

Village Diary

Wilsden Parish Council meeting...

Mon July 4th, 7pm, Library Room, Village Hall

Mon Sept 5th, 7pm, Library Room, Village Hall

Mon Oct 3rd, 7pm, Library Room, Village Hall

Mon Nov 7th, 7pm, Library Room, Village Hall

Mon Dec 5th, 7pm, Library Room, Village Hall

Wilsden Gardening Association...

Annual Show Sun Sep 18th, 2pm, Village Hall

Senior Citizen's Xmas Party Sat Dec 3rd, 2pm, Village Hall

Wilsden Xmas Lights switched on Fri Dec 16th, 6.30pm, Wilsden Park

Parish Council Elections

This year all existing parish councillors had to stand down and, if they wished to continue, apply for re-election. Wilsden Parish Council consists of two wards, Harecroft ward returning one councillor and Wilsden Ward returning eight councillors. Because there were nine candidates have applied to be councillors for Wilsden Ward there was an election on May 5th, on the same day as elections for Bradford Council and the referendum on changes to the voting system for parliamentary elections. The votes cast are given below:

Peter William Allison	680
Paul Antony Bentley	407
Jane Elizabeth Callaghan	730
Tony Caunt	711
Simon Martyn Dickerson	572
Ray Graham	647
Peter Michael Ketley	547
Leslie Mosley	656
Dennis O'Hara	442

The eight candidates with the highest number of votes are elected to serve as parish councillors until May 2015. Therefore Peter Allison, Jane Callaghan, Tony Caunt, Simon Dickerson, Ray Graham, Peter Ketley, Les Mosley and Dennis O'Hara are elected as parish councillors for the Wilsden ward. No candidate was nominated for the Harecroft ward so this vacancy was filled by the cooption of Terry McNamara at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

Village Community Contact Point

It is now four years since the Police and Community Contact Point opened at the Village Hall but only a minority of residents use this facility. Now that the new disabled access ramp has been opened it will be easier for everyone to reach the Contact Point which is next to the lower level door of the Hall.

Opening hours are 1.30 to 4pm every Thursday and 10.30 to 12 noon every Saturday. As well as reporting minor Police related issues there is also the opportunity to report other council related problems and raise general village issues. The Contact Point is usually manned by a parish councillor and discussions are confidential unless you request otherwise. We hope more residents will take advantage of the services offered.

THE WILSDENER

Latest news from around the village,
PLUS Wilsden Parish Council Newsletter

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Closure of Wilsden Library

The implications of Bradford Council's decision to close Wilsden Library has been the main focus over recent weeks for both the Parish Council and the Village Hall Management Committee. More details of our concerns and the two possible options are given on pages 6 & 7. We urge everyone to read this, consider the options and decide which is the best for our villages, particularly our young people. If you believe that keeping the library within the Village Hall is the best solution can you give some time as a volunteer to help achieve this? If so please complete the form inside and return to the Village Hall.

Follow the Yellow Brick Road - It's Gala Time Again

We are fast approaching the time of Wilsden Gala 2011, due to be held on Sunday 3rd July. Thank you to all of you who have volunteered so far for the hard work involved in making this event happen. It is not too late to come forward to volunteer your help now. If you can spare some time, either beforehand or on the day, or if you want to enter a float or book a stall, please let us know by contacting Julie at the Village Hall on 01535 272786.

Just as a reminder of how successful the Gala has been over many past years here is an entry made in the Domesday Project launched by the BBC back in 1986:

"Wilsden Gala is an annual event, held in July. There is a procession with floats which starts the gala by wending its way through the village, finishing up at the park by the Village Hall. A Gala Queen and her attendants open the gala. All sorts of activities then begin. This year, 1985, there were two contemporary dance displays. One was 'DISCO' type dancing, and the other was 'BREAK' dancing. Break dancing is currently the new rage. It is a very gymnastic form of spins, turns, flips and dives to special 'Break Dance' music. Stalls included plants, books, second-hand items, pop and crisps and ice cream. There were other entertainments for the many gala goers, such as bouncing on a large inflatable castle, smashing crockery, and a coconut shy. In the evening there was a dance for adults."

This year we have the theme of "The Yellow Brick Road". The procession will leave Townfield at 1.15pm. There will be pony rides, games, the Munchin Maze, WI teas and a beer tent. Donations of prizes for the tombola and bottles of beer for the wheelbarrow are needed please and these can be left at the Village Hall.

