

Chairperson's Report 2025

Firstly, I would like to mark the passing last year of Councillor Platts. Sue was a valued member of the Parish Council who had served for a number of years. In addition to her reasoned approach to matters, her employment background made her an asset when matters of a legal nature were being debated. Her presence is greatly missed.

Looking back at the last year I am faced once again with the fact that there are a number of issues that crop up on a regular basis. There are also some that we manage to resolve quite quickly and are one offs. Inevitably our role as a Parish Council is to keep working to maintain the area in as good a standard possible within the legal and financial confines we operate.

I reported last year on our ongoing issues with the condition of footpaths, potholes in the roads, street lighting, general maintenance of gutters and drains, excess weed growth being a particular issue. Fly tipping on Common Lane also continues to be an issue. These as you would expect are regular returnees and we continue to apply pressure on the City of Doncaster Council to carry out their responsibilities on these matters. I have given up counting how many times the Mosham Road footpath has been raised as an issue. Despite it's regular use it is not maintained in any reasonable condition even though it is used quite extensively by persons young and old and should really be maintained in a more usable state. Additionally, it can be a challenge to get adequate maintenance of the green footpaths around Auckley.

Last year I raised the ongoing issue of traffic, particularly speeding through Auckley; there are increased volumes due to developments both in our area and in the neighbouring areas.

I am pleased to say that finally the Community Speed Watch initiative is gathering pace and Cllr Cox is coordinating the group and gaining the necessary funding to enable it to operate. Some volunteers have come forward and completed their on-line training and will shortly receive their second stage training which will qualify them to carry out speed monitoring. More volunteers are required so if anyone is interested then I can pass on contact details to Cllr Cox.

You may have also noticed that both Finningley and Branton Councils now have CCTV cameras at strategic points in the villages. This is being funded from Ward Member's budgets and the proposal is to extend the coverage to Auckley in the near future. The Parish Council is still to fully consider the issue having installed CCTV at the Hayfield recreation area and being aware of some of the operational issues.

These two issues do highlight the need for neighbouring Parish Councils to work together and last year began a series of meetings with Parish Council Chairs and Cllr Cox to discuss and coordinate local issues. Meetings so far have been informative and it is hoped they will carry on after the local elections next month.

Unfortunately, I have to report we continue to have ongoing issues with parking particularly around the schools where indiscriminate parking causes not only an

inconvenience to other road users but danger to pupils attending the schools when cars park on pavements and cross or park on verges. There have been several suggestions made to help resolve the issue at Hayfield Lane School, some not practical because of highway safety issues, some just not robust enough to prevent the parking issue. It should also be noted that this is not restricted to the primary schools but also from attendees to The New College.

We will continue to raise these matters but are realistic in what we expect CDC will do to alleviate the problem.

I don't intend to repeat concerns about flooding in The Green or on Riverside Park. Both issues are well known to the Parish Council and needless to say they do all they can within the confines of their legal and persuasive powers. However; I would like to add a footnote to this matter. There are two developments currently with CDC Planning both of which could have a negative impact on flood management. It is imperative that the Parish Council maintains a watching brief on the developments and makes a contribution at the appropriate time.

One issue the Parish Council has been involved with over a number of years is the general state of the frontage and car park at the Ellers Lane shops. Resolving the various issues is not straightforward due to the ownership boundary issues and establishing who is the correct contact. Thankfully there now seems to be a suitable point of contact for the shops and the Parish Council through the Clerk is liaising to have works carried out. CDC owned land issues continue to be a longer process. Which leads me on to the redundant telephone box. As you will know this was decommissioned by BT some years ago and the Parish Council were given the opportunity to purchase the box. It was decided that as it contributed positively to the street scene it should remain. Various uses for the box have been proposed and some tried, usually in vain as although other areas manage to utilise their boxes for a variety of functions unfortunately our box continues to suffer vandalism and is currently in a poor state of repair. The Parish Council had appointed a contractor to carry out the necessary specialist works but unfortunately he has now given back word so is seeking another contractor.

And on the general subject of maintenance both the Parish Council's recreation area at Riverside Park and Hayfield Lane require ongoing maintenance, not just in grass cutting but general Health and Safety in respect of tree and fence maintenance. On a positive note, the Parish Council were successful in appointing a Site Supervisor and his effect is noted not only in the regular maintenance of the park areas but the flower tubs and other areas around Auckley.

A further point to note about Hayfield Park. No doubt you are aware that last year an illegal encampment occupied the Park. It is thanks in no small part to the rapid actions of the Clerk that the matter was resolved quickly with minimum damage to the area although an amount of rubbish was left.

The Parish Council has subsequently installed additional security to prevent a further occurrence. It does however highlight the issues related to open areas and accessibility.

On a positive note, the process for installing additional play equipment is well on its way so we hope to be able to give an update on progress very soon, again due in no small part to the work carried out by the Clerk.

One particular issue the Parish Council has had to deal with in regard to the Hayfield Park is the condition of the grassed area. It has never lived up to expectations even though significant resources have been poured into improving it. Despite this the Parish Council were approached by the New College seeking permission to use the area at times when their existing playing fields were oversubscribed. Having met with a representative from the New College the Parish Council agreed that it would be a good use of the resource. It is proposed that it will be utilised during the College day and only in term time.

On a completely different matter, last year the Parish Council supported an event to mark D Day. This was hosted by the Scouts and followed the approved national format. There was a reading by the Rev Redeyoff vicar of Finningley and Auckley adding poignancy to proceedings. An event is being planned for 8th May this year to mark V.E. day. My thanks go to everyone involved in both events and particularly to acknowledge how much behind the scenes work has been undertaken by certain members of the Parish Council.

I would also like to thank all members of the Parish Council for the work they do to support the parish by not only attending the monthly meetings but the additional work done to keep pace with changing legislation and other issues affecting the working of the Council, not an easy task. All of this work is carried out without monetary reward.

A thank you also goes out to local residents who do their bit in maintaining the look of the area.

And finally, a thank you to our new Site Supervisor who is growing into the role and the Clerk who ensures everything runs as smoothly as possible, which is no mean task.