

**BOROUGHBRIDGE MAYOR'S DIARY**  
**Councillor Geoff Craggs's Weekly Diary**

**16 December 2011**

Last week saw serious disruption to traffic flow and parking in Fishergate, due to the renewal of worn and damaged paving slabs. Thankfully this work has now been finished and whilst the choice by NYCC of the period just before Christmas was far from ideal, the contractors who carried out the work did so speedily and well, despite the appalling weather, and with their usual resilience our residents and shoppers coped with the situation although many of the businesses must have suffered.

We also had our first reminder that we live alongside the River Ure when we had a flood alert last Friday following the high winds and rain in Swaledale and Wensleydale, and it was reassuring to see that the Environment Agency and HBC representatives were "on the ball", monitoring the situation. Fortunately the river level was well below the danger point and all was well! Ironically, a meeting of the local Emergency Committee had already been scheduled for Monday the 12th. December, so that we had quite an interesting and productive meeting! For those who do not know, the Emergency Committee is made up of representatives from Boroughbridge Town Council, the neighbouring Parish Councils, Harrogate Borough Council, North Yorkshire County Council, the Environment Agency the Police and other emergency services. Unfortunately the Police and Environment Agency were unable to send representatives, but we had a very useful meeting with the County and HBC officers, and lessons from past events have been learnt and will be incorporated immediately into operational procedures; a very good meeting.

On Saturday the 10th, along with our counterparts from Ripon, Pateley Bridge and Harrogate, we attended the always-entertaining and humbling talent contest put on by Ripon Activity Project at the 4Youth Centre in Ripon. This year we were spared last year's fire alarm interruptions and the event went off very smoothly, with very talented performances by RAP members, interspersed by contributions from the MC Jerry Anderson, who really should have a new joke book on his "wants" list for Christmas! RAP is one of the many worthwhile- nay, invaluable- charities which has either lost its funding or had it severely cut back because of the current economic situation - along with our own Community Care organisation they now depend almost entirely on local support for their survival, so "support it or lose it" ( to misquote a popular injunction).

On leaving Ripon we went straight to St. James's Church to the Christmas Tree Festival, and marvelled at the creative talents of local folk, young and old. The trees were incredible and whilst there were winning trees, really everyone was a winner. Several pound poorer (well, there was a tombola and other means of relieving people of their money) but replete with coffee and cakes we went home to get ready for Sunday's "Carols on the Square", which looked at one point destined to become "Carols in the Church" because of the unpromising weather. Thankfully, by mid afternoon the rain had more or less ceased. We managed to put up the tent for the band, rig up the lights and speakers, put out chairs and all went ahead more or less as planned. Soup, generously given by The Dining Room, was gratefully consumed, along with Santa's mince pies - another well attended and happy community event which somehow "happened".

At the end of the carolling, the winners of the Christmas tree competition and the best shop window display were handed their trophies, we cleared up and everyone went home, rejoicing.

In conclusion, we owe a huge "thank you" to all the volunteers from Community Care, the Allotment Society, St.James's Church and everyone else who helped to make the weekend's events happen; in particular, thanks are due yet again to Keith Trott, Chairman of Community Care and also the Chamber of Trade for its involvement and invaluable help.

