



Annual Parish Meeting

FOR ELECTORS OF THE PARISH OF OXENHOPE

**7.00 p.m. Thursday 4th April 2019
Marsh Methodist Church**

Minutes

- 1. Apologies for absence**
There were no apologies for absence.
- 2. Report from the Chair of Oxenhope Parish Council**
Cllr Eastwood read out a report as follows:

I am delighted to present a further report as Chair of Oxenhope Parish Council.

The Council has again had a busy and productive year.

The Rose Garden has featured prominently in our work this year and I have been delighted to see a Friends Group established and volunteers helping with planting and bed preparations throughout the year. The Parish Council is acting as the accountable body and we are grateful to the Ovenden Moor Windfarm Fund and the Community Foundation for Calderdale for the award of a grant of £9,672. This will be used to transform the Rose Garden and enable the purchase of new benches, a new welcome to Oxenhope information sign, new entrances and repairs to stone walls.

Fruit bushes, bedding plants, shrubs and, of course, roses have recently been planted along with 8 new cherry trees.

After a lengthy process, the lease transferring responsibility for the Garden to the Parish Council is agreed by both parties and all being well will be signed shortly.

Another village asset, the Horse Shoe Dam, was put up for sale by auction during the year. The Parish Council had previously registered the land as an

asset of community value under the Localism Act. This process prevented the planned sale proceeding and enabled the Parish Council to enter into negotiations with the Duchy of Lancaster to purchase the site. A deal was agreed on favourable terms and we are awaiting completion of the conveyance which, somewhat ironically, has been held up by the asset of community value listing. However, I am assured by Bradford Council that this should not slow the purchase any further.

I have recently been contacted about the embankment behind the dam by members of the public previously involved with the Oxenhope Gardening Club. In the past volunteers planted primroses on the slope, which has now become overgrown with Ivy and Brambles which is preventing the primroses from flowering. We will need to give some thought to the maintenance of the site and the cleaning of the footpath in due course.

Work on development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Oxenhope has progressed well, with direction from Cllr Peter McManus, input from other members of the Council and from members of the project group. Our planning consultants, Integreat Plus, are currently working on a revised draft which we will be consulting on widely later this year and into 2020 as the process to produce the plan reaches completion.

Throughout the year, we have continued to comment on planning applications received, supporting development that is in keeping with the village and opposing that which is not.

In a different area, we have worked closely with Bradford Council on the development of a local emergency plan for Oxenhope. We now have a secure equipment store and various materials and resources to assist in the event of a local emergency, such as the localised flooding we faced in 2016. We will be holding an exercise in the new municipal year to test the plan and ensure we are as well placed as we can be to provide a local response to emergency events. Thanks to the Clerk and Cllrs Maw and Harrop for their work in progressing these important arrangements.

Our relationship with other organisations in the village has continued to be good and to develop further. The community art project leading up to the Tour de Yorkshire was a successful example of how we can come together and make good things happen. The Oxenhope sign and wooden rosettes looked great and the bunting along the route brightened up the village and led to requests to leave it in place throughout the Summer. We were fortunate to receive a visit by the Tour de France Director and the Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire. I have to say it was somewhat surreal seeing them sat in Oxenhope's bike shed painting rosettes with the kids! All told, a fabulous project and many thanks to all involved.

The Tour is coming to Oxenhope again in 2019, on Sunday, 5th May. This year the route will bring the riders into the village from Long Causeway and out again along Blackmoor Road. I'm looking forward to seeing how we can provide a warm Oxenhope welcome.

Two of our Members have worked with the Clerk to organise meetings with regard to the unadopted roads in The Square. We have been pleased to see a good level of resident engagement and whilst this is a very difficult issue to resolve, we are hopeful we can find a way to implement some improvements.

This year we have seen the Parish Council recognised nationally. I was invited to present at two National Association of Local Councils conferences and to write an article for their Local Council Review journal. The focus of this work was on our use of social media and online polls and surveys. It has been good to see Oxenhope Online receiving some acclaim and I am grateful to fellow administrators for making that a success and a useful resource for the village.

Late last year we invited the Ward Officer to deliver a presentation on dementia friendly communities. We have recognised that dementia is a serious issue within many communities and as Oxenhope has a higher than average proportion of elderly people we need to explore opportunity to provide support and to raise awareness of dementia within the village.

With leadership from Cllr Faulkner we are planning a dementia friendly Oxenhope project, joining up with businesses and care providers in the village, to hopefully help people with dementia.

In addition to new projects and initiatives, we continue to support the Youth Club, which would not exist in its current form without Parish Council financial support. We also continue to provide allotments and to manage the amenity land at Marsh Common.

This year is election year and it is with sadness that we will be saying farewell to four of our Members who will not be standing again in May. Cllrs Ashcroft, Harrop, Hopkinson and Maw have made significant contributions to the work of the Council and to Oxenhope and I would like to thank them sincerely and wish them the very best for the future.

I am also grateful to other Members for their input and for freely giving their time to support our work. I am looking forward to working with them, with new Members and, of course, with our Clerk as we begin another term of office.

Finally, I'd like to record my thanks to Ward Councillors, the Police, the School and Rev. Thatcher for their ongoing contributions towards helping the Parish Council in its work.

Thank you also to those members of the public attending our meetings and raising issues of concern in the village.

3. Public question time

There were no public questions

4. Public opportunity to inspect the Parish Council's draft accounts

The clerk made the draft accounts available.

The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.