

Hovingham Action Group Report – September 2020

The Hovingham and Scackleton Action Group was formed as a direct result of the 2009 Community Plan to give Community volunteers the framework to implement improvements for the Community. This is with the full support of the Parish Council while giving each group the maximum autonomy to fund, specify and implement various projects. In the last 11 years this has evolved, with the addition of a very successful Scackleton Group, the rise and fall of some sub-groups, such as the Youth Group, and now the major challenges of the Corona virus pandemic. The Action Group provides a solid framework to the groups; which together with the support of the Parish Council; means the volunteers concentrate on what they volunteered for, achieving a “Gold Standard” of transparency, inclusiveness and governance.

Instantly the pandemic became reality a team of 40 Hovingham and 14 Scackleton volunteers have ensured that all residents have received the support they have needed and wanted.

Many other activities have been forced to quiesce during the pandemic; the greatest impact is the closure of the Market which over 10 years had become a vital funding and a great monthly opportunity for the villages to come together. The Market will not re-open until there is a significant change in circumstances; the safety of volunteers, visitors and residents is the number one priority. In the short and medium term both Action and other Community Groups have to now look for other sources of funding and evolve their ambitions to the “new normal”.

Each group continues to be responsible for funding and implementing their projects, reporting with progress reports to every Parish Council meeting and a formal Annual Report to the May meeting of the Parish Council. If any group wants to make the Parish Council aware of a particular challenge, opportunity or way they can help, then they should contact the Parish Council immediately. The Action Group has very successfully evolved over the last 11 years and well done to everyone who has made this all possible.

Corona Virus Community Support Please see separate report.

Clock Winder and Winding They have now raised £7,117.15 and are seeking permission from the Diocese to proceed. A details project plan and cashflow is now required so the clock winder can be installed.

Community Speedwatch Started up again on 15th July after a long gap because of Covid restrictions. The team have been out fairly regularly since then with 19 sessions to date. Traffic flow in July was still relatively quiet (165-200) with an average of 5 offenders per session but has now returned to normal levels (269-470) compared with previous years and an average of 7 offenders. The Police are having a nationwide campaign on speeding this week so it will be interesting to see what they find. We have managed to recruit one new member to the team but have been reliant on 7 regulars. If you are interested in joining the team then please contact Helen Newby or speedwatch@hovingham.org.uk

Email Diary This has changed to a weekly mini-Newsletter during the pandemic. Approximately ½ of households receive a copy however, ideally this should be more. Alternatives for those without email connection need to be considered, together with the role of the Diary, Website and Newsletter in the future. Please subscribe via the website, or email diary@hovingham.org.uk to receive the weekly diary.

Hovingham Village Website This is regularly updated and provides a central source of information, available to all Hovingham Community Groups and Businesses.

Litter Pick & Sign Cleaning These annual events have been suspended due to the Pandemic. Individuals are encouraged to go out to litter pick and clean signs until the next events in 2021. Thank you to Ryedale Streetscene and Sally & Tony Finn of the Worsley Arms for their invaluable support of this project.

Market During this extraordinary period, we have promoted those stallholders who are operating through the website and how to access their products and services. We’ve also responded to requests to share posts on social media eg Nunnington Galleries open weekends; North Yorkshire Open Studios (profiling out stallholders); Laceys Cheese; Cooper King Distillery; Yorkshire Rapeseed Oil and the interview on BBC Radio York on 2nd May.

Newsletter This has been suspended during the pandemic. The current funding, from businesses and the Market, will need to be revised. It also needs to be determined whether the bi-monthly paper version is now appropriate. Currently the volume of news and events is very low and most can be covered via the Email Diary. The paper Newsletter was distributed to all households in Hovingham and Scackleton, so that those who do not have an internet connection or do not see emails sent to the household have the opportunity to read about what is going on.

Playground

Following some lifting of restrictions and adhering to the Government guidelines, the Playground Group conducted a risk assessment and the Playground was opened again to the public on Saturday July 25th. The Playground Group now boasts 7 members plus Frank and Mark, and everyone has pulled together to get the Playground up and running, dealt with problems etc via zoom meetings and phone calls and some socially distanced chats!

