



SKELMANTHORPE COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP

Welcome to the third 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. New proposals were expected in January, but recent news from Kirklees suggests it may be March before they are ready. Our aim is to organise ourselves to fight any proposals that threaten our green spaces.

In addition we try to act as a voice for our community, campaigning for action to be taken on issues that affect the people of Skelmanthorpe.

We welcome all the help we can get so if you would like to hear more visit our web site.

SCAG social event a success

On 27 January SCAG held a Candlelit Supper at the Darby and Joan Club to update members on SCAG's activities over the past few months. Forty-six members enjoyed a bangers and mash supper, helping to raise over £500 towards the running costs of SCAG activities and the web site. The event proved to be very popular with many members requesting another social get together soon. If you would like to join us on our next event contact us through our web site, we will be delighted to see you.

The Village Survey

In December we circulated a questionnaire to the whole village to investigate the issues of most concern to residents.

It is perhaps not surprising to find that the *increasing volume of traffic* and the problems it creates, in terms of parking and speeding, was the number one issue. SCAG is in the process of raising this issue with both the police and Kirklees.

83% of respondents stated that the lack of active policing was a source of dissatisfaction. Some people linked this to problems of unsocial behaviour among gangs of young people and traffic offences. SCAG intends to bring the survey results to the attention of the Community Police Officer.

Other issues to score highly in terms of dissatisfaction are the lack of public toilets, insufficient sports and social facilities and village seating.

Health care received a vote of confidence

Not all the survey results were negative; residents clearly value and appreciate the excellent provision of health care in the village. Other issues to receive a positive vote were the local schools and the standard of street cleaning.

THE FULL SURVEY RESULTS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEB SITE

www.skelmanthorpeaction.org.uk

The police and the community working together

Following the results of the village survey which showed that policing in Skelmanthorpe is a major concern, SCAG held a meeting with the community-policing unit to see what could be done to improve the situation.

Sergeant Ian Hardy and his team are keen to develop a sense of social responsibility in the community and to foster a partnership between the police and the people of Skelmanthorpe with the aim of reducing crime. The police are increasing the number of officers who can respond to incidents but they need the help of the community if they are to succeed.

It is important that everyone who witnesses criminal behaviour reports it to the police, so action can be taken. If we ignore incidents the perpetrators get away with it and this encourages them further. It's down to us to take action.

If you see any form of criminal activity such as anti social behaviour, vandalism or dangerous driving telephone **0845 606 0606** to report it.

Action to improve safety at road junction

SCAG has lobbied Kirklees Highways Dept to improve safety at the junctions of Cumberworth, Commercial and Station Road. We understand from the Council that work is planned to start on improvements this year.

We have also campaigned to reduce the number of heavy goods vehicles using Station Road as a short cut to Wakefield and the M1. We understand signs will be erected stating the road is unsuitable for heavy vehicles.

Lack of school crossing could prove fatal

Responses to our survey revealed that many parents are concerned about the dangers for school children crossing Commercial Road. The lack of a crossing linked to the narrow road and lack of pavements makes crossing the road hazardous, especially during the morning rush hour.

SCAG helped the parents with their protest on the 22nd January in an attempt to get Kirklees to have a change of heart over their refusal to introduce either traffic calming measures or a crossing.



Local footpath improved

SCAG lobbied the council to improve the public footpath from Parkgate to Skelmanthorpe. Work began on re-surfacing the path before Christmas.

Flooding – still a cause for concern

Parkgate residents are still very concerned about the risk of flooding in their area. These fears were heightened before Christmas when workmen on the Jones Homes site released a large volume of standing water, which flooded Station Road and put houses at risk. SCAG recently held a meeting with the Environment Agency to

discuss the problem.

The increased flow of water into Baildon Dyke and the inadequate road drainage are the two principal causes of concern.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT IS STILL A THREAT

Whilst all the issues mentioned here have been receiving our attention we haven't forgotten that our primary goal is to defeat any development proposals that threaten our village and our green spaces. We have been quietly developing plans so we can launch a campaign of protest if necessary.

How can you help?

You can help to beat unwanted developments

- First believe that *you can make a difference*, we need *you* to take action when the time comes.
- Encourage your friends and neighbours to take action too.
- Contact SCAG and offer to become a volunteer. We need people willing to leaflet their street or circulate petitions. Our contact details are below and on our web site.
- Complain to Kirklees – we will tell you how when the time comes.
- Support our fund raising efforts and socialise with like-minded people at our social events.

Remember - if we all work together as we did last year we can stop any unsuitable development plans that threaten our village.

CONTACTS

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