

Looking to the Future

For those who didn't already know... our parish elections take place on May 2nd which will see all eighteen Haydon Wick Councillors stand-down and who knows who will replace them. So for those current councillors present tonight, our future could be somewhat curtailed!

But this doesn't mean the current councillors have stopped working. We have for the past few months and for the forthcoming few weeks continue to make decisions about the services we provided. Some decisions have been "kicked into the long grass", these are mainly ones that present long term financial commitment, for example, at present we as a Council hold 6 months General Reserves, this is seen as good practice, during Budget considerations we discuss the possibility of reducing that General Reserve to 4 months – still an acceptable amount – , freeing capital to ease the impact on the precept, however it was felt that this reduction in Reserves would impact any incoming Council unfairly. Similar, decisions about the Short, Medium and Long Term investment of Reserves, have been delayed as we didn't want to tie up the money, therefore hampering the incoming Councils spending wishes.

[this is repeating some of Richard's speech so I've changed it slightly] Richard has also talked about the play area refurbishment projects at Heaton Close and how the Council has committed in next year's budget to make the Haydonleigh skatepark refurbishment our next big project. As a Council we commit each year to investing £70,000 into the budget for this purpose.

We cannot tell you what the new Council will do post election; we hope they feel we have left the Council in a strong financial position – no letters with "all the money's gone" from us. And that they will look at the work we have done

over the past years and follow in our footsteps and continue to invest [and enhance] in area we live in.

Community Engagement

We continue communicate with our residents through our website, our social media channels such as Facebook and through the Haydon Living magazine which is published by the Council three times a year. ~~, but these are a passive activities, we simply provide information.~~

In the past year we have also undertaken some activities that have generated much interest in the Parish. As Linda has already discussed, the installation of the “Tommy” Figure, the installation of a memorial bench, the Temporary Mural and Poppy Display, for the Centenary of the End of WW1 all generated very positive feedback.

~~[repeats Linda’s so take out] Though the “Tommy” and the Bench were bought in, the Mural and Poppy Display were original ideas generated in the Council Chamber and bought to fruition by collaborating with local Artists Marilyn & Chris Tasker, for the Mural and with Haydon Wick Primary School for the Poppies. It is this collaboration with local groups and individuals that we would like to do more off. But it needs to be a two way Street, not simply the Parish coming up with an idea and reaching out, but groups and individuals coming up with ideas and reach out to the Council.~~

Another first occurred in Christmas 2018, for the first time in the thirty year history of the Christmas Parcel Scheme we worked with two third parties, Metro Bank & The Redeemed Christian Church of God to provide our parcels.

This proved a very successful piece of teamwork, and hopefully in the future we can work with other groups to provide for our elderly residents.

As said previously, we need local groups and individuals to let us know their ideas in ways we can engage with residents through activities and events.

So if you have an idea as to how Haydon Wick Parish Council can become more engaged with the community please **do come and speak us – we'd be happy to expand on any ideas you may have.**