

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

**7 October 2011**

On Tuesday evening I attended the Safer Neighbourhood Group meeting at the Coronation Hall, where representatives from the neighbourhood parish councils and other interested groups meet every quarter with representatives of the Police. Inevitably, the subject of anti social behaviour from a small "hard core" of youngsters and adults came up for discussion, particularly as a letter from the Headteacher of the High School had been received expressing concern at the escalation in acts of trespass on to school grounds and the consequent litter and damage caused, together with the way in which young people not connected with either the school or the Youth Service hung about near the school, intimidating pupils. It was stressed at the meeting that there was no connection with the operation of the Youth Service, as these activities occur when the Youth Wing is closed, and youngsters who attend their Club also suffer from the "attentions" of these people. Assurance was given by the Police representatives that they are aware of the situation, patrol the area whenever resources permit and certain actions are being implemented already.

Crime, particularly theft from premises and from vehicles and the theft of vehicles has increased in our area; the Police representatives stressed the need for tighter security, in particular the locking of vehicles, buildings and homes. We are in hard times, the dark nights are on us, so let's all be warned- and careful!

The other "hardy annual" which came up was dog fouling, and the mammoth task of enforcing the law when the District has only two dog wardens. As the two of you who read my weekly diatribe will know, the unspeakable behaviour of some dog owners who think it is acceptable to allow their dogs to defecate anywhere and who make no attempt to pick up the result is the cause of most of the complaints councillors receive from visitors and residents; last term children at the Primary School came up with some very good posters which were to be turned into notices to be fixed in the worst "black spots" in order to shame people into picking up their pets' waste products- I wonder what happened to these notices? I must ask the school.

The once-a-term "Links" meeting was held at the High School on Thursday, when one of the matters discussed was inevitably that of the anti social behaviour referred to in my first paragraph. Along with the other "lay" members at the meeting I found it very commendable and courageous that the Headteacher Ms. Dixon had brought the School's concerns to our notice, and hope that the "bad apples" are soon found and dealt with.

It is very apparent that our High School is going from strength to strength, both academically and as a "good place to be", and these regular meetings are of enormous benefit to everyone. As an instance, Mrs Rainbow told us of the difficulty she sometimes experiences in placing pupils for work experience, partially because of a reluctance on the part of some employers to take on youngsters for a couple of weeks to let them experience the working environment. Over the years we have had many youngsters on work experience, and have given full time employment to several of them, to our mutual gain...so if you are approached by some diffident young person wanting work experience, think kindly of them- it takes courage to ask some perceived ogre for a job!

Later on Thursday three of us from BACLA met two senior officers from the NYCC Library Service to find out what progress is being made over the future of Boroughbridge library. It seems that there will now be no closures of libraries in North Yorkshire, and Boroughbridge in particular- having been the first community to come up with an action plan for keeping the facility open with some volunteer input- is likely to receive as much professional support as possible. The recommendations of the Library Service to NTCC members will be in the public domain on November 8th, and will be accepted (or not!) by NYCC at a meeting on November 22nd.

THEN we will all know how many "professional" hours a week we will have and involve everyone in planning the way ahead for the library and St. James' Hall .( The "upper room" !)  
On Friday we had the bitter-sweet pleasure of attending a farewell buffet and presentation in honour of Lynette Barnes, who has been in charge of Ripon and District CVS for 25 years, and has now retired. Ripon CVS covers Boroughbridge of course, and contributes financially and in manpower towards our Boroughbridge Community Care- although how long that will continue is very uncertain in view of the drastic cuts to the CVS budget- it looks very much as though Boroughbridge will soon have to be self sufficient and provide all our funding for Community Care- something we had to do in the past, so we can do it again if necessary.

Friday evening was the Chairman of North Yorkshire County Council's Charity Dinner at the Pavilions in Harrogate, where we all had an excellent meal (which we had to pay for, I hasten to add!) of Yorkshire produced and prepared food, well served and in good company. We shared a table with the Chairman and Consort of Cumbria County Council and some of the "top brass" from North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, and in fact had quite a bonanza with raffle prizes between us, as well as sharing some interesting anecdotes! A great evening.

Finally, a reminder that the good folk of the Boroughbridge Methodist Church are holding their Harvest festival this weekend, starting tonight at 7 pm with an exhibition of scarecrows (I must remember to keep moving in case I'm judged) and culminating in the Harvest Festival Service on Sunday; this links in nicely with "Sow It, Grow It" on the Community Open Space in Back Lane, starting 10.30 tomorrow, Saturday- also a good time to take along any garden refuse you want rid of to the recycling skips on the Open Space, which will be paying their regular visit on the second Saturday in the month from 8 am to 12 noon