

There is quite a lot to write about this week, so I hope the Editor is forebearing!

On Tuesday evening the quarterly meeting of the Safer Neighbourhood Group took place in the Coronation Hall, when the Police were able to report on the recent spate of burglaries in the area- notably in Boroughbridge itself. A person had been arrested, charged, found guilty in Court and is now residing in one of Her Majesty's prisons...a good result, thanks to the Police and I understand input from members of the public; this underlines the importance of Neighbourhood Watch and similar schemes in reporting and guarding against criminal activities, anti social behaviour and the like in our communities. If no Neighbourhood Watch scheme exists in your own area, it is well worth starting one up - how about it?

On Friday evening we had great pleasure in attending the "Volunteering Oscars" awards evening at the Old Swan in Harrogate. The "Oscars" was the brainchild of Councillor John Fox when he was the Mayor of Harrogate 2008/9 to reward some of the countless volunteers from around the District who have gone "the extra mile" to help others. It is good that John is still the moving force behind this celebration and recognition of the huge contribution to the quality of life in our communities which is made by the voluntary sector; the list of organisations and individuals is endless, all of them largely unsung and in fact not seeking any recognition for the work they put into their chosen voluntary work. Well done everyone, recognised or unrecognised- you are all winners!

Saturday evening found me at King James's School, Knaresborough with the Mayor and Mayoress of Knaresborough to help hand over the prizes for the 2010 Knaresborough Rotary Club's "Young Musicians Festival". What a superb evening's entertainment we enjoyed from supremely talented and dedicated young folk, age range from Year 6 to Years 12 & 13. Whilst we were treated to performances by the winners from each Year Group on their favoured instruments, between each individual performance we were entertained by - in order of performance- the KJS Riverside Jazz Band, the Knaresborough Schools Junior Choir, the Boroughbridge Combined Junior School Orchestra (and more on that later), Christian Young, who is a past winner and now singing professionally, the Hermes String Quartet (made up of the Messenger boys, aged 8 to 16!), the evening being rounded off by Riverside Jazz .... what a wonderful evening, and a vindication for the commitment, discipline and dedication of our young people and their teachers - and of course for the support they receive at home in most cases. Thank you all.

Now to the Boroughbridge Combined Junior Schools Orchestra. Apparently whilst many children learn to play a musical instrument at their primary schools, very often they have no opportunity to play with their peers because their school is small. This can even apply to a school as large as Boroughbridge Primary if not many pupils take up an instrument. On chatting to the Boroughbridge Head, David Roberts, I learnt that through the enthusiasm of one lady whose idea it was, and the support of, I think, 15 schools in the Boroughbridge area many of these children were brought together only 6 weeks ago to form this orchestra. Most of the children have only been playing for about a year but the music we heard on Saturday evening was fantastic. What was even better was to see the joy on the faces of the youngsters at playing in public as part of a group. Funding was available only for six short weeks and it would be an absolute tragedy if these children cannot continue to play together; without this encouragement, many will inevitably become discouraged, " drop" their instrument; if they

continue playing, when they take their next step on the education ladder they will be able to continue playing with their new school music group.  
Watch out for more on this subject!