

Armthorpe Parish Council, an update from your Chairwoman, Chris Brodhurst-Brown.

Hi everyone,

As you may know, following the elections in May, the Parish Council had quite a change in personnel with many of the former members retiring after giving many years of service to our community. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them and to wish them well for the future.

We have a full complement of 15 Parish Councillors, we initially had 12 and then we undertook a co-option process and were able to appoint three more. Information about your Councillors is available on the Parish Council Website. At our first meeting I was honoured by being elected as Chairwoman.

I feel that I can speak for the Parish Councillors in saying that we are all motivated by wanting our Village to be as good as it possibly can be and that we take our responsibilities seriously and will work hard on your behalf.

We have been quite busy so far and we thought it would be a good idea to keep you up to date with our activities and with some of our future plans.

However, before I do that, I would like to say that we will always try to listen to Parishioners and to communicate as well as we can. We would like to encourage you to come to meetings and to make your views known and to share your ideas. We would also like to encourage local organisations, schools and groups to talk to us if we can be of help or assistance. We can't promise to solve all problems and issues, but we will do our best within our powers. What I can promise is that we will always be on the Village's side.

Over the past few months, we have been involved in several projects.

Christmas Lights upgrade

Firstly, what I think is a good bit of news and I hope you will agree. We've had quite a bit of negative feedback about the Village Christmas lights, we were at the end of our contract and there were many issues including, getting repairs done and obsolete kit. Frankly last Christmas's display reflected the gloom many of us were feeling at the time. We were ahead of the game in Christmas lights at one time and we're hoping to get to that position again.

We've had a small working group on the case for a couple of months now, I think you'd be surprised at how complicated a process it can be. I now feel that I know more about the Village lamp posts than any human being needs to know. Specific thanks to Graham Shephard, Frank Tyas and Lynne Donald on this one.

We have now entered into a new contract which provides a very significant improvement in the lights for this year. We've tried to create a flow along the main thoroughfares starting at the boundaries on Doncaster Road, Hatfield Lane and Nutwell lane and carrying on right through the Village.

There will be motifs, multicoloured wraps around lamp posts, a significant number of trees wrapped in twinkling fairy lights, and a large, animated fairy light wrapped tree in the Village centre. There will also be decorations leading to the Community Centre on Church Street and a large lit Christmas tree in front of the Centre.

A couple of points, there are technical issues with the suitability of lamp posts on Hatfield Lane up to the junction with Mill Street, these are outside our control due to the need for upgrades to the lamp posts, however we are hoping that this will be sorted in the not-too-

distant future. For the time being, we are unable to put motifs on this stretch. We've problem solved it by putting quite a few column wraps along there and a large tree wrap on the green at the Rands Lane junction. It is likely that when the upgrade work is done that we will revisit this part of the scheme.

In addition, please note that the lights are LEDs and the power needed to run them is much lower than needed for the previous lights, all lighting will be out of reach.

There is scope for adding to the scheme in future years if there is support for this.

The Parish Council are planning a Christmas Fair event with light "Switching on" ceremony in late November, look out for further information as planning progresses.

Armthorpe Food Support

The Armthorpe Food Support Project has been running since February of this year, it's quite appalling that, in this day and age, there is a need for this kind of service. However, there is real and serious need in our village. We have families amongst us who are short of food and necessities. It is likely that this situation will worsen over the coming months.

The Project was set up and is run by volunteers. It is a separate organisation to the PC but works in close partnership with it. Several Parish Councillors regularly volunteer, and the Parish Council has provided funding, premises and admin support. It has also purchased a fitted-out container so that the Project can have a long-term base.

It is not a traditional Foodbank, Armthorpe residents can self-refer and apply more than once, they will then receive a substantial basic package with additional donations on top.

Although AFS is a separate project it would not have been able to function without this support from the Parish Council.

Our local environment.

You will have noticed that many local volunteers have been generously giving of their time and cleaning up our Village. They do terrific work.

