

Happy New Year

In my first newsletter article of 2022, I and my fellow Parish Councillors would like to wish all Ravenshead residents a very Happy New Year. Covid cases do appear to be reducing and the pressure on the NHS is perhaps not quite as severe as originally anticipated.

The New Year has seen record numbers attending classes and group activities at the Leisure Centre. Do look on the Parish Council website for more details. It is our intention to update the website in the near future, and we plan to move with the times and make greater use of social media. Watch this space for further details.

Christmas Lights Switch On

Approximately 500 residents attended the annual Christmas lights switch on. It was a cold, wet and windy December evening, but hopefully everyone enjoyed themselves. Despite some ill-informed speculation on Facebook about the lights in the trees and on the lamp posts, as well as our new tree, the event proved to be a great success. Hopefully, once the lights were switched on, the concerns disappeared. As always, any feedback is welcome. I would like to clarify a couple of rumours which were circulating prior to the event. There wasn't an issue regarding being able to afford a Christmas tree. Councillors Barnfather, Murray and myself, your Gedling Borough councillors, provided the funds for the new tree. The decision to go for an artificial pole tree was thoroughly discussed by the Parish Council, and was chosen for environmental reasons. It was always the intention for the real tree, which was already in situ on the village hall land, to be lit and decorated. It was not decorated because a few people campaigned for it on social media. Most residents realised that they needed to wait for the switch on event to see the full effect.

The event itself would not have been possible without the support given before, and on the night by Parish Councillors and clerks, the Village Hall management committee, the Rotary, the Scouts, the WI, Ravenshead Swing Band, St Peter's Church and many other volunteers. The sound system provided by Dan Johnson was excellent and the disco was very well received by our younger residents. As stated previously, please do contact the Parish Council if you would like to offer any suggestions about how we could continue to improve the event.

Village precept as part of your Council Tax

A small proportion of your Council tax does go towards funding Parish Council activities. This is called the Parish precept. The charge, of course, is determined by the band your property is placed in. A typical band D property attracts a charge of £1 a week. Often residents ask, where is this money being spent? None of this is spent on Parish Councillors who are all volunteers. However, it is used to pay the salaries of the Parish Clerks, the Booking Office staff, the Leisure Centre handyman, as well as subsidising activities at the Leisure Centre. As we are all aware, utility bills use up a large amount of the income as well as the maintenance of the grounds and site, including the pitches. We are quite unique in Ravenshead, in the fact that Gedling Borough Council offer no financial support for the running of the Leisure Centre. In addition, we have the three play parks to maintain and keep the play equipment up to date. Benches around the village are owned by the Parish Council and also need maintaining, along with the replenishing of the blue grit bins. The fantastic flower displays around the village, particularly in the precinct and the red telephone box, are mainly paid for from your council precept along with some individual donations. As always, our accounts are publically available by appointment and can also be viewed on our website.

Martin Smith - Chairman Ravenshead Parish Council

