

# **Skelmanthorpe Community Action Group.**

## **Are we safe from the threat of flooding?**

Everyone remembers the floods of 2007 and the damage they caused. The Government claim that it was a once in a hundred years event was scant consolation to the victims, some of whom had to live with the problem of repairing their homes for many months.

The recent floods in Cumbria and other parts of the country send a clear message that such floods are anything but a once in a hundred years event. Recent government reports state that extreme weather, leading to flooding, is likely to increase in frequency in the years ahead, and urges local government to spend more on flood prevention measures.

## **Kirklees response to this has been to spend even less!**

Recent attempts by SCAG to get the badly silted bridge at Parkgate cleared of debris were met with a flat refusal and a statement that funding for such flood prevention measures is unlikely to be available in future. Far from spending more, the council actually intends to spend less.

Parkgate residents were badly affected by flooding in 2007, as a direct consequence of the blocked bridge being unable to handle the volume of water flowing down Baildon Dike. In the aftermath they received visits from MP's, representatives of the Environment agency and Kirklees, but little practical help was forthcoming. After much pressure from SCAG, the bridge was partly cleared, but heavy rain over the past two years has filled it with debris again.

To protect themselves the residents have build flood walls along the banks of the stream and invested in more drains, spending thousands of pounds of their own money. However, unless the bridge is kept clear this investment may not be enough to ensure future safety from flooding.

## **Old mining culvert poses a new threat.**

In the past few weeks a new threat has emerged with the deterioration of a culvert built many years ago by the Coal Board. This brick built culvert carries the Baildon Dike under the remains of a spoil heap and is now beginning to show signs of collapse. This is hardly surprising, as it hasn't received any maintenance since Kirklees took over responsibility for the site many years ago. If the culvert were to collapse it would create a dam behind which thousands of gallons of water would accumulate until it is high enough to flow down the public footpath to Parkgate. SCAG is currently in contact with our local councillors to try to get some action to repair the culvert

While most of Skelmanthorpe is too high to run the same risk as low lying areas like Parkgate, it is important that all drains and culverts are kept clear, so they have the best chance to cope when heavy rain comes. We ask anyone who suspects their local road drains are not clear to report them to [highways.ross@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:highways.ross@kirklees.gov.uk)