During the Great British Spring Clean Week in March the Parish Council became involved in supporting and promoting some of the numerous events organised by local people. Following this the PC decided it wanted to find ways to support these initiatives and decided to purchase litter picking equipment that can be borrowed by residents' groups. It also decided to recruit a Community Clean Up Champion to help to keep the Village clean and tidy and to loan out equipment and support the organisation of Clean Ups where required.

A fair point has been made, by several people, that this kind of work should be done by DMBC and that we are in danger of doing the Borough Councils work for them. We debated this thoroughly and agreement was reached that, overall, it was a good use of the Precept, i.e., your money, in that it could lead to a great improvement to the Village.

Parish Councillors have met with some keen local activists and are trying to look at other ways of supporting volunteers including looking at the location of litter bins and other initiatives. This work is ongoing.

Students from Southfield School wrote to the PC earlier in the year sharing some of their lovely work and asking for a litterbin to be situated on Tranmoor Lane. Our Vice Chair Lynne Donald has visited the school and spoken to staff and students, this has led to the purchase of a "Superbin" which will be adopted by the school and emptied by DMBC. The Superbin has a keypad protected

compartment which contains litter pickers and other litter picking equipment. It will be situated outside the school on Tranmoor Lane. Well done to all the students and teachers involved.

Armthorpe Miners Memorial Day.

Dennis Nowell is holding a large community Memorial event on October 3rd this year, part of it will be the inauguration of the new sculpture that will be placed in the Memorial Gardens.

This was discussed at the last Parish Council Meeting and the PC have decided to support the event by holding two large events on the day. The first will be an Autumn Fair in and around the Community Centre and a large ticketed social event in the Community Centre in the evening.

It's an important day for the Village and for our proud local culture so watch this space for further information.

The Autumn Fair will be an excellent opportunity for any local community groups or Schools to have a stall and raise money or raise awareness for their organisations. Why not get involved?

Ongoing events.

The Parish Council will continue to deliver our traditional events including the Halloween Party, the firework display in November, the Senior Citizens Christmas Tea. The Senior Citizens seaside trip will go ahead, it takes place on August 20th. The lucky winners have been waiting 18 months to enjoy their prize from the Christmas Tea raffle, here's hoping for great weather.

The Summer Fair will not be held this year.

Armthorpe Mental Health Carers Support group.

Two of our Parish Councillors, Andy Barrington and Colin Head are setting up the above group which aims to support the families and carers of people with severe mental illness. Both are experienced in this field of work. The first meeting will be held on Monday 6th September between 6pm and 8pm at the Community Centre on Church Street and will be meeting fortnightly. For more information please call Colin or Andy on 01302 355039.

Citizens Advice Bureau.

The Parish Council has arranged for Outreach workers from the CAB to be available at Armthorpe Community Centre on Tuesdays between 10am and 2pm. Please call 01302 243057 to make an appointment. The workers can look into all kinds of queries for you and can link you up to accessible support on Debt and Benefits issues. So if you need help why not give them a try?

Communications.

I think it is fair to say that the Parish Council has always done a lot of work but could be better at communicating with residents. We are, therefore, going to put a number of measures in place in order to try and address this.

The Armthorpe Community Centre Facebook page will change into the Armthorpe Parish Council and Community Centre Page so you will be able to find us more easily. We welcome comments, ideas, feedback and enquiries.

We will improve the information on the Parish Council website and, for the less technically minded among us, we are going to revisit and refresh our Notice Boards and make sure they are visible and up to date. This may take a little time, but we are working on it.

In conclusion I hope this has given you more of an insight into the work of your Parish Council. We would encourage you to come to meetings, the main PC meeting is held on the first Tuesday of every month at 7pm, there is no meeting in August, we would also encourage you to get involved in some of the initiatives mentioned or undertake initiatives of your own.

Let's all try and work together to try and improve things for our community.

Stay safe and take care.

Armthorpe is a great Village!

Chris Brodhurst-Brown

Armthorpe Parish Council Chairwoman.

