

SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH PUMP NO 3



Welcome to Parish Pump No. 3, the final edition to be published by the present Parish Council as the local elections loom. Once again it is worth remembering to offer this as hard copy to neighbours and friends who do not have access to the Internet.

1. Shincliffe Village Play Park News

Following the removal of the picnic benches two teak benches have been installed – they provide good viewpoints across the play area. Another addition, a willow arch was installed in the worm box, a gift from a resident in High Shincliffe.

Over the Easter weekend correspondence was received by Council regarding the Play Park. On Easter Saturday the area became completely overwhelmed by visitors and Cllr Stoker had to attend with the Police to restore social distancing. The Park faced the perfect storm generated by a sunny Easter day following the easing of some Covid restrictions and, significantly, by the proxy advertisement and promotion of the area on Facebook pages *North East Family Fun* and by our 'neighbours', the Poplar Tree Garden Centre ('Bring your own camp chairs/picnic blanket'). This behaviour merely confirms the wisdom of retaining the picnic benches off-site until conditions improve.

An official from Durham County Council attended our last meeting to consult about parking and road conditions , notably at the junction of Low Road with Hall Lane, adjacent to the Play Park entrance.

Photographic evidence of the dangers associated with its use by very large delivery vehicles has been provided to Durham County Council.

2. Green Belt protection.

A resident drew attention to the creation of the Shincliffe Green Belt Group. Contact details are published in the current edition of SCAN. Councillors attention was also drawn to the policy adopted by Durham

County Council concerning the Climate Emergency; the Parish Council was encouraged to found a relevant Action Group to respond to this.

3. Horticultural Activities

The Durham County Council mowing contractors planned to return to the fray, week commencing 22nd March. Forewarned, our Parish Gardener placed protective tape around areas of bulbs die-back. He will be out checking the condition of our benches as the weather hopefully begins to warm up. A priority will be the bench at Bank Foot which has commemorated the tragic death of Steven Bell for some time. His friends have now removed the memorabilia. Decorative shrubs will be planted at either side as an enduring memory.

4. Local elections

All local authorities have now entered a state of *purdah*, so called because all public officials must avoid dealing with matters which might influence their election prospects. Given that our Parish Council meetings take place on the fourth Thursday of the month, only a matter of days will separate such a meeting with the dissolution of the present council and the inauguration of the next. Under these circumstances it has been decided that there will not be a meeting in April. Clearly residents can still contact the Parish Council through the Parish Clerk.

5. Our new Parish Clerk

We welcome the arrival of Patricia Embleton who took up post as Parish Clerk at the beginning of April. She follows Kate Kirton who has loyally supported Shincliffe Parish council for over nine years. We thank her and wish them both well..

SPC Minutes

In these difficult times it has not always been possible to post our minutes to the SPC noticeboards. They are presented on our website but as an aid to public access you will find a copy of the draft March minutes attached to this bulletin.

Many thanks to Daniel who has acted as the webmaster for the distribution of *Parish Pump*. **Please do not respond to this email**. If you wish to express a comment or contribute your ideas, please write to our email address – shincliffeparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk