



Newsletter.

Welcome to the second edition of the SCAG newsletter.

If you are a first time reader of this newsletter you are probably wondering what SCAG is? Skelmanthorpe Community Action Group was formed to fight Kirklees development plans, which included a proposal to build 14,000 houses in our area. Thanks to the many letters of objection they received these plans have now been shelved. But, the risk to our green spaces has only been reprieved temporarily and new proposals are expected in January. Our aim is to organise ourselves to fight any proposals that threaten our green spaces. We welcome all the help we can get so if you would like to hear more visit our web site.

We are developing an action plan so we will be ready in January.

We know that to defeat any proposals that will affect our village we need the active support of everyone in Skelmanthorpe. We will need to be in a position where we can bombard not only the Council planning department with objections, but our local councillors and our MP's too. We will need to get as much exposure in the press as we possibly can. All of this will need planning and coordination if we are to stage a protest that will really have impact.

So watch out for future newsletters where we will set out how you can help or keep taking a look at our web site where we will make our plans available. **Remember you can make a difference, but only if you become active in your protests.**

SCAG has been fighting the Bovis Homes development on the allotments site.

Bovis Homes had already acquired the allotments and submitted outline plans before SCAG was formed so we came into the planning process rather late. Despite this we raised a number of concerns:

- The number of houses proposed (44) was greater than the maximum supposed to be built on the site (42).
- The development will cause further congestion at the junction of Cumberworth Road, Huddersfield Road and Station Road.
- The risk of people parking on Cumberworth Road will also cause congestion.
- The proposed design (three storey houses) is not in keeping with the existing housing.

Two of our members Christopher Ward and Wilf Ryden attended the planning meeting in Dewsbury on 2 November to discuss these and other issues. They were dismayed by the planning process, which can at best be described as undemocratic. Both patiently waited for 4 hours to speak, and then were only allowed 3 minutes each to speak!

Only one councillor from our area was on the committee so the vast majority of the people making decisions that affect Skelmanthorpe know nothing about the village! Over the coming weeks we intend to raise this issue with the council and with our representatives. We will tell you more in our next edition.

As a result of our efforts that number of houses has been reduced to 42 (a small victory) and the three storey houses will be relocated so they have less impact. Finally, action will be taken to reduce the risks of parking on the road adding to congestion.

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However, we are far from happy and feel that we arrived too late and did too little to impact on the outcome. There were only 28 objections to the development, most from SCAG members and only three people attended the planning meeting, two from SCAG, and one from a consortium of allotment users. Naturally this was far too few to affect the outcome. If we had managed to organise objections from just a quarter of the people in Skelmanthorpe the KMC Planners couldn't afford to ignore us. This has to be our aim in future and you can help.

You can help to beat unwanted developments.

How can you help?

- First believe that **you can make a difference**, we need **you** to take action.
- The next time you see a planning notice on a lamppost take time to read it.
- If you don't like what you see then write to the planning department and object you can do this by e-mail to planning.contactcentre@kirklees.gov.uk , and also visit the Kirklees main Planning website <http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/business/planning/planning.asp> or write directly to
- Planning Services (KMC),
P.O. Box B93, Civic Centre III,
Market Street,
Huddersfield
HD1 2JR
Tel: **(01484) 221587**
Fax: **(01484) 221585**

E-mail: andrea.smith@kirklees.gov.uk

- Contact SCAG and tell us about the planning notice (details on our web site)

Or call us directly on 07921 477 571

- Tell your friends and neighbours about the proposed plans and encourage them to object too.
- Complain to your local councillor.

Join us at one of our social events.

Most of us feel we are powerless when fighting the Council and they will do whatever they want. Why not come along to one of our social events and mix with a bunch of people who are determined to change that? You will find there are many people in Skelmanthorpe who are determined to do something to protect the village they live in, and have recognised that by banding together they will have greater power to do so.

Our next planned event is a Candlelit supper on Saturday 27 January 2007 in St Aidan's Church, so why not come along and meet us?