

UDVET Upper Dearne Valley Environmental Trust

Registered Charity 1157514 - Established 2014

Chairman's Report 2021

UDVET was formed by SOS (Save Our Scissett), SCAN (Skelmanthorpe Community Action Network) and KORS (Keep Our Rural Spaces) in June 2014, for the benefit of our local communities, mainly, but not exclusively, in the Kirklees Denby Dale Ward. As described on the Charities Commission website UDVET exists "for the public benefit, conservation and, where possible, the enhancement of the natural and architectural beauty of the area known as the Upper Dearne Valley, and in particular to conserve for the benefit of those who live in, work in, or otherwise derive pleasure from this area, the open green spaces and flora and fauna, for this and future generations."

A major aim is to help preserve the green belt and green fields around our villages, and to encourage a more sensible approach to development: building what is required in the places that are suitable - rather than allowing more-or-less uncontrolled massive commuter estates and huge warehouses to swamp our green spaces and green belt.

In the right place we welcome truly affordable homes, not least for local residents; and also homes that are suited and affordable for a growing older population

We keep an eye on situations that are unhelpful to the local community; but we also welcome and encourage positive things that enhance our villages.

The earlier part of this year continued to be marked by the coronavirus pandemic, which did restrict meetings and other activities –affected the work of Kirklees Council, local charitable and environmental agencies, community and cultural action, and so on.

Following UDVET's work with a planning lawyer in recent years, we continue to check the outcomes of the current Local Plan in the Denby Dale ward area. KORS (Keep Our Rural Spaces) sent a response to "The Kirklees Open Space Supplementary Planning Document" on behalf of UDVET.

As far as possible UDVET continues to respond to the issues of planning procedures, housing needs including potential sites, industrial and commercial requirements and potential sites, greenbelt release, and so on. We continue to work with and support other organizations, such as KCAN

(Kirklees Community Action Network), CPRE and various other similar groups from Holmfirth, Hade Edge, Mirfield, etc; including advice given to, and making detailed representations on behalf of, the "Cumberworth Road Action Group" (CRAG) in Skelmanthorpe, and the "Denby Dale Inkerman 100 New Houses - Planning Application" group in Denby Dale.

We were in the process of joining CoVoP (Community Voice on Planning) but sadly this organization became defunct.

UDVET continues to monitor Discharge of Conditions for the proposed 190 house development off Cumberworth Road, Skelmanthorpe. Unfortunately some of the conditions were not met before work on site was allowed to commence; despite Kirklees Planning Department being alerted to any such breaches. Among other issues we have concerns about the spacing between houses, the effectiveness of drains and flood mitigation, provision for carparking, the loss of habitat through the removal of old hedging and the lack of new hedge boundaries within the development.

As previously stated, Kirklees often appear reluctant to enforce their own planning conditions, which in part (but only in part) may be due to the loss of personnel within the Council over the last few years, and the pandemic problems this year – thus the long-term problems of resolving the 'ransom strip' situation with Kirklees Council, as Trustee of the Clayton West Baths Charity (Scissett Baths), lacking some openness and transparency, with properly detailed accounts, concerning the sale of a ransom strip to Redrow that they required to allow building on the Pilling Lane site.

UDVET continues to monitor the development off Pilling Lane, Scissett. Apart from the overall effect on the wildlife and green spaces around Scissett, UDVET has concerns about the nature of the houses being build, their design and spacing, drainage and flooding issues, heavy vehicles on roads before the agreed times to start work, and many other issues (which can be read in UDVET minutes).

We are glad to note that Kirklees has taken some responsibility for the damaged bridge over the River Dearne in Clayton West (off the A636).

Our support cooperating with local residents to ensure that local firms do not pollute air, and water courses, has made slow progress with the statutory authorities.

We are hoping to work with the "Greener Kirklees" officials in a 'Keep it Green – Stop the Chop' initiative and have already encouraged a firmer response from the local authority in protecting various trees that have a tree preservation order (TPO); as well as promoting more room for wildlife and wild plants in relevant spaces. We welcomed the planting of a small orchard off Huddersfield Road, Skelmanthorpe (opposite "The Triangle")

Other issues of importance that UDVET has considered, and/or that UDVET members have been active with, include: litter picking in Scissett hedgerows and green spaces; monitoring heavy good wagons in local villages. We hope that there will be a satisfactory community resolution to the sale of the old Baptist Chapel in Clayton West but recognise that financial and legal issues may not bring about such an outcome.

We welcome the renewal of the former Chartist Pub in Skelmanthorpe as a space for industrial employment but have objected to the removal of several trees behind this building, and have concerns about the proposed design and layout of the new industrial buildings next to the area of trees (especially since it seems this may not provide much additional employment).

Local residents have raised problems of bad parking, and examples of poor driving in the area. We have begun the process of looking at how a Traffic Warden, dedicated to the Denby Dale ward, might be funded.

Some of our activities concern Kirklees Council and its Cabinet and thus it is important to reiterate that UDVET is non-party political. We welcome good relationships with local politicians across party lines whenever possible; and are delighted to have support from people of all shades of political opinion and none. Mark Eastwood MP joined one of our sessions to discuss various issues relating to the work of our charity.

UDVET is in the process of creating a new website.

UDVET has put into place procedures and policies concerning Data Protection and Data Audits in line with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) of May 2018. A copy of our policy may be requested.

Though our remit is not providing finance to those in need, we do need to raise money for UDVET expenses, thus we recently held a successful Pie & Peas and Quiz evening in Scissett Working Men's Club. Providing such events helps enhance community cohesion, which is perhaps even more important than fundraising for our charity. It seems that the Denby Dale Pie Hall may be reopened for some sort of community use.

Philip Reynolds

Chairman of UDVET

UDVET FINANCE RECORD
MONEY HELD IN CASH/BANK

DATE	DESCRIPTION	IN	OUT	BALANCE
01/01/2021	BALANCE B/F			757.90
15/10/2021	PIE & PEA SUPPER		184.00	573.90
15/10/2021	PRIZE MONEY		50.00	523.90
26/11/2021	FUNDRAISING	505.00		1,028.90
30/12/2021	MELISSA WAJORSKI INVOICE		300.00	728.90
		505.00	534.00	