

WOODHALL SPA PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER Issue 1 2008
Community Website: www.woodhallspa.org

SPENDING YOUR (AND OUR) MONEY. Once a year in January the Parish Council sets its 'precept', that's our bit of the council tax you, and we, pay. As always, it's a balancing act between keeping it as low as possible and being able to have enough in hand to carry on improving and protecting our environment and our community.

Once again we have dipped into our reserves to keep our share of the council tax bill down. We will be precepting for £39,500, that works out at about 49p per band D household a week (just over £25 a year), approximately 3 ½ p a week more than last year. The clerk's salary and payments to ELDC for the maintenance of the Kirkby Lane Cemetery account for almost half this sum. We have also agreed to support a range of local organisations and charities who presented proposals to us in November. These include the Cottage Museum, the Cricket and Croquet Clubs and Woodhall Spa Country Show. Full details of our accounts and costs are always available for inspection..

COUNCIL VACANCIES Following the resignation of Coun Doug Waring, we have a vacancy on the Parish Council. If you're interested in helping to shape the future of Woodhall Spa and would like to know what's involved, please contact the clerk or the Chairman for more information BEFORE 12th February, the deadline for applications.. Our thanks to Doug for 17 years excellent service, we will miss his humour and his unswerving commitment to serving the community.

We are also sad to report that our Clerk, Wendy Radford, will be retiring in the spring, after more than 20 years service. We have been fortunate to have such a well qualified clerk at a time when the Parish Council's role has grown in importance and the demands put on her, along with the extra paperwork, have become much more complex and time consuming. Fortunately she is prepared to help her replacement settle in and we will shortly be advertising to fill the post.

LIBRARY UNDER THREAT. The County Council is proposing to demote our library and cut the hours fro 24 ½ to 16 as well as reduce the staffing from April. The Parish Council is fighting this- we (and the Parish Plan) want to see the service extended, not cut. Ours is one of the best used and most efficient in the district! If you wish to add your voice, please write INDIVIDUALLY to Mark Homer, Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL as soon as possible.

QUARRY PROPOSALS – FINDING OUT THE FACTS. You will almost certainly be aware of proposals to route lorries from a large new sand and gravel site at Tatterhsall Thorpe through Woodhall Spa. Following our meeting with Cemex, we understand that the numbers of loads quoted in the planning application were incorrect and the numbers will be much lower, we are waiting for these revised figures and other information before deciding whether or not to call a public meeting –see our website for a full statement on this issue, which will also be appearing in the local press. In the meantime, individual comments still carry weight, **please** write to AC Winckley, Director of Development LCC, Planning and Conservation Group, City Hall (4th Floor) Beaumont Fee. Lincoln LN1 1DN with a copy to Copy to Maurice Brown, Senior Highways Officer, EL Div. LCC Highways Depot, Manby Middlegate, Grimoldby, Louth LN 11 8SU.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK District plans are a thing of the past, the new 'planning bible' will be the Local Development Framework. We've mentioned it before, but it's so important we make no apology for doing so again. The parish council has already spent hours choosing between various options for the future development of the district, with a view on how these strategic policies will affect us – questions such as whether low cost housing should be concentrated in the towns alone, how much, or even if, villages should be allowed to grow, what about more wind turbines, and do we consider relocating coastal towns further inland because of rising sea levels.

The LDF looks at much wider issues than the old District plans and covers social and economic matters too. It also gives more weight to our environment – not before time. In line with this, and the Parish Plan, and in advance of the more local policy rounds, we have decided to carry out an **environmental audit** for Woodhall Spa NOW. This covers the natural environment in and also around Woodhall Spa- the LDF recognises that a community's setting is as important as what goes on within the development envelope. The audit will identify these sites, areas and features – the beck running through Woodhall Spa is an obvious example.

MAKING WOODHALL SPA A BETTER PLACE are the other committees and individuals who came forward following recent appeals- on behalf of Woodhall Spa, thank you! Here in brief is what they're up to:

Tree Committee – looking at existing tree preservation orders, long-term tree replanting, and ways of checking that planning conditions on replanting are met.

Heritage Committee – has been looking at listing proposals for the Spa Baths, a worthwhile if unfortunately unsuccessful venture. It has also produced a heritage trail leaflet (two more are in the pipeline) and played an active role in the Conservation Appraisal. It will also undertake an audit of our archaeological and heritage sites .

Britain in Bloom Committee has had a plan for colourful planters on the Broadway/Station Road approved and is now seeking sponsorship

Public spirited individuals have come forward to **pick litter** in the woods and identify **signs** that need cleaning and keep the **noticeboard** clear. We have also had a report on **footpaths** and a list of work that needs doing and part of the **Viking Way** has been cleared and tidied. Volunteer **flood wardens** have come forward and a group, headed up by councillors, is working on a general **emergency plan for Woodhall Spa**.

IN BRIEF: JUBILEE PARK: In the event none of the expressions of interest to put private money into the park were appropriate, so ELDC will be going ahead with the £1.54m investment on its own. Hours for the new season will be the same as last year. The results of the customer survey and details of the 2007 season have also been published and can be seen on the Woodhall Spa website. Full, information on the new 2008 season will be available shortly- on both the Woodhall Spa and ELDC websites, leaflets are in preparation. **CLEANER STREETS** are on their way thanks to a new, more comprehensive street cleaning programme in Woodhall Spa by teams from ELDC. You should already be seeing the difference. **LIGHTING UP** Royal Square is a long term plan that will be completed in 2008 with heritage style street lights. The whole electrical system – which was declared unsafe just before Christmas- is also being replaced. **THE COUNTRY SHOW** takes place on Sunday 18th May. For more information contact Sue Stennet on 01526 352703

(usual clerk/councillor details here)