

Once again the Parish Council have had a successful year.

Our regular financial commitments have been met out of our budget and it was consequently felt once again that there was no necessity to raise the precept above the rate of inflation. The Parish Council subsequently applied for an increase of 3%.

Unfortunately due to a change in the way that council tax is apportioned by WMDC, this has resulted in an increase of around 11% to some households. However, this only applies to the proportion of the rate which is the Parish Precept and equates to an extra £2.55p year on a band F property. Even with this increase Darrington continues to have one of the lowest precepts in the area.

Once again we have invested cash from our reserves to replace some old wooden planters with stone ones. The emphasis this year has been at the eastern end of the village, on Valley Road. There are still a number of old wooden planters which will require replacement in the near future and so the project continues.

We have maintained an excellent working relationship with other groups who are trying to improve the village and have assisted the newly established Reading Room Restoration Working Group. The council felt that this project was so important to the village that we gave them a grant of £500.

One new item last year was the Scarecrow Competition which exceeded our expectations. A new group has been formed to organise this year's event and we hope to match, if not exceed, last year's efforts. It is hoped that the event will bring more people in to the village and hopefully raise more funds for village projects.

Once again I would like to express my thanks and the thanks of the Parish Council to those people who put in their time and effort to improve our village. In the past there has been some conflict of interest among different groups, but I believe that in recent years we have seen the various Darrington groups and Societies recognising that we are all striving for the same goal and it is so much easier to do this in harmony. In the time that I have been a member of the Parish Council I consider this to be our greatest achievement.

Finally I should like to express my thanks to my fellow councillors for their time and effort and especially for making it a pleasure to work together.

Michael Britton ` Chairman DPC.