



Parish of Ingleby Arncliffe Parish Council –
Chairman's Report 2021 Parish Council

This report only covers the responsibilities and activities of the Parish Council. The contribution other organisations and individuals make to the community for example the Village Hall Committee, the Women's institute, the Church, the Garden Club, Neighbourhood Watch, and the Oil Co-operative are all worthy of mention and thanks go to them for what they contribute to the community.

Last year saw a coming together of the community in the face of the Covid challenge and our thanks go to the many residents who helped others and continue to do so.

There was one change in the composition of the Parish Council during the year. Our thanks go to Ruth Eastham who retired towards the end of 2020 and we welcome Barbara Funnell to the Parish Council.

The Council would very much welcome any Parish residents who would like to put themselves forward for consideration as Parish Councillors when vacancies arise in the future.

The other Councillors are, Hazel Warhurst, George Hunter, David Cook and myself. All Councillors are unpaid volunteers.

We cannot pass over mentioning Hazel, without recognising that in addition to her duties on the Council, she undertakes countless roles within the Parish. I know residents are more than grateful for Hazel's continued efforts.

The Council also needs to express it's thanks to Susan in her twin roles as Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. She took on the Clerk's role in 2016, before adding the financial role. Susan has been a great help to the Parish Council.

The Parish council has moved back to holding monthly meetings and on a few occasions, particularly recently arranging additional meetings as circumstances and events dictate.



All Parish residents are welcome to attend the meetings and participate in our discussions. Any resident who wishes to have a matter considered by the Council should contact any of the Councillors or the Parish Clerk. Our agendas, minutes and policies are published in the Parish Council's section of the Parish's website.

The Council meetings took place on Zoom from March of last year but meetings have now reverted to the Village Hall. Whether this move continues or not, depends on the Govt's review of Covid restrictions later this month. Legal advice for all Councils is that it is no longer permitted to hold meetings with attendees on Zoom contributing to the meeting, they all have to be physically in the same place.

What does the Council do - well its activities range from meeting various legal obligations, deciding on the Parish precept, accounting for its expenditure, consideration of planning applications, Neighbourhood Planning, maintenance of the recreation ground, grass cutting and taking part in various consultations, and meetings.

We continue to benefit at our meetings from updates at both District and County levels from District Cllr David Hugill and County Cllr Bryn Griffiths.

The Police provide the Council with monthly reports on Parish crime incidents and our local Neighbourhood Watch representative keeps crime, anti-social behaviour, and the No Cold calling regime under regular review.

Financial

The Parish budgeted to spend £7,577 in the year ending 31st March 2021, actual expenditure (excluding Neighbourhood plan costs, which are covered by grants), amounted to £6,381, £1,196 lower than budgeted. The main underspends were on lower grass cutting costs, and on recreation ground maintenance.

For the next financial year, ending 31st March 2022 the Parish has budgeted £8,377 of expenditure. The largest category of budgeted expenditure are the costs of running the Parish Council, which amounts to nearly £4,000. This latter cost includes Parish Clerk's salary, insurance and various fees and

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subscriptions. Every month the Parish Council is provided with a full income and expenditure breakdown by its Responsible Financial Officer.

The Parish precept is the major source of the Parish's income and for this current financial year, the Council increased its precept to £6,375, a £310 or 5.1% increase.

Likely to be because of an increase in single occupancy levels, the precept's tax base within the Parish has reduced year on year, combined with the budgeted expenditure increase resulted in the 7.6% increase in your precept level.

You will notice that budgeted expenditure is still more than the income raised by the precept, £8,377 versus £6,375, as the Parish's cash reserves are gradually reduced. The Parish's cash reserves amounted to just over £10,000 at the start of this financial year.

The Parish Council must justify why it holds cash in excess of a certain level and £8,300 of the £10,000 has been attributed to specific reserves such as potential election costs, asset replacements etc, leaving just £1,765 of excess cash.

This level of excess cash is expected to be fully used by March 2022, if the Parish Council's expenditure approaches budgeted levels.

So, to avoid an appreciable increase in the precept level in the year ending March 2023, it may well be necessary to reappraise reserve levels or some combination with a noticeable increase in the precept level.