There are a few other interesting articles about Wilsden on the Domesday Project website – if you are interested you can search for them on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/domesday>.



Brought to you by Wilsden Village Hall (Reg. Charity No. 511626) & Wilsden Parish Council



~ Covering Wilsden, Harecroft & Hallas Bridge ~

Wilsden's Member of the British Empire

“Valerie, Mrs. Smith, for services to the community in Wilsden, West Yorkshire”.

These were the words announced at Buckingham Palace on 3rd November 2010 at the point in the investiture proceedings when Wilsden's very own Val Smith received her MBE from the Queen.

Val was recognised with the award for the hard work she has put into our community over many years for the benefit of the village's younger and older residents alike. Val runs the luncheon club in the village which meets every Tuesday in the Village Hall as well as being very involved with after school activities for our primary school children.

When her accolade was announced in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in June, she said: “It's very special, I didn't think people like me would get things like this.” Her fiancée, Keith, wrote for their Church newsletter “Of course, apart from a few, most awards are given to ordinary people, like Val doing ordinary things in the community not for remuneration or recognition but because it comes naturally to them. Val's MBE came as a complete surprise and is a personal matter to her.”



Many Congratulations Val on a well deserved award.

Wilsden War Memorial

Many of you will have noticed the new railings that have been installed around the Wilsden War memorial. This work, which is shown in the accompanying pictures, has been carried out at the instigation of the Parish Council. One of the disadvantages of the location of the Wilsden War Memorial is that it is very exposed and the wreaths will blow away unless they are securely fastened. For the last few years the wreaths have been secured with string tied around the base of the war memorial, which is far from an ideal solution.



The Parish Council decided to look at how this problem was handled at other war memorials and, as a result, decided that the best option was to install a low level cast iron rail around the base. The local firm Anbec Fabrications were commissioned to do the work because of the excellent work they did with the replacement gates at the old St Matthew's churchyard on Laneside.



proposed library budget in its entirety.

Bradford Council's current position is that they will not fund Wilsden Library from June 30th. The proposal is to replace the static service with a mobile library parked on Townfield for the same number of hours (although not identical hours as evening opening will cease).

An alternative option to a mobile library suggested by Bradford would rely on volunteers staffing the library to supervise the circulation of books, (which the Council would continue to provide) and to manage the space; the Council would continue to offer technical backup and support to Wilsden Library.

Bradford Libraries position was restated at the Neighbourhood Forum held on May 18th.

The Parish Council in conjunction with the Village Hall Management Committee have lobbied our MP, district councillors and the Leader of Bradford Council to reverse this decision as it was unfair in that Wilsden was doubly penalized through losing the library and the £1800 pa in rental income for the Village Hall.

Villagers have also done their bit in signing a petition to save the library; this was presented to Bradford Council.

In spite of our efforts Bradford Council has refused to change its decision. You may be aware that councils up and down the country have targeted libraries when seeking to meet reduced budgets; you may also be aware that a number of legal challenges have been made to the actions of a number of authorities based on breaches of statute, namely lack of proper consultation. North Yorkshire Council has indeed recently rescinded proposed closures of branch libraries.

The battle to save Wilsden Library may not be over. However the alternatives have to be considered. The mobile option will significantly reduce access opportunities and will have a smaller bookstock. It cannot adequately address the function of the library as a working space, particularly for groups of children. The alternative of a community library staffed by volunteers is a possibility but will require an organizational framework and a team of volunteers to enable meaningful dialogue with Bradford Libraries over support. **A number of volunteers have been identified but more names are needed. If you would like to help please let us know as quickly as possible.**

The Parish Council and the Village Hall Management Committee have a further meeting scheduled to discuss the next steps following the Neighbourhood Forum presentation from Bradford Libraries staff and the receipt of the letter of refusal to reverse the decision from Councillor Ian Greenwood. We will keep you informed.



Proposed Closure of Wilsden Library

One of the consequences of the government's financial settlement on the City of Bradford Council is the proposed closure of Wilsden Library. Immediately after Bradford Council approved the budget the Parish Council held an emergency meeting and issued the following statement:

“Wilsden Parish Council is opposed to the proposed closure of the Wilsden Library. Whilst realising the need for economies to be made in local authority spending the Parish Council is extremely concerned with both the process and the proposal that may represent an annual saving to Bradford Council of well under £10,000 but will be at a high cost to the Parish of Wilsden and Harecroft.”



