

Skeeby Parish Council 2021

My report for the 2021 P.C. year.

The year started, and is indeed still, under the most difficult situation known to man for over 100 years. This is a war against a worldwide enemy that can't be seen or heard in any circumstances and life as we know it has virtually stopped. The population have been confined to their homes for a considerable time, except for essential workers and the people needed to maintain the necessities of life. As I write, deaths in this country alone are over 125,000. Grim reading statistics indeed. I think we all know someone who has suffered because of this.

There have been only two P.C. meetings this last year, August and October, all others being cancelled due to Covid restrictions. Thankfully it has been a relatively quiet year for the P.C. Flooding in Olliver Lane was investigated by Highways who have found a gas pipe that could cause obstructions. We await Highways to investigate further and remedy any potential problems. Highways also did extensive and essential work on Skeeby Bridge, demolishing part of the walls and spandrels, and rebuilding to a standard that ensures it can carry a large amount of traffic, some heavy, into the future. The water leak on the Western approach to the bridge is still ongoing, extensive dry weather and it ceases, heavy rainfall and it reappears, which leads to the suspicion that it may be a spring, and should be easy to rectify. We still await reinstatement of the removed speed cushions.

A planning application for No. 42 Richmond Road had been approved for the property to be developed, with two further dwellings added. Highways had advised the applicant regarding obtaining consent from the P.C. for access over the Village Green. This has currently been ignored and surface damage has been created. We await further work on this project, but P.C. reserves judgement on the reinstatement of Village Green. Other planning issues have been raised, but it appears the planning department do not have the teeth they once had.

The Travellers Rest Committee have regrouped, and revamped their work to purchase and reopen the village pub. Thanks go to them, especially Kay Richardson for her hard work. At the moment, they have commitment for 55% of target price. Cllr Heslop had offered assistance to enable a compulsory purchase by R.D.C. to enable it to move forward. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, has promised £150m for countrywide projects such as this, and other forms of public participation, so perhaps a C.P. may not be needed. Let's hope the pub reopens, and can go forward, but if people get used to working from home, there may not be any travellers left to use it!

Central Government had put out for consultation, the possibility of a Unitary Council for the whole of North Yorkshire to replace both District and NYCC. Both NYCC and all District Councils put their case for either a split Unitary, East/ West, or the whole including York, depending how they preferred it. H M Government will make their decision at some point, but no doubt it will cause a lot of expense and heartache no matter what they decide!

Thanks go to Cllr. Ian Moreton for his work researching a Play Policy for the Community Parks. This has been adopted and covers everything for the continuing development of children and their Elders. Thanks also go to Cllr. Paul Rummery for his sterling work in obtaining trees to plant in the Community Park as part of the Northern Forrest, and we await delivery. Indeed my thanks go to all P. Cllrs. For their help in what has been a very difficult year for us all. Cllr. Heslop for his assistance, especially the Travellers Rest, and not forgetting Cllr. Thomson. He has been unable to attend meetings, but he is there as our contact with NYCC. Then of course, many thanks go to Frances, she has been very diligent in her work, under especially trying circumstances. Keeping in contact with us

all by email or phone is one thing, but Frances should not have to spend hours trying to contact senior officers in higher councils, or to be put on hold for considerable lengths of time while staff get their act together and point her in the right direction for her enquiry. I know she finds it frustrating when they don't even reply to an email! *Thank you Frances for all your hardwork f&w*

I will leave you with this thought, in 1914 we had the Great War and many millions lost their lives, followed by the Spanish Flu in 1919, This was followed by the Roaring Twentys when the World let it's hair down, and rightly so. 1929 saw the Wall St. crash with the result that many millions worldwide lost their livelihoods during ten years of the Great Depression. The poverty was unbelievable! We have had wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a worldwide pandemic that is not yet finished.....and I really hope history does not repeat itself, for if it does, then I fear the worst is yet to come.