When considering the Council's finance and it's procedures, it is appropriate for the Council to record it's thanks again to Susan for her work as Responsible Financial Officer. It's a task that she carries out diligently ensuring the Council's financial transactions are kept in good order. Residents can inspect the Parish's accounts and the dates for inspection will be announced shortly.

Turning to just a few Parish matters that your Council has been working on over the last twelve months.

Parish website

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The website enables the Council to comply with its legal obligations under the Government's Transparency Code in making available to residents, or rather to those residents with an internet connection, Agendas, Annual Accounts, Minutes of Meetings, Council policies and details of your Council's monthly income and expenditure.

The website covers much more than Parish Council activities and Parish residents, organisations and businesses are encouraged to make use of the site. The website is for the Parish to use and we would welcome any suggestions to enhance the site.

The Government has introduced accessibility legislation which means that we must improve the site's access to residents and visitors to the site, who have difficulty viewing or accessing the material. Any residents who, in the meantime, have difficulty accessing the website, please contact the Parish clerk to see what we can do to assist.

Recreation Ground

Ruth and her husband, Gerry deserve special thanks for their efforts in looking after the recreation ground, but thanks also go to all those of you who help on the workdays.

Dog Fouling

Our continued thanks to the majority of responsible dog owners who continue to exercise and walk their dogs round the Parish in a responsible manner.

Additional posts and signs were erected round the Parish by David Cook to remind dog owners to exercise their dogs in the proper manner.

However, it's unfortunate that in three areas, the path down to the recreation area, the field beyond the recreation area and the road south from the Village Hall, all still show instances of dog fouling.

Grass Cutting

Grass cutting was mentioned earlier and we like to thank, Keith Henderson for his work and other residents who regularly mow particular areas within the Parish.

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Vehicle Speeds

A Community Speed Watch programme was started on Cross Lane, but struggles to continue without the necessary volunteers.

Neighbourhood Planning

The Neighbourhood Planning process is a long, long process. The regulation 16 phase concluded in January 2021 and the formal examination stage has just started.

Assuming this examination goes according to plan, the next stage will be a Referendum, in which the Plan will be put before the Parish's electors. A simple majority of those voting will carry the Plan to its final stage when it becomes a "Made" Plan and form part of HDC 's new local plan.

Footpaths

The Parish Council raised with the Arncliffe Estate the question of footpaths in the Arncliffe Woods, as part of those discussion, NYMPA with the co-operation of the Arncliffe Estate have reinstated the public rights of way in the Arncliffe Woods.

Parish Housing Development

Beyond Housing planning application is still ongoing.

Recent Parish Council meetings have covered the position in considerable detail but to summarise the present position:

1. The planning application made in June 20 was for 10 open market houses and 8 affordable houses.
2. In October 20, HDC agreed a grant of £220k, made in response to Beyond's concerns over viability and the number of affordable houses planned increased from 8 to 11, with an offsetting reduction in the open market houses down to 7.
3. However, Beyond's projected costs continued to increase whilst their projected income from rents and sales proceeds fell. Beyond told the Parish council that total costs showed a projected increase of nearly £780k above initial estimates.



4. The combination of the two rising costs and falling income meant that viability remained an issue with open market house sales failing to achieve Beyond's required rate of return.
5. So, to achieve viability, additional grant income had to be sought from Homes England which meant all the houses would have to be of affordable tenure. Homes England only provide grant funds for affordable housing. The remaining houses would be available for purchase by way of a low-cost home ownership scheme supported by the HDC grant.
6. So, Beyond's present proposals, only advised to the Parish Council in late April, are for at least 11 affordable houses and up to a further 7 available for freehold purchase under a low-cost home ownership scheme.
7. The number of houses, and their sizes remains as presented in Beyond's community presentation in November 2019. However, to reduce costs, a limited number of changes have been made to the designs as originally presented by Beyond in November 2019 community's presentation. Balconies have been removed and there has been a reduction in the number of chimneys on the development.
8. The Parish council was clearly disappointed that the original scheme mirroring our Neighbourhood Plan's requirements could not be met but equally we appreciate that a development to proceed must be viable.
9. Actions taken by the Parish council following the change in Beyond's proposals were:
 - a. To ask HDC to place a hold on progressing Beyond's planning application pending further consideration of the proposed changes. HDC planning agreed to hold up the planning application.
 - b. We asked Beyond Housing to contact the site's proposed contractor to see if they can offer freehold purchases from day one. A response is awaited.
 - c. We asked the Rural Housing Enabler to organise an updated report on the level of interest in both affordable housing and houses for down-sizing, from the Parish's residents.
 - i. The affordable report, which has been added to the Parish's website shows interest from 16 Parish residents and an



