



Sprotbrough and Cusworth Parish Council
Annual report – 2021/ 2022

Sprotbrough and Cusworth Parish Council – Report on activities 2020-21

1. Council and Committees

- 1.1 The Parish Council comprises 17 seats with all 17 being elected Councillors across 7 Parish Council Wards. The Full Council takes overall responsibility for all decisions but can choose to delegate authority to a committee or to a Council Officer but can never delegate authority to an individual Councillor. Elections for all 17 seats took place in May 2021. Further details relating to each councillor can be found on our website;
<https://www.sprotbroughandcusworthparishcouncil.gov.uk/councillors.html>
- 1.2 To be more effective, the Council has one committee (Performance, Review and Staffing) and three working groups (Newsletter, Projects, Climate Change) to spread the workload, review issues in more detail and operate more effectively.
- 1.3 In addition, several Councillors serve as the Parish Council's representatives on various Outside Bodies, Partnerships, Liaison Groups and regularly attend associated meetings. These include;
- Don Gorge Community Group
 - Parish Council Joint Consultative Committee
 - Yorkshire Local Council Association
 - Sprotbrough Community Library
 - Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- 1.4 The Parish Council owns and manages several assets within the Parish;
- The Goldsmith Community Centre, children's play area and wider open space.
 - New Lane adventure playground and recreation area.
 - Anchorage Lane Park including children's play area, skate park, outdoor gym and pavilion.
 - Newlands Park including pavilion.
 - Allotments at Windsor Walk, Scawsby.
 - Joint ownership of Scawsby Community Centre, Barnsley Road.
- 1.5 In addition, the Parish Council activities include;
- commenting on planning applications within the parish.
 - providing community grants to support local groups.
 - the production of a Neighbourhood Plan for Sprotbrough.
 - production of a Parish Newsletter.
 - liaising with relevant authorities regarding infrastructure /policing/community issues to represent your views and get the best advantage for the local area.
 - engaging with all interested parties regarding current and future shape of life in the local area

2. Clerk to the Council's report

- 2.1 This year has continued to be an unprecedented and different year for the Parish Council and the residents and business of Sprotbrough and Cusworth. Covid 19 has thrown significant challenges for the operation and management of the Parish Council and its sites with constantly changing restrictions on how the Parish Council operates. We have worked through all these challenges and we are on a strong footing to move forward into 2022/23.
- 2.2 The Council has faced some financial challenges this year but by reviewing all its expenditure we move forward in a sound position. Income from the Goldsmith Centre and sports pitches has reduced this year and the Parish Council has faced unexpected expenditure to deal with Covid and keep services running. However, this position has improved from the previous year as hirers have been able to return to some activity. The Parish Council have worked alongside all hirers to enable them to use the centre when permitted with confidence. All sites continue to be very well used by a variety of groups and we see no reason for this not to continue now restrictions have been lifted. Our outside spaces saw a significant increase in use particularly through the lock down periods and have been managed in accordance with the regulations throughout. Risk assessments for each activity and site have been undertaken at regular intervals throughout the year.
- 2.3 The Council maintains a General Reserve which it can use in case of emergency or for unbudgeted items of expenditure. As we emerge from the pandemic and with Covid 19 still with us it is very important to ensure the level of the General Reserve is maintained at an appropriate level.
- 2.4 Against this backdrop the Parish Council was able to confirm a zero increase in the precept for 2022/23.
- 2.5 The Parish Council adopted an Action Plan for 2020/21 which sets out the activities and projects prioritised for the year into three categories; people, place and provision. The Action Plan can be found on our website; <https://www.sprotbroughandcusworthparishcouncil.gov.uk/the-council.html>

3. People

3.1 Community Grants

The Council is able to provide Grants, in certain circumstances, to Voluntary or Charitable Organisations that support the people of Sprotbrough and Cusworth. Each application must be made using the prescribed form which is available on our website which provides details of what the grant is to be used for.

