

Egton with Newland, Mansriggs and Osmotherley Parish Council

Chairman's Report 2019-21

The Council

A new Council took office following the election in May 2019 and shortly after we were fortunate to appoint Cathy Child to be our Clerk. The new Council was getting into its stride when public meetings and our other activities were stopped by the regulations introduced to control the pandemic. Those closures meant we could not hold our Annual Meeting in 2020 so this Report covers two years of Council activity.

Councillor Jane Carson stepped down in 2019 after many years of service to the community as a Parish Councillor and latterly Chair of the Council. Jane led many initiatives and made an important contribution to our work. Councillor Anne Burrow also stepped down in 2019 and we thank her for all she did as a Councillor and as a past Chair.

Sadly, Howard Graves, one of our long serving Councillors from Broughton Beck died in March. We are very sorry to lose his wise counsel and positive contributions. He will not be easy to replace.

Since restrictions were imposed on public gatherings the Council has continued to hold its usual meetings but remotely by ZOOM. This has allowed us to carry on but has meant that we have not been able to welcome the public to participate to the extent we would want. We hope that normal meetings with enhanced public participation will resume by mid-Summer.

Some councillor training sessions have been held but some have been curtailed because of the restrictions. More such sessions are planned.

Meetings & Activities

We have held 11 meetings since the last report with six being held by Zoom. Councillors have held meetings of Working Groups to develop budgets and plans for the future.

We have considered all planning applications made within the Parish and where appropriate have made comment and representations to SLDC or the National Park.

The long-planned defibrillator for Spark Bridge has been fitted in the redundant phone box opposite the Royal Oak and we have continued to maintain and improve the four bus shelters provided by the Council (Penny Bridge, Spark Bridge and two at Greenodd).

At Spark Bridge Village Green we installed a picnic table and refurbished the two benches. Elsewhere noticeboards have been upgraded and new ones commissioned for Arrad Foot and Penny Bridge.

The Council has carried out a review of its woodland assets and over the next year plans to begin a long-term programme of enhancement with a view to improve the conservation and recreational value of these community assets.

In March last year we made the application to have the Farmer's Arms declared an Asset of Community Value which was the first step along the path that in April this year resulted in Grizzdale Arts acquiring that historic building to establish an important new arts and community centre serving the Crake Valley and beyond. We wish them well in this project.

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At the end of 2020 Holker Estates closed a well-used permissive path to Mearness Point. The Council took immediate steps to engage with the Estate and succeeded in having the permissive path re-opened.

Other actions have involved attempts to deal with traffic problems at Penny Bridge and Spark Bridge. We can report that the County Council, as the highway authority, has agreed to instal new signage and some other minor works to mitigate the problems we identified.

The Council also carried out a questionnaire survey of residents in Greenodd aimed gaining a better understand of parking problems on Main Street and at the Crakeside Industrial Estate. In addition the Council has had a meeting with the agents who manage that estate to urge them increase off-street parking within the estate.

The Council made its usual and donations to local community organisations and this year made a £900 grant to Broughton Beck Village Hall for improvement to signage and the electricity system.

Finances

The Council is in a good financial position with a capital reserve fund standing at £46,000 and other reserves of around £10,000. The Precept for 2020/21 has been kept at £8250 for both years covered by this report.

Our capital fund arose from the proceeds of sale of land some years ago and has been retained until such time that the Council can identify suitable projects that will be of long term benefit to the Parish. The other reserves have come from a bequest made by the late Nigel Lord who lived in the Parish for much of his life.

This year, our accounting procedures as regards AGAR (Annual Governance and Accounting Return) have been completed very satisfactorily, well ahead of the deadline and audited by Julie Hartley, acting as our internal auditor. We would like to thank her for her guidance.

Chairman's Thanks

I would like to thank our Clerk for all the good work she has done over the past two years and my fellow Councillors for their help and support.

Councillor Brian Campbell

Chair Egton with Newland, Mansriggs and Osmotherley Council.

May 2021