

Melton Messenger Grant- Discussion Paper

The parish church of St Andrew's lies at the heart of Melton's conservation area and ever since it was built in the 1860's – to be closer to the new railway!- it has remained a centre for worship and community engagement.

Until the 1920's, the parish council and the parochial parish council were one and the same body. Now we have two distinct councils, both focussed on doing the best we can for the people of Melton.

One of the ways the church reaches out to the community is through its publication, the Melton Messenger (MM). The Rector is the Editor and there is a team of willing volunteers who ensure it gets delivered to every household in the village. It is unique in this regard because the distribution of other publications is very patchy in Melton.

Following each and every meeting of the Parish Council, Cllr. Jenny Eckersley writes a piece for the MM summarising our proceedings. Her reports are written in a very accessible style and are an integral part of our communication strategy with the village.

The issue arises for the parish council when we have items which are time-critical or require a more urgent response than the MM schedule can cope with. There have been numerous examples of this over the years where the needs of the two parish councils collide rather than coincide.

This has now become a major stumbling block and obviously a financial one because in an ideal world, while we are keen to be supportive of the MM team, we do have a duty to communicate and we have to work within our limited budget.

I would like to propose that we can do both, that there is a way we can provide financial security for our partners at the church while still delivering on the commitment for regular and timely communication for MPC.

What I am suggesting is that we take the line in the **MPC 2013/2014 budget** for **Communications** and apply it solely to our own plans for a new MPC Newsletter and our own website development.

We take the line in the budget for **Grants** and apply that to the **MM** on the basis that the church is one of our three community partners in the village- the other two being the Burness Parish Rooms and Melton Primary School.

In future years we may decide to decrease these Grants or we may consider equal treatment or even alternating between the three, as funding allows.

I am recommending this proposal as a way of breaking the deadlock because by working within our limited budget there is a way to successfully support both our own communication endeavours and the MM in this budget year.

The proposal additionally recognises that we are working closely with the three bodies identified in this paper- namely church, school and parish rooms- for the benefit of all our residents here in Melton, as evidenced by the success of our 2012 events and further plans for this coming year.

Bryony Abbott

Chair, MPC

February 2013