The opposition to the closure cited:

- No consultation whatsoever with the Parish Council or any other element of the community before the decision to withdraw funding was made.
- Difficulty in determining the rationale for the selection. The budget approved by Bradford Council included a saving of £70,000 through closure of the smallest libraries referred to in the Bradford Library Service Review 2010. Size appears to equate with opening hours. The Library Service Review simply records Wilsden as being one of five libraries to have opening hours of less than 10 hours per week (para 3.12) However the report then goes on to say in paras 3.22 and 3.23 “in resource terms the provision and use of the thirteen village libraries is broadly commensurate with the staff resources and opening hours allocated” and “given the relatively small floorspace available at these thirteen village libraries the levels of use are relatively strong”. Wilsden Library is not a failing library that is not worth retention; its potential to increase its 'size' by increasing opening hours has been previously suggested by Wilsden Village Hall but turned down by Bradford Library Service.
- Small saving in global council budget terms.
- **The Parish Plan for Wilsden and Harecroft (2010) identified improvements to the library service as being a priority commitment, both in terms of extending access and increasing integration of the library into the activities of the village, particularly involving the village children who are routinely taken to the Library through the Village Nursery School. The importance of Wilsden library to the community lies as much in the learning space it provides as the books on the shelves; this is something that mobile libraries cannot effectively offer.**

Since that time the Parish Council has met with the Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture and the Head of Library Services for Bradford; both emphasized that the decision to close Wilsden Library was taken by Bradford Councillors in the light of information supplied to them by the Library Service, although the Councillors did not have the benefit of seeing the

Wilsden Scouts Lead the Big Parade



A new Union Flag was presented to the Scouts at the Wilsden Women's Institute Annual General Meeting on 7th March. The WI decided to purchase and present the flag to the 1st Harden and Wilsden Scout Group as they didn't have a Union Flag to parade at major events. The picture on the left shows the WI President, Judy Caunt presenting the flag to representatives of the groups along with their leaders. Pictured are James Thomason from the Scouts, Rowan Maitland from the Cubs and Leo Maitland from the Beavers. The leaders are, from left to right, Alison Baldwin, Ian Maitland and Jonathan Booth, the Group Scout leader.

On 3rd April Rev Bob Evans, who was District Commissioner for the Aire Valley District Scout Group some years ago, dedicated the flag at St Matthew's. The flag was then paraded in bright sunshine on St George's Day 17th April with the Scout Group leading the parade as shown in the picture on the right.



Wilsden Post Office

Everyone was greatly relieved when, in 2008, it was announced that Wilsden Post Office would be spared from closure. That does not mean however that a Post Office can survive if people don't use it. One of the major challenges is the pressure from the internet for services such as renewal of the car tax, where the online service from DVLA is designed to make it very simple to use. The problem with this approach is that while the Post Office allows equal access to all, internet access is not available to everyone. As long as we still have a Post Office the many people who either don't have access to a computer or don't have the possibility to pay electronically will have fair access. The challenge is that, if everyone who could carry out all their transactions on the internet did so, there is not enough business in a village such as Wilsden for the Post Office to remain viable.

One of the new ways this type of competition is affecting the Post Office is actually from the Royal Mail. If you go online to register for online postage labels for parcels and packages and then go to the Fast Drop location at Post Office they have to check that everything is OK but do not receive any additional payment.

As for all the shops and businesses in our village they will only survive if people use them. We know from our Parish Plan survey that the Post Office is considered a vital part of village life but will only prosper if people use its facilities whenever possible.

Village Society Reunion

Verner Wheelock is organising a “get together” for anyone who was involved with the Wilsden Village Society. If you are interested the reunion will be at Chaplin's in Haworth on Wednesday 17th August from mid-day. The cost will be £15 per head and if you would like to attend please contact Verner on 01535 636008 or email to wheelock9x@gmail.com

Wilsden Parish Council Newsletter

New Parish Council Chair

At the Annual Parish Council meeting on May 16th Cllr Les Mosley was elected to serve as Chair of the Council until May 2012. At the same meeting Cllr Jane Callaghan was elected as Vice Chair for the same period. The previous Chair, Peter Ketley and Vice Chair, Peter Allison did not seek re-election and both Les and Jane were elected unanimously.

