organise and fund improvements to accessibility, parking, traffic safety and the performance of the cobbled areas.

Operations Committee



Recreation & Open Spaces Committee



By bringing together its Recreation and Open Spaces committee ETC has ensured that matters relating to its public spaces are handled in one meeting. Finding the right mix between recreation and social use and visual amenity in public spaces is a significant balancing act. The Millfields working group highlighted above has this juxtaposition constantly in mind.

Keeping things looking great is especially hard during the summer when we face such strong growth. This year we have carried out a survey of trees in some of our key public areas and have committed to their management over a cycle of six years. Our heritage oak tree in Chase Garth has received much needed care and attention. Works have been completed to trees in Uppleby, one tree removed on Lime Tree Avenue, and a clearance done to the boundary of Mallison Woods. Council volunteer working parties have cleared the overgrowth in several public footpaths and the verges along Oulston Road have been cut back. Our programme of grass cutting got underway early this year as the spring spurt came so soon.



In our recreation areas we have continued to maintain all our play equipment and its safety. These are checked quarterly and problems resolved as quickly as possible. We are delighted that our new skate park has been such a success and are investigating if we can find a way to illuminate it for the early evenings of winter.

Social & Events Committee

Our new Social and Events Committee marks a significant increase in the amount of activity the Council believes it needs to dedicate to the social aspects of life in Easingwold.

Easingwold has been growing fast of late and, with many more houses approved for construction by our planning authority, that pace is not going to slacken in the next few years. This means Easingwold having lots of new people to share in our lives, resources and help make our community an excellent place to live, work and visit.

A great deal of the life in our community is driven by our superb network of voluntary and charitable clubs and organisations. From the long standing excellence of the Galtres Centre, to the success of our sporting clubs, the arrival of a voluntary library in our midst, and so much more. The Council welcomes the presence of them all and will do its best to support and promote them. For those looking for support, this committee will be your first port of call.

Our Friendliness Initiative has recently celebrated its anniversary and its goes from strength to strength. We want the Easingwold community to remain open and supportive, and we will work to try and continuously improve accessibility and inclusivity in all we do.

We welcome the development of the Easingwold Business Forum and their collective efforts to market Easingwold's commercial potential. We will work them to help Easingwold build further on its already strong attraction as a visitor destination.

Finally we will try to improve the communication capabilities of the Council to keep people informed of what is going on, when and where.



Friendliness Initiative anniversary tea



Rockin' all over the Wold in action