



## **POOL-IN-WHARFEDALE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021**

2020, What a year, lockdown and restrictions but still the work of a Parish Councillor must go on. The Parish Council chose not to raise the Parish Precept (Council Tax) this year as it felt locally and more widely people had suffered enough hardship, a lot financially, through the Pandemic. It is impossible to put into words our thoughts for those families who lost loved ones or for the many who fell ill as a result of the Pandemic. But we all look forward to better times in the not-too-distant future.

A word of praise for the owners of the Post Office for their stalwart service to the neighbourhood and for the many volunteers from the community who gave their support to help others throughout the Pandemic.

What is a Parish Councillor ? A person concerned about their local parish and is prepared to spend time and effort for it. A Parish Council is the lower level of local government with Town and City and Parliament completing the structure. Pool-in-Wharfedale has nine seats but only seven are filled at the moment. During this term of office, we regretfully accepted the resignation of Gavin Barlow, an excellent and hard worker and thank him and wish him and his family better times in the future.

We were not allowed to meet face to face so we have held Zoom meetings, a new experience for us all. Hopefully we will return to face-to-face meetings soon.

The BT phone box which held the defibrillator was emptied and the defibrillator moved onto a new position at the Post Office building. When the building was extended, we had to move the box. It was moved at quite an expense to Stocks Hill and was repainted. In September hopefully thanks to a suggestion from young Lily Harrison it will become a library for children's books. Lily and her father joined us in a zoom meeting recommending this action to the Council.

We have had several members of the parish attend the Zoom meetings bringing forth their concerns and ideas.

Road safety is a big issue. Many issues have been highlighted and many are held up by Leeds Council Highways Department either waiting for work to be completed or in most cases waiting for resources to be identified. Like everyone else Leeds Council have been dramatically affected by COVID 19. Our bid for a 20MPH zone in the village is one of those caught up waiting for funding, though we believe it is not a very high priority for Leeds Council. We have also campaigned for many years for restrictions on allowing heavy vehicles to pass through the village, a stumbling block here would appear to be North Yorkshire County Council

We are grateful to those residents who have taken time out from their busy lives to monitor traffic speeds through the village as this has added weight to arguments for reducing traffic speeds throughout the village. We are waiting for the Speed Indicator Device to be moved further up Pool Bank New Road.



We have held lots of meetings which included some residents about the playground next to the skate park and I am delighted to say that the work is to start on replacing some of the outdated equipment in the new few weeks. We have also undertaken work to repair surfaces around the equipment damaged by heavy rainfall earlier in the year.

We supported the Recreation Ground Committee with funding by providing extra security measures at the entrances. We also provided a grant to support improvements at Pool Village Memorial Hall and Old Pool Bank Village Hall and provided a grant to the Methodist Church to support their activities in helping residents getting through the Pandemic.

A substantial amount of everyday work continues in terms of maintenance of the playgrounds, the memorial gardens and the woodland. We are also looking to have remedial work done at the cenotaph.

In 2020 we were not allowed to hold the annual Sunday Service of Remembrance, due to covid restrictions in place. However, in partnership with Arthington Parish Council and a member of the Methodist Church we placed the wreaths and crosses on the Saturday with prayers and a short service.

Hopefully, this year we can once again hold a Civic Service and Remembrance Service. This year 2021 is also the year for nominating an Honorary Citizen. Nomination forms are in the Post Office and online.

The members of the Parish Council have continued their support of the various committees in attending zoom meetings for Pool and Old Pool Bank Village Halls, Recreation Ground Management Committee, Jane Whiteley Homes, Neighbourhood Planning Group, Wharfedale Greenway, Airport Committee and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association.

We have a limited budget but are pleased to have identified reserves for the refurbishment of the main playground. We try and obtain grants where we can to cover unexpected expenditure and are grateful for the support we get from our Leeds Ward Councillors

As I mentioned we have two vacancies on the Council so if you are interested in joining the Council please contact the clerk, John Ryan.

My grateful thanks go to John Ryan our clerk for his patience and guidance and to Kieran our Lengthsman who works hard in all weathers.

Thanks also go to Councillors Joanna Rowling, Judy Davey, Richard Parker, Belinda Cooke, Emma Mifsud and Barbara Wheeler for their support and hard work and the many hours they have spent working for the good of the parish.

Hazel Lee, Chairman.  
June 2021.