additional one 1 with family connections to the Parish in affordable housing, making a total of 17.

ii. The interest in downsizing should be available shortly.

d. To gain an understanding of the various tenure options including details on the low-cost home ownership scheme and how applicable the schemes would be for Parish residents.

i. Several tenure options and the low-cost home ownership scheme would provide a route for freehold ownership either initially with the low-cost home ownership scheme or after a few years with the "affordable rent" and "rent to buy" options.

ii. Affordable tenures and low-cost home ownership schemes do offer local connection safeguards both for initial occupation and maintaining that link into the future

iii. The tenures offer the opportunity to stop "buy to let" landlords and the use of the houses for holiday homes.

Once the position has achieved greater clarity, a community meeting or meetings will be held to hear and respond to resident's views. It is anticipated that a representative from Beyond would be available to answer questions. Beyond have been invited to update residents by producing their own circular explaining the background to their proposals.

Finally, thanks once again to the members of the Parish Council and to all the many other Parish residents who continue to give their time and support to the Parish, in the many and varied activities which take place within the Parish.

The meeting was then open to questions.



Whilst we are still seeking clarification on several points. The Parish council

- e. Several tenure options do offer a route to a freehold ownership. For example, affordable rent the "right to acquire" after 3 years and also at a discount offers to the market price, and "rent to Buy" can lead to freehold purchase after 12 months.*
- f. Low-cost home ownership is freehold from day one, you buy at a discount to the market price and that discount must be maintained in any future sale.*
- g. Affordable tenures and low-cost home ownership do allow the local connection both for initial occupation and maintain that link into the future.*
- h. Several questions have come up at the various meetings which I would like to summarise.*
 - i. The planning application was approved by a delegated decision, however HDC planning department have confirmed that the nature of that decision and the hold requested by the Parish council on an accompanying document to the planning application, a S106, means that Beyond cannot proceed.*
 - ii. the only planning permission that exists is outline planning permission for 4 – 4 bedroom detached houses on the school site.*
 - iii. Beyond Housing were the highest bidder for the two sites, the former school site, and the playing field. Whilst the bidding process was confidential, we have been made aware that one housing developer bid for the development but their bid was less than that made by Beyond.*
 - iv. Beyond Housing have over 15,000 houses under management and do make a surplus from their activities as they are required to do under HA regulations. They receive grants from Homes England but the bulk of their finance is loans from Lloyds, RBS and Nationwide.*



- v. *Beyond Housing do build mixed sites with both open market and affordable houses. It is simply that on our site, viability was the key issue.*
- vi. *Speculation has arisen over the role played by the Rural Housing Enabler. At all times she has been assisting the Parish in endeavouring to achieve its objectives. Sites in which the RHE is involved are not all completely affordable housing sites.*
- vii. *It is not a reasonable position on this application to suggest that the involvement of a housing association and a RHE did at the outset predetermine the present position. Its simply a question of costs.*



CONCLUSIONS

- v. Beyond housing the bid mix is not with both open market and affordable houses. It is simply that on our site, which was the key issue.
- vi. Speculation has arisen over the role played by the Rental Housing Trust. At all times the Trust has been assisting the Trust in endeavouring to achieve its objectives. Sites in which the Trust is involved are not all completely affordable housing sites.
- vii. It is not a very subtle position on this application to suggest that the involvement of a housing association and a RHT bid or the other, predetermine the present position. Its status is a question of fact.