Signage re the virus is visible throughout the playground and will remain in place for the foreseeable future. The actual equipment remains as before and it was not necessary to close any areas of the playground or specific play structures. The annual inspection was done in August and unfortunately did highlight an issue with one of the uprights on the zip wire. This structure has been immobilized and hazard signs put up until a time when it can be repaired. We are in the process of trying to find out if the structure is under warranty and if the replacement can be done under the terms of that warranty. The report highlighted no other issues which are serious enough to warrant immediate attention.

The rabbit hole issue is an ongoing one - we have, however, been contacted by a recent (parent) visitor to the playground who is licensed to hunt with ferrets and at the next Playground Group meeting we will discuss our options with regards to this. **The Parish Council may know if we need to contact Estate/anyone else if we were to pursue this.**

Sturdy signs will be ordered in the next two weeks for parking and also to update other general playground information.

Neighbours - despite the flurry of e-mails prior to the opening of the playground again, it does seem that all has been quiet recently. I, and other members of our group have made frequent visits to check on how things are going round at the Playground on the days the weather was especially nice and cars have certainly been parked appropriately (despite there being no signs up at the moment) and the majority of the time even with a relatively busy playground there have been no cars at all.

It is anticipated that we shall once again have a working bee in autumn time to do any necessary maintenance work and hope that we have as many keen volunteers as last year. Due to the loss of revenue from Hovingham Market this year we are currently looking at ways to raise additional funds. Lastly thanks and gratitude to Frank and Mark from the Parish Council who have steered our little group through some turbulent waters, their help and guidance has been - and is still - invaluable.

Project Purple

Repair Café The first Café was opened on 14th March. Excellent community event bringing people together. Fixers had items to repair from a much-loved jumper, to a dressing table stool, chairs and a 40-year-old clock which left the cafe ticking again!!! Reducing the need to buy more stuff with the corresponding positive impact on limited resources.

We have great feedback from the March Cafe and numerous enquires since. We hope to open the Repair Café again on the 12th December with the necessary Covid precautions in place.

Recycling RDC have not provided a timeline to refurbish the recycling centre. We have gone ahead together with Sue Wainwright to introduce new signage to encourage users to optimise and keep the recycling centre tidy. Sort, Squash and Squeeze!! They will be installed before the end of September.

Share Shed 8 residents come forward prepared to share tools and equipment. As well as a community sharing activity and saving the borrower money, it will reduce the need to buy more "things" with the corresponding positive impact on the environments limited resources. We hope to have a virtual shared shed in operation during Q1 2021.

Reduced Energy Use - Electric Vehicle Charger Installed on the 10th March 2020; there have been 5 users during that time period, 20 charges and 294kWh consumed. The Charger is working as well however, we have experienced a delay in payment from BP Chargemaster, for electricity used, due to back office system upgrading.

Household Energy Efficiency There are a number of initiatives that we will roll out in October and November including the Governments "Green Homes Grant" announced on 1st September.

Renewable Energy Project Purple has carried out a detailed feasibility study to install a community solar farm up to 2MW which was supported by the Rural Community Energy Fund. An array of this capacity would make it financially attractive to local individual investors and provide a revenue stream to support the community. It would generate approximately twice Hovingham's requirements based on estimated 2030's demand. However, after extensive evaluation the maximum grid connection in and around Hovingham is 190kW. We have therefore decided not to take it further at this time. We will continue working closely with Northern Power Grid to evaluate options.

Challenges Ahead - Due to Covid 19 we will not be able to raise the funds in the same way we did last year, i.e. through the Market Café and donation from the Repair Café, we are therefore looking for new sources

Volunteering – There is something for everyone in volunteering

– something to suit your experience, age, interests and time available, with regular or ad hoc activities for everyone - Get involved and benefit your Community - it's often surprisingly good fun.

Please contact action@hovingham.org.uk, or Ann or Phil Chapman on 627171 to get involved.

T h a n k Y o u

(thank you to all those who contributed to this report, consolidated by Phil Chapman – 18th September 2020)