

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2021/22

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 4TH APRIL 2022

After a period of holding meetings remotely due to the pandemic, in person meetings resumed in the middle of the year. Myself as Chairman and Cllr Anne Powell as Vice Chairman were re-elected in their respective positions for a further term.

This has been a busy twelve months for your Parish Council. During the year Vehicle Activated Signs (funded by the Parish Council with the aid of a small grant from the Police Commissioners Office) were installed in Rufforth. These include a data collection facility which can be used to build a case for further speed management measures. At the same time permanent community speedwatch signs were erected. These measures are all part of our efforts to address the issue of speeding in the village and community speedwatch plays a vital role in this, as it is only by having comprehensive data that we can lobby for further action. On this note we still need more volunteers to assist in the speedwatch activities. My thanks to Cllr Nick Murray for all his work and determination in leading this project.

The Parish Council has funded and organized the resurfacing of Southfield Lane and repairs to the French Drain alongside. This has significantly improved conditions for pedestrians and for access to the Natural Burial ground.

The Parish council has facilitated the purchase and installation of benches along the cyclepath, which have kindly been donated by 3 residents, some in memory of loved ones. Yorwaste have kindly constructed a path to the bench on the rise past the gun club road providing access for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Unbelievably and disappointingly one of the benches has now been stolen. The matter has been reported to the Police and to our insurance company.

Councillors continue to meet with Yorwaste management at regular formal Liaison meetings to monitor the Operating Agreement which the Parish Council has with them. As a result of much hard work we now have an excellent working relationship with Yorwaste and any issues that may arise are dealt with promptly. If residents have any concerns we urge them to let us know via the form on the website. As a result of our discussions a guard rail has been

erected opposite the Harewood Whin entrance to provide further measures to prevent HGV's turning right out of the site.

Subject to planning permission, which we are currently awaiting, the Parish Council will create a children's play area on the recreation field in Knapton. This is being funded by the Parish Council with the aid of a grant from CYC and a generous donation from Barratt Developments. Thanks to Cllr John Flynn for leading and driving through this project with great enthusiasm.

We are aware of parking issues in Knapton and are lobbying CYC to find a satisfactory solution.

York's Community Woodland project is progressing and we have been involved in a number of stakeholder meetings throughout the year. In particular we have raised concerns over adequate parking, the provision of toilet facilities and waste bins. As a Parish Council we have been promised a direct input on these issues into Forestry England who will be managing the project. It should be noted that this is a long term project and that public access is several years in to the future.

At long last the new allotments for Rufforth are nearing completion, following a great deal of chasing by the Parish Council. CYC will shortly hand over the allotments and lease the land to the Parish council who will manage the allotments with the Allotment Holders Association. CYC's budget did not extend to a communal shed and store, so with the help of a Ward Grant the Parish council will be funding the provision of such a facility.

We have dealt with a number of planning applications throughout the past year, many of them for extensions. In all cases, our response is guided by our Neighbourhood Plan, which is available to view on our website. The application for 60 affordable homes on land adjoining the Trenchard Road area of the parish, went to appeal and the decision to reject was upheld. The parish Council spent a great deal of time building and presenting the case against this application, including a meeting with CYC agreeing the approach to the appeal. More recently we have been working on the application for 21 houses at the end of Middlewood Close. This site was allocated for housing in the submitted Neighbourhood plan but removed by the Examiner before the plan went to referendum. Accordingly we have not opposed the application in principle but have been working very hard on aspects of the design in order to minimize any

adverse effects on residents. This has involved numerous meetings with the relevant authorities, and we await the result in the planners' report. This application will go to the CYC planning committee at a date yet to be announced. Similarly, the Parish Council has supported the redevelopment of the "old shop" site in principle but have raised a number of issues with the design.

The cemetery both formal and natural continues to offer a service to parishioners and in the case of the Natural Burial ground to people from a wider area. Our thanks are due to Cllr Helen Butterworth for her passion and hard work in managing this facility.

It should be noted that it is proceeds from the natural burial ground that have enabled us to deliver the projects that I have outlined and which we believe offer very significant benefits to the Parish, whilst keeping the precept for the coming year at a rate of just £25.07 per annum for a Band D property.

Our new website has been operational for over a year now, and we have received many positive comments. Please use it to find information on our meetings, planning and other local news. Our Parish Council meetings are held on the first Monday of every month in the Institute at 7:30 pm. Members of the public are welcome so please come along and have your say on local issues.

Finally my thanks are due to all my fellow councillors for their hard work , enthusiasm and personal support throughout another year and especially to our Clerk, Stephanie Warden for her hard work, commitment and efficiency as always.