

Chairman's AGM report for 2021-2022

Ah 2021-2022! What a year that was!

Covid restrictions; Zoom meetings: controls easing and a gradual return to face-to-face council meetings at the Friends Meeting House.

Apart from the forgoing it was business as usual. However, each of our monthly agendas had their own unique highs-and-lows.

Councillor Parrett and her working group have finalised the AWSPC Local Plan which is now with the City Council Officials and is making very significant progress towards becoming fully absorbed into Lancaster City Council's overall Local Plan. Within the next couple of months, there will be a referendum of AWS parishioners and if there is a majority vote in favour of our plan then it will be 'made' (incorporated).

Following much concern expressed by parishioners and land-holders regarding HGVs being mis-directed along our narrow lanes and causing damage to property, Lancashire County Council Highways Dept were eventually persuaded to install 'No HGV' signage at the approaches to all our parish road junctions. The effect of this signage has been quite spectacular with very few HGVs now to be seen on our lanes.

The ageing trees overhanging Lunecliffe Road were becoming of great concern with large branches falling onto the road after every gale. Lancashire County Council Highways Dept were approach for help and the land-holder was requested to have their trees made safe. A number of substantial trees have now been felled and the work is still ongoing as I write.

After many months of asking, in conjunction with Tim Dant and the local farmer Alan Barge, the County Council Highways department plus United Utilities were persuaded to solve the problem of the constant running water flowing from opposite Ivy Cottage downhill along Aldcliffe Hall Lane. By digging a deep ditch from the source of the spring and encasing a permeable drain pipe in a membrane covered in gravel the water is now ducted downhill and successfully diverted into the stormwater drainage system.

Again, another long-standing problem is being resolved. Liaising with Tim Dant, two local farmers and the Wildfowlers Association the field drainage that runs under the old railway embankment out to the river was cleared of debris blocking the pipework. Long Mile Lane is now much less prone to flooding. Once Heritage England finally give permission for a mini-digger to access the foreshore It is hoped that the detached 'Clack-Valve' can be replaced at the riverward end of the pipe. Once this repair is complete the high tide will hold the swinging door shut and there should be no more floodwater to wade through.

A great deal of time and effort has been spent addressing a number of rural planning issues some of which are still ongoing but now out of our hands.

Yet again, the Canal and River Trust have been approached for help with resolving the long-standing fly-parking problem adjacent to the canal-side railings. Regrettably, they were not at all helpful in their response. However, as of the 1st June there will be new traffic regulations in force and I propose to discuss the matter with County Highways officials as a matter of urgency. There is now an average of 30+ vehicles parking all day. There are no spaces left as passing places and the free-flow of traffic is much impeded. Councillors are regularly, almost daily, approached by outraged parishioners who want this problem resolved.