

Acomb Parish Council – District Councillor’s Report February 2006

The Monday Club for older residents is up and running (though as a Labour Party member, I’m not sure about the name!) We held a drop-in session on December 13th at the Village Hall, inviting anyone interested in joining the club to come along. We had a very useful discussion, with quite a lot of interest shown and several people volunteering to help. The mince pies were provided by Mrs Dorothy Pencott – they must have been good, as they all disappeared!

The Monday Club met for the first time last Monday January 16th from 1.00pm till about 3.00pm. Around 15 residents attended, with several more giving their apologies and intending to come in the future. Bill Grigg arranged for Marie McWilliams from Age Concern Northumberland to come along to talk about the organisation’s work in Northumberland. In particular, she mentioned the Age Concern Northumberland Information Line which operates on 08450 950150 (calls are charged at the local rate). This service has been set up specifically for older people and can help on issues such as benefits, as well as broader issues such as noisy neighbours. The line is open Monday-Friday 10am to 1pm and all calls are confidential.

Bill Walker, also from Age Concern, gave a useful presentation on Age Concern’s Money Maze project, and explained the various methods by which pensions and benefits are now paid.

At the end of the visit, Marie and Bill distributed “goodie bags”, each containing such items as reflective shopping bags to ensure visibility and low energy light bulbs, as well as containers for the “message in a bottle” scheme and panic alarms. It was an excellent afternoon – may I express my thanks to Bill Grigg for arranging it all, and to Mrs Anne Robson for single-handedly organising the refreshments? The intention is that the new club will meet every week on a Monday at 1.00 – all are welcome.

As I mentioned in my December newsletter, Acomb First School was visited by Ofsted on November 28th. Staff and governors were delighted with the report, which recognised the high quality of teaching in the school, as well as the care, guidance and support offered. The report states that Acomb School is “a good school which provides well for its pupils... Pupils enjoy school...

The acting headteacher provides good leadership and management....

Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. Pupils enter the school with average levels of pre-school skills and reach above average standards by the end of Year 4.”

The inspector Mr David Ford spent some time with the children (without the staff listening in!) and sent each child a letter with a summary of his inspection report, so that all the children were involved in the process.

As Chair of Governors at the school, I should like to congratulate everyone, the children, parents, staff and particularly, the acting headteacher Ms Jo Bentley for this complimentary report. It reflects the tremendous amount of work which everyone has put in at the school and the support given to Acomb School by the wider community.

If you would like to discuss any matter raised in this report, or indeed any other issue, please get in touch (01434 681487 or jane.wrigley@tynedale.gov.uk).

Jane Wrigley

January 18th 2006