Below is a list of grants awarded between 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

20/05/2021	Scawsby Girl Guides	£800
20/05/2021	Sprotbrough Scarecrow Festival	£400
17.06.2021	Sprotbrough Methodist Church play group	£300
21.10.2021	Sprotbrough Christmas Lights	£300
17.11.2021	Richmond Hill Primary School	£150

4. Place

4.1 Planning matters

The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications received by the Local Planning Authority (Doncaster Council). The Parish Council does not have power to approve or refuse applications, simply give an opinion based on material planning considerations. Doncaster Council determines planning applications.

61 planning applications have been considered by the Parish Council between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022. Full details of decisions and responses given are contained in the minutes and on the Parish Council website; <https://www.sprotbroughandcusworthparishcouncil.gov.uk/planning-applications2.html>

A significant planning matter for the parish was the adoption of the Sprotbrough Neighbourhood Plan on 23rd September 2021. This was after the examination of the plan in March/ April 2021. This was the culmination of eight years dedicated work of the steering group supported by the Parish Council and their planning consultant. The plan can be viewed on our website;

<https://www.sprotbroughandcusworthparishcouncil.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan.html>

The neighbourhood plan is now being used to determine planning applications in Sprotbrough and is proving to be a useful tool to support comments made by the Parish Council on applications to ensure the views of local residents are taken into account.

4.2 Tree/ site maintenance

The Parish Council own and manage four large sites within the parish which require regular maintenance. Play equipment at all sites requires routine maintenance and also repair due to wear and tear. Sadly, vandalism also occurs on all sites which requires parts to be replaced.

All sites have differing levels of trees located within them. Newlands Park being the largest site. A programme of tree maintenance at all sites started in 2021 and will continue each year to ensure our trees remain healthy and do not pose a risk to uses and neighbours of each site.

Significant work has also been undertaken at Newlands Park to maintain a culvert which runs under the site between Cusworth Park and Cusworth Lane/ St Martins Avenue.

4.3 Public Realm

Litter picking – the Parish Council set aside a budget to procure and provide litter picking equipment for local groups and residents to use to assist in improvement to the public realm within the Parish. This has been a successful project with several local groups (including the Don Gorge Community Group and the Scawsby pluggers) using the equipment throughout the year.

Dog fouling/ litter – the Parish Council has worked with Doncaster Council to provide additional signage and bins at all Parish Council owned sites and used the Parish Council communication methods to promote awareness and responsible dog ownership/ litter. We encourage residents to report problem areas to Doncaster Council to enable additional enforcement patrols to be undertaken.

New bins have been purchased and installed at the Skate Park (Anchorage) and Wroxham Way (Newlands). Two new bins are located at the play area at Anchorage. Additional signage has been added to the play area relating to no dogs in the play area.

4.4 Footpaths at New Lane, Sprotbrough

The work to tarmac the lower section of the footpath at New Lane recreation areas was completed in August 2021. The whole of the path is now tarmac making it more suitable for access.

4.5 Climate Change

The first meeting of the Climate Change working group was in September 2021 and a draft Action Plan was agreed by the Parish Council in November 2021. Projects from the plan have been put in place including new recycling bins inside the Goldsmith Centre and providing subsidised water butts for residents. The working group meet regularly to discuss future projects including the potential for electric vehicle charging points at the Goldsmith Centre, projects relating to food waste and providing trees for residents to plant within their gardens.

We are also working with Doncaster Council and other parish/ town councils on this issue being part of a working group looking at shared ideas and resources.

The Parish Council planted an additional 40 trees at Anchorage Park (provided by the woodland trust) and two fruit trees within the garden area of the Goldsmith Centre.

5. Provision

5.1. Christmas Trees and lights

The Parish Council continues to support local residents with the Sprotbrough Christmas Light event. Trees were lit again at the Goldsmith Centre and we are looking at adding to this provision in 2022 as part of a wider Christmas festival on the wider Goldsmith Centre site.

