



## Skelmanthorpe Community Action Group

### Press Release

#### ***Mums take to the Streets, and Protest!***

Following our press release dated the 10<sup>th</sup> January 07 43 parents and children, plus Cllr Elaine Ward, Rick Barber (Head Teacher Skelmanthorpe First and Nursery School) and Rev Philip Reynolds, 3 SCAG Committee Members held today Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 07 a protest at the Junction of Barrowstead, and Commercial Road to highlight the 'dangerous' road safety problem that exists, due to the lack of a safe pedestrian crossing, and in addition the 'unsafe narrow foot path' leading to the junction of Kings Street and Commercial Road, and speeding traffic, especially through narrow section of Commercial Road, again just prior to the Junction of Kings Street, which all constitute part of the '*walking to school*' policy encouraged by Kirklees metropolitan Council.

During the protest the problem of the volume of traffic was witnessed and timed by Cllr Elaine Ward at 2 to 4 seconds intervals between vehicles, with many that were driving in excess of the 30 mph limited.

The Rev Philip Reynolds inspected personally the narrow foot path approaching Kings street, and commented '*that it was not only dangerously narrow, but also sloped towards the road and in icy conditions could cause pedestrians to slide into the road*'

Mum Jo Lockwood stated that '*the same footpath was not able to accommodate the width of a wheel chair, and additionally that if you encountered a parent and a push chair coming in your direction that you had no option, but to step into the road to let it pass.* to which Cllr Ward added '*that in taking her Granddaughter Katie to school had personally had on one occasion to quickly move onto the land adjacent to the footpath due a large mounting the footpath, endangering she and her Granddaughter*'.

SCAG Chairman Christopher Ward, stated that the protest has brought the problem fully into the public domain, and thanked Cllr Ward for her intervention with the KMC Highways department, and that Liz Twitchett of the Highways Department had now written to Cllr Ward acknowledging the problem and had offered various solutions, but however that budgetary constraints could mean that remedial work might not be able to be undertaken until financial year 2009/10! However with involvement from our local schools through the 'School Travel Plan' scheme that additional and necessary finance could be available.

Mr Ward continued '*that the problem must now be given the highest priority as involved the safety and well being of the children each and every school day, and not just for the children from Skelmanthorpe First and Nursery School,; but also those wishing to have a safe 'Pedestrian Crossing' to enable them to walk safely to Scissett Middle School*' .

SCAG Committee Member Philip Wheeler added that it was also essential that traffic calming methods be implemented as a matter of priority. , especially due to the frequency of wide HGV, and in particular those entering and leaving the engineering works opposite the Kings Street junction, as the Street width at that point was down to 16 feet.

The solution Mr Wheeler continued '*was to install a 'priority' form of road calming, which would allow for the carriageway, and the footpath to be widened, and that this would certainly reduce the speed of all vehicles*' . .

***For further information Call Christopher Ward 01484 866 705***