The Annual Parish Council meeting also expressed its thanks to Bob Armstrong who had served 7 years as councillor for Harecroft. Terry McNamara who had previously been a councillor for the Wilsden ward was elected to represent the Harecroft ward.

New Parish Councillors

Details of the election results are given in an article on p8. After these elections we have two new parish councillors, Simon Dickerson and Dennis O'Hara. Both have written a short message for the Wilsdener.

Simon writes "I have lived most of my adult life in villages, nearly thirty of them in Wilsden. I enjoy the sense of community, involvement and participation, something that is much easier to do in a village rather than a city. I have joined in village life and tried to encourage others to be part of and contribute to their local community. Over the years I have put a lot of effort into, and got so much out of, organisations such as Round Table, Village Societies and here in Wilsden the Gardening Association which has done so much foster a sense of community.

Now retired, having worked for Grattan, in both Leicester and Bradford, and more recently a small Insurance company in Little Germany I am pleased to have been elected to the Parish Council. I bring a range of marketing, sales and operational and budgetary experience to the council which I hope can be used to bring better communication and interaction with the villagers of Wilsden.

My wife Sheila and I have three children who live locally and who all attend primary school in the village. As a family, we have enjoyed living in this lovely part of the world and been very happy here."

Dennis writes "I was born in Bradford in 1946 and moved to Wilsden when I married Janet Mitchell, who had lived in the village all her life. We have one daughter, Katie who lives in Harden with her husband Liam. We have lived in the village for forty years and celebrate our ruby wedding anniversary later this year with a Mediterranean cruise.

In 2004 I was made redundant after 42 years service in the textile industry. At present I am employed full time by the Co-op Peugeot Garage in Keighley as a driver.

For a short period I have assisted with the Gardening Association and the Walling Group. My hobbies are gardening, dog walking, DIY and going to the theatre.

As a newly elected member of the Parish Council I look forward to serving the community of Wilsden in these changing times ahead"

A future edition will include pictures of all councillors.

The Localism Bill

Some of you will have heard or read about a Localism Bill currently going through Parliament and perhaps wondered whether it will have any impact upon you. While some of the proposals do not have any significant effect on our villages others offer an opportunity to have a greater say about planning issues, such as the number and type of houses that are built.

The Bill introduces a new right for communities to influence the future of their area by drawing up a neighbourhood development plan. This will be led by a parish council and say where new houses and businesses will go and what they should look like. Although these plans must conform to various planning policy requirements they will allow local people to have a say on what is allowed. Once a local plan has been developed it will be subject to a local referendum and if approved will put conditions on what the local authority can.

As the Bill is not yet law all the details have yet to be finalised but the Parish Council is looking closely at the implications. It is clear that if such a plan is to be approved by a majority of people in the village there will need to be wide consultation during the development.

This year there has been significant concern about two recent major planning applications in Wilsden that, if approved, will have a major impact on the village. Although these applications will be considered under the existing processes they do illustrate some of the challenges our villages face. It is clear from the comments from residents that there are significant concerns about the strain on local facilities and the extension into the green fields at the boundary of Wilsden. Whatever happens with these applications it is important that we have many other people involved in formulating this neighbourhood action plan.

Wilsden Parish Plan

The Parish Plan was launched last Spring; critical to its usefulness and success is its purpose to start the process of improving village life, rather than being the culmination of the consultation that preceded its publication. The Parish Council have identified three themes on which to concentrate in the first year; support for and dialogue with local businesses, provision of facilities for young people in the village and expanding the provision of library services in Wilsden.

- The Parish Plan seeks to improve support for local business; one of the actions identified is to promote dialogue with businesses within Wilsden and Harecroft. To this end the Parish Council is arranging a forum where business and the Parish Council will exchange ideas on what can be done. The organisation of this event is underway and the forum will take place in summer 2011.
- Improving the provision of facilities for young people is seen as being key to the success of the Parish Plan. The Parish Council is well aware that the consultation exercise held in the development stage of the plan failed to encapsulate the views of this section of our population. The Parish Council has set up a joint working party with the Village Hall Manager to take this forward.
- The third priority for the Parish Council concerns Wilsden Library, with the object of encouraging more villagers to use it and to improve its facilities, including opening hours. This has been overtaken by events with the Bradford Library Service plan to axe Wilsden library. More details of Parish Council actions are given elsewhere in this Wilsdener.