5.2. Christmas Pantomime

The Parish Council hosted its first Christmas Pantomime on 19th December 2021. Two shows of Beauty and the Beast were performed by local theatre company Talegate Productions. Both shows sold out within a couple of hours (160 tickets) and the event was a great success. Children received a gift from Santa and two residents kindly provided refreshments for attendees before the show and during the interval. Given the success of the event we are hosting an easter Pantomime on 24th April – Rapunzel. We are also holding the Christmas pantomime in December 2022.

5.3. Financial matters

The Parish Council is required to undertake rigorous financial controls given its size and scale. We have an internal audit by an external auditor twice a year and an annual audit by national auditors to ensure we are meeting our statutory requirements. Further information on these matters can be found on our website;

<https://www.sprotbroughandcusworthparishcouncil.gov.uk/transparency-and-finance.html>

The Parish Council current reserve is £300,000. The total value of the Parish Council's fixed assets is approximately £1.4 million. We undertook up to date valuations of all our sites in 2021.

5.4. Training and development

The Parish Council is committed to training and actively encourages Councillors and employees to attend regular training to raise awareness of responsibilities, improve skills and keep updated with legislation. Over the last year Councillors and staff have attended on-line training sessions provided by the Yorkshire Association of Local Councils (YLCA) and external training providers. The Clerk completed the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) in June 2020 which has enabled the Parish Council to confirm it can act under the general power of competence which provides greater scope in decision making. A full record of all training is kept.

Council Services

In Sprotbrough and Cusworth the provision of services is split between Sprotbrough and Cusworth Parish Council and Doncaster Council. A Parish Council is a corporate body - a legal entity separate from that of its individual members. Its decisions are the responsibility of the whole body. It is the first tier of local government and exists completely independently from Doncaster Council

Sprotbrough and Cusworth Parish Council	Doncaster Council
➤ 5 allotments at Windsor Walk	➤ Adults and Children Social Care
➤ The management of the Goldsmith Centre, playground and recreation area	➤ Anti-social behaviour
➤ The management of Newlands Park and pavilion	➤ Benefits
➤ The management of Anchorage Park including; the children's play area, outdoor gym, skate park and Anchorage Pavilion	➤ Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships
➤ The management of New Lane recreation area and adventure playground	➤ Bus Pass Issue
➤ Joint ownership of Scawsby Community Centre with Brodsworth Parish Council	➤ Car parks and fines (Doncaster Council owned and operated)
➤ The management of Newlands Park and pavilion	➤ CCTV
	➤ Council Tax
	➤ Housing Advice and homelessness
	➤ Disabled Parking (blue badges)
	➤ Emergency Planning
	➤ Fostering and Adoption
	➤ Highways – including gritting, maintaining, street and traffic lighting, traffic signs, pot holes, road markings, pedestrian crossing, road safety and verges.
	➤ Household Recycling and Waste Site
	➤ Licencing
	➤ On Street Parking Enforcement
	➤ Planning and Building Control
	➤ Public rights of way
	➤ School Admissions, Free School Meals and School Transport

	➤ Street cleaning and bins (including dog fouling enforcement)
	➤ Tourist Information
	➤ Trading Standards
	➤ Public Health
	➤ Waste collection

Please note that the Parish Council does not have any authority over services which Doncaster Council provides. If you wish to report an issue relating to Doncaster Council's services please contact their main switch board on 01302 760000 or use the relevant 'report it' form on their website; <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/report-it> . This includes;

- Dog fouling
- Road safety
- Parking enforcement
- Littering/ fly tipping
- Anti-social behaviour

In addition South Yorkshire Police should be contacted for issues relating to;

- Covid 19 breaches
- Criminal activity/ anti-social behaviour
- Speeding

They can be contacted using the information below;

<https://www.southyorks.police.uk/contact-us/report-something/>