

Wark Parish Annual Meeting 16th June 2021

Chairman's Report

The Parish Council has had another busy year, looking after the interests of the parish on your behalf. The Pandemic has meant that meetings have been online and difficult to organise .

It is excellent to see the Monday Club continuing with their work to enhance our village. Thanks from all in the village are due to them. Thanks to the Nichol family for the Christmas lights and flowers around the War Memorial. Meanwhile at Stonehaugh as a volunteer Jimmy Murray has extended the carpark area much to the delight of residents, Jimmy also cuts the grass on the football field and other areas not included in the Grass cutting contract with Mr Bell, while Liam Reid does the day to day safety checks and checks the AED and keeps Stonehaugh clear of rubbish, a group of volunteers are in the process of doing repairs to the play area. Thanks to all the volunteers

At Stonehaugh NCC have completed the changeover of all the street lights to 'down lighters' and the new lights will dim by 30% after midnight. The new lights do make a big difference to the village and residents are happy with the transformation. Whereas Wark has been left with dark areas that makes it difficult for residents to go out at night, we are still negotiating with NCC for some lights in Wark to be repositioned and/or removed. Cllr Jeffrey and County Cllr Gibson have had several meetings with NCC in order to get this done. The long awaited dropped kerbs for Wark have been done.

This year has seen plans approved for a small housing estate development north of St Michael's Mount unfortunately a proposed development on Stonehaugh road was refused. Majority of members of the public and Wark Parish Council agree that Wark needs more houses, unfortunately NCC have designated Wark to be outside the Local Plan area for housing, unfortunately this might mean that Wark will become a village overshadowed by other neighbouring villages and this could have a knock on effect on local businesses, the school and churches.

County Councillor Gibson found time to attend many of our meetings and provide useful advice on County activities and to take up the Parish Council's concerns. It is thanks to him that the footpaths in Westacres and St Michaels Mount have been resurfaced with those in Stonehaugh to follow this year. Councillor Gibson has also been instrumental in securing the proposed 20mph speed limit on Hexham Road and he maintains and installs the Moveable Vehicle Activated Speed Warning Sign that we share with Humshaugh. Thank you Rupert.

The new toilet is nearing completion and it is hoped it will be in service before the end of June, We do get some complaints about lack of toilet rolls and general tidiness from time to time however I would like to remind you that owing to financial restrictions our cleaner's time is limited to 1 hours paid work per week and each and every one of us have a responsibility to ensure that we leave the toilets how we like to find them or at least report the problem to the clerk. WPC have an account with the Post Office so if toiletries are absent see Neill and he will supply you with whatever is needed.

Despite covid restrictions volunteers at Stonehaugh have found time to create an Activity Centre/lecture room with a small Nature Reserve, and facilities for groups, it is hoped that in the future this will allow us to create a Forest School with photography, Astrophotography, Nature walks and other outdoor activities.

I am sorry to report that once again we are without a clerk and I ask you to bear with us until we find a replacement. I would also like to remind you there is a public participation slot at our meetings. We would be like to see parishioners attend and put forward any issues. Please notify the clerk if you wish to speak.

Unfortunately, work and family commitments mean that while I remain as a Parish Councillor, I no longer have the time to take on the responsibility of Chairman

Phil Leadbitter
Chairman Wark Parish Council
30 May 2021