

Eskdaleside cum Ugglebarnby Parish Council
Annual Meeting of the Council - Chairman's Report 2013 - 14

Council Membership

During the past year we have welcomed Cllr Christine Stephenson to the Parish Council.

Finance

With the introduction of the Localised Support for Council Tax for the 2013/14 financial year, the calculation of the Parish Precept changed. However, the Parish Council decided to continue to again freeze its Precept request and for the 2013/14 financial year the Precept was £15691, and the LSCT Discretionary Grant £1090 – giving a funding requirement of £16781 (as per previous year's Precept). The 2014/15 Precept and Discretionary Grant will remain unchanged – due to the increase in Band D properties this has the effect of a 1.65% reduction in council tax for residents.

The Model Agreement monies of £3694 were received from Scarborough Borough Council during the year, with the return stating £3054 was spent. The new Model Agreement for 2014/15 has been signed and sent to Scarborough Borough Council for an estimate of £3813; however due to the underspend in 2013/14 financial year this will actually be reduced.

Planning Applications

41 planning applications and consultations were received during the year from Scarborough Borough Council, North York Moors National Park Authority, NYCC and Central Government. The Council is grateful to Cllrs Dave Tate and Alf Watson for considering and advising on planning matters again this year.

Public Conveniences

The Parish Council is currently working with its designated architects to obtain tenders from contractors to undertake this project, and is researching funding opportunities to assist with the costs. Whilst the Eskdaleside toilets are in a relatively poor state they are still usable, and we remain most grateful to John Mead for keeping watch on them and locking and unlocking them every day.

Highways

Working with SBC, NYCC and the police the Parish Council has been able to tackle speeding and parking issues in Sleights. This has resulted in the funding of a temporary VAS sign on Coach Road, speed gun monitoring, increased traffic warden patrols and a compromise in resolving the issues of the Briggswath Chicane and the A169/B1410 The Carrs Junction.

Following persistent communications, it has been confirmed by NYCC that the A169 Coach Road from the New Bridge to Iburndale Lane will be resurfaced and there will be kerb widening outside The Spar in Sleights during Qtr 3 of the 2014/15 financial year. There will be further improvement works planned on roads throughout the parish. Blue Bank has already seen some tidying and improvements.

Environment

The Linden Close project continues to progress and has been a fantastic addition to the village. Additionally, a wildflower verge on Coach Road opposite Sleights Village Hall has now been developed and will hopefully give some enjoyment over the coming years. The Parish Council agreed to give support to Colin Nelson in the setting up of the new Sleights Parish Environment Association, in conjunction with Scarborough Borough Council's Roger Burnett, and hopes this project goes from strength to strength.

Dog fouling continues to be a persistent problem; however, the Parish Council has been active in liaising with Scarborough Borough Council's dog warden to crack down on this issue.

Flooding

The issues around flooding in Linden Close have been a continual area that the Parish Council has been pressing NYCC for a resolution. NYCC are working with landowners in the area to come to a solution and are continuing to monitor the situation. However, the Parish Council continues to ensure that the sandbag storage unit is full of sandbags available for residents to take in times of need.

Footpaths

The Parish Council has financially supported North York Moors National Park in undertaking improvements to Tom Bell's Lane and Seggimire following damage from 4x4 vehicles. These works have been completed and will hopefully encourage walkers, horse riders and nature lovers to enjoy what is on our doorstep.

Other Activities

The council again had a presence at Sleights Show and this was well received by those who attended.

The Parish Newsletter continued to be produced on a regular quarterly basis and distributed to virtually all residents via the Whitby Advertiser. We are grateful to Cllr Judy Powditch for the excellent work she does in compiling each edition.

Noticeboards are continually updated with information regarding the Parish Council, relevant organisations and events in the parish and the surrounding area.

We now have a website, which hopefully will be a central location for information about the parish council and the area and be of use to all the residents.

Parish Plan 2008 - 2013: A review has been undertaken by Cllr J Powditch and the Clerk and it is planned that a summary overview of how the objectives have been met will be circulated to residents with the summer newsletter.

Affordable Housing: Permission was granted for development by the planning authority following consultation with various stakeholders. It is hoped that after a delay this project will continue to progress over the next year.

York Potash: Representatives from York Potash have addressed meetings to explain progress, and the Parish Council will expect to receive more information on the new planning application in due course.

Police liaison: The Council has received regular updates from the police representative regarding incidents within the area, and has ably answered questions on matters of concern raised by the councillors.

Post Office: The Parish Council has continued to petition Royal Mail to retain a presence within Sleights. It is hoped that the move to the Spar will be completed as soon as possible.

Borough/County Councillors: Regular updates have been received on matters that appertain to the Borough and County from our representatives. The Parish Council has welcomed Cllrs Helen Swiers and Mike Ward to its meetings, and is grateful to the hard work undertaken by Cllr G Coulson.

I am grateful for the contribution of all Members.

Cllr B Truman