

Fulford Parish Meeting
9 May 2022
The Old Library, Social Hall, School Lane, Fulford, 6.30 pm

Parish Council Chair's Report

This report refers to the period since the last Parish Meeting, held on 24 May 2022.

The Parish Council is responsible for a number of buildings, playing fields and other open spaces in the area, and owns and manages the Cemetery at Fordlands Road. The councillors are all volunteers, and in the recent elections were all formally accepted into the role as there were too few candidates to require elections. During the last year full meetings have taken place in person every two months and occasionally more often, with additional less formal meetings online or in person, as required. Councillors participate in Working Groups between formal meetings to address ongoing responsibilities.

The Councillors are:

- Keith Aspden, Vice Chair of the Parish Council, who until the elections on May 4th 2023 was Ward Councillor for Heslington & Fulford and Leader of City of York Council, but did not seek re-election
- Vivienne Clare, Chair of the Social Hall Working Group
- Juliet Koprowska, Chair of the Parish Council, Chair of the Open Spaces Working Group and the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group
- Simon Marsh (new in 2021), leading on Fordlands Road Playing Field developments
- Mary Urmston, Chair of the Planning Working Group, which makes recommendations to City of York Council about planning applications in the Parish
- Andrew Vevers
- Karin de Vries, Chair of the Cemetery Working Group and Cemetery Committee

Neil Dumoulin became a councillor in 2021 but resigned owing to the volume of work and personal responsibilities.

Prior to the elections, Geoffrey Walker did not put himself forward to remain on the council because of personal circumstances.

There is space for more councillors so please apply to the Clerk if you are interested.

The Parish Council also employs **several staff**. The Parish Clerk, Rachel Robinson, plays a central role in managing the Parish Council's finances, she is the Responsible Financial Officer, and she manages many other areas of administration. She takes care of the website and the Facebook page, organises and produces minutes for Parish Council Meetings, liaises with contractors, and ensures that the Parish Council is properly managed. The remaining staff work at and manage the Cemetery, headed by the Cemetery Superintendent, Stuart McCabe. The new member of staff recruited in 2021 is a great asset. Another member of the cemetery staff has now retired.

Income

The Parish Council is funded through:

- the precept (the amount local people pay in their Council Tax which is allocated to the Parish Council)
- Cemetery fees
- Social Hall hire
- Allotment fees
- Sports Club fees paid for use of the School Lane Playing Field and for the land on which the Pavilion stands
- Grants

See the Clerk's Financial Report for more detail.

Principle areas of activity 2022-2023

Playing Fields

The Parish Council continues to work with a Project Officer from City of York, the City Council, and the Sports Clubs to bring about improvements to **School Lane playing fields**. A public consultation favoured improvements to playing areas for football, and preferred a basketball area over additional enclosed Tennis Club tennis courts. The aim continues to be improving the area for sports without losing the amenity for general leisure use of the fields for walking, play, picnics, and Fulford Show. A drainage plan was made which in the end was not workable, and a more modest approach to drainage is now under consideration. The adjoining land currently owned by Persimmon Homes is intended for similar use in conjunction with the Parish Field, with discussions continuing.

The Parish Council has worked with the Environment Agency to plant more trees and wildflowers at **Fordlands Road playing fields**, creating more shade in hot summers and enhancing the green space as a whole, while leaving areas free for play and biking.

Play equipment on both fields is monitored regularly, and repairs made as required.

Social Hall

The Social Hall is an important building in the community, used regularly for classes, meetings, the annual Fulford Show and private events. The Parish Council has been working with Phil Bixby of Constructive Individuals to design improvements into the existing building to make it more sustainable, more comfortable and more attractive. Phil has engaged with members of the public at Fulford Show and with users of the building, as well as identifying some new uses that a redesign could facilitate. A next step is to obtain information about the work required and the costs involved. It is likely that different parts of the building will be improved one by one, and different kinds of funding will be sought to cover the costs. The hope is that the building will be used more frequently and become an even greater community asset.

David Gardiner has resumed holding gigs at the Social Hall. The next one is on May 20th, 2023.

Village Green

The Village Green is part of an area along the river from Clifton Ings in the north to the Designer Outlet in the south designated as a 'green corridor'. St Nick's Centre for Nature and Green Living has been working with the Environment Agency and landowners such as the Parish Council to enhance this green space. They, with volunteers, have cleared an overgrown area at the Village green to allow tansy to flourish and support the tansy beetle. They have planted new tansy plants. Councillor Andrew Vevers has worked with the Tansy Beetle Action Group to replace the signboard about the tansy beetle which disappeared some months ago. The Ward Committee has contributed funding towards the replacement board.

Greener Cleaner Fulford

This group was formed as a result of the declaration of a Climate Emergency by the Parish Council in 2019 and met for the first time in May 2022. The group has members from the Parish Council and the local community, and has gradually been growing. It is an open group which meets monthly and new members are always welcome. The group organised a Greener Cleaner Day on April 30th, 2023, held at the Social Hall. There were short talks about reducing your carbon footprint, Cycling in York, Community Energy, the plans for the Social Hall, the Community Orchard, St Nick's work on the Green Corridors, and observing wildlife in York. There was information available about how to make your garden more wildlife friendly (including No Mow May), opportunities for people to talk with the speakers to gain more information, and craft-making activities. Nan's Van supplied food and drink and the Scouts, Cubs and Beavers litter-picked the School Lane Playing Field. The group also collected information about what activities and events people would like to see more of in Fulford. In the afternoon a few homes and gardens were open for visiting.

The next meeting is on 18th May 2023, 18.30-20.00 in the Old Library at the Social Hall. All welcome.

Cemetery

The Cemetery provides an important service to the people of York and is also a tranquil place to visit, whether to visit a grave or simply to spend time in a green space. Some visitors have expressed a wish for public toilet facilities to be reinstated, but unfortunately the cost of doing this, and then maintaining them, is beyond the Parish's means at the present time.

Allotments

The Parish Council owns 30 allotments adjacent to the Cemetery. New gates have been installed to match the fencing installed last year, making the site secure. The Parish Council holds two meetings a year with plot holders.

Other activities

The Parish Council or Parish Councillors attend meetings of the Sports Clubs and meetings about flood defences. They are members of the Germany Beck Liaison Committee, a group with representatives from Persimmon Homes, City of York Council, Fulford School, the Sports Clubs, and more recently, Germany Beck residents.

York Civic Trust came to speak to the Council and members of the public about their Transport Policy for York, and Carstairs Countryside Trust met with the Council to explain changes it is making to land it owns in the parish.

The Parish Council will continue to issue occasional newsletters, printed and delivered to every household in the area, as well as being published on the Parish Council website in an accessible format. The website has been redesigned and updated.

Ongoing maintenance and replacement work takes place, for example, repairing and replacing benches and bus shelters or working with City of York to do so. Overall, the Parish Council is well managed and is involved in both everyday matters and more farsighted plans, such as for the Social Hall and for the Playing Fields.

New ideas and new energy are welcome, whether by attending Parish Council Meetings to put a point of view, by joining the Greener Cleaner Fulford Group or by applying to become a councillor.

Juliet Koprowska

08 May 2023