

Crossgate Community Partnership

Annual report 2023

Crossgate Community Partnership (CCP) is a charity whose objects are:

- to promote the conservation and improvement of the physical and natural environment of Crossgate and the surrounding area in Durham City
- to promote the establishment, continuation, and improvement of local amenities
- to build and maintain a strong, safe, healthy, and balanced community by encouraging the residents of Crossgate and neighbouring areas to participate in community activities.

The principal way we do this is to hold monthly residents meetings to identify current issues and address them. We are grateful to Unite Students Rushford Court for hosting these meetings. We also have an email list where members can exchange views between meetings.

We have 157 local residents registered as members (an increase from 149 last year). Attendance was also up, ranging from 14 to 28. The median was 19, plus guests, and the average was 19.25.

The minutes of our meetings are on line, see <https://www.crossgate.durhamcity.org.uk/minutes/> and these record the details. Various themes have emerged and these are set out below.

Parish Council

There continues to be a good flow of information to and from the Parish Council. We are grateful to County and Parish Councillors for attending our meetings, sending in reports, and taking up issues raised with them. The Parish is now funding additional Neighbourhood Wardens, and their monthly reports show how effective they are.

The Parish is formulating a Community Emergency Plan with planning needed at a very local level. Volunteers from CCP are now working with Councillor Carole Lattin on this.

STACK

This is an entertainment venue, providing food, drink and live music in the former M&S premises on Silver Street. CCP opposed both the licence and the planning application, mainly on public safety grounds as we felt the fire escapes at the rear of the premises were not safe. However both were granted, in January and April respectively. But despite these permissions, work is yet to start.

Planning issues

The following planning applications which we commented on have been particularly notable;

DM/23/00241/FPA to convert 24 Nevilledale Terrace into two flats was refused by the Planning Committee despite the officers recommending approval. An appeal is now under way.

DM/23/02236/FPA, to sub-divide into three flats. Part-retrospective application after complaints by local residents and CCP. Not yet determined.

DM/23/00436/FPA to demolish and rebuild Goldrill on Farnley Hey Road would have blocked an iconic view of the Cathedral from Farnley Mount. CCP supported objections from the City of Durham Trust and numerous local residents. The proposal was revised and plans for a lower building, preserving views of the Cathedral, have been approved.

DM/23/02224/FPA at 4 Nevilledale Terrace, for replacement windows. uPVC windows have been installed without authorisation and this application seeks to replace the ones at the front with wooden sashes but to keep the ones at the rear. Also still awaiting determination.

DM/22/03024/FPA to demolish and rebuild Tower Cottage, The Avenue: still not decided. CCP, local residents and the Parish Council have all objected. Revised plans in mid-2023 have not produced a satisfactory design.

The permission for 27 apartments on the North East side of Holly Street, which was approved in February 2020, has, we are informed, now lapsed since work was not started within the statutory three years. However, while no obvious start has been made on the 12 apartments proposed between 24 and 25 The Avenue (permission granted in June 2018) we are advised that as some drains have been rerouted this counts as a start. This site, once a garden for the enjoyment of the residents of 24 The Avenue, is now an overgrown tip.

Parking and street works

This is a recurring theme, with these general issues:

1. Shortage of parking spaces in some streets, notably Briardene and Crossgate
2. Permits issued to houses built or converted after 2000.

These issues are being pursued mainly via the County Councillors.

Resurfacing work to Hawthorn Terrace, Allergate and surrounding streets took place just after the start of the autumn terms, missing a golden opportunity to do it while the students were on vacation. The work was done at very short notice and not all cars were moved and the reinstatement of the road markings also caused some problems. Nevertheless, once these issues were resolved the road surfaces were a marked improvement.

New Bus Station

The delay in completing the bus station continued to cause problems in North Road, especially for the traders but also for residents trying to move on the street. Opening was further delayed but finally took place on Sunday 8 January 2024.

Proposed "Coronation" Street Party on 3 June

The organiser of the 2022 Platinum Jubilee street party attended the February meeting to explain her plans. Members were opposed to this and their opposition was relayed to the appropriate authorities. After the Police and Environmental Health indicated that they would oppose any application for temporary event notices the organiser decided not to proceed.

University

We continue to participate in the Durham University / Residents Forum (DURF) which meets senior University staff several times a year. The targeted leaflet *Living Out, in Durham* has once again been produced and we helped with its distribution. This explained to students, largely second years who have moved from college accommodation to HMOs, what the arrangements are for things like rubbish and recycling, and also what the responsibilities and expectations are for livers-out.

Never-the-less rubbish and recycling issues continue. Large communal bins have been placed in student areas and these have on balance resulted in an improvement, though issues with the wrong contents being put in them remain, particularly at the start of the academic year.

The PBSA at Rushford Court is being converted into a college, which necessitates some building work to create a social space for students. We have been kept very well informed about the plans and the progress of the building work.

Proposed closure of ticket office at Durham Station

CCP objected to this proposal, which was part of a nationwide scheme which we learned attracted opposition from across the country. The proposals have now been withdrawn.

Simon Squires

Simon, who had been our treasurer for ten years until 2022, died on 11 December 2023. He is remembered

for his friendship and fierce support for our community. CCP was represented at his funeral on 5 January, which was standing room only.

In conclusion...

The January 2023 meeting elected five trustees to look after matters between monthly meetings. They were Roger Cornwell (chair), Ann Evans, Chris Hugill, Simon Priestley and Sarah Wilkinson (treasurer). In the course of the year Simon Priestley assumed the role of Secretary. Our thanks are due to Jean Rogers who has taken minutes of our meetings throughout the year, and published them on the CCP website.

This annual report is necessarily a summary of our activities during the past year. A fuller account of the work of CCP is on our website at crossgate.durhamcity.org.uk which includes the minutes of our monthly meetings (see crossgate.durhamcity.org.uk/minutes) and how to apply to us for small grants to enhance the area.

Roger Cornwell (Chair)

6 January 2024

Crossgate Community Partnership

Financial Statement: Year to 30 September 2023

	2022/23	2021/22
Income		
Total Income	£0.00	£0.00
Expenditure		
Subscriptions (NORA)	£25.00	£25.00
Total Expenditure	£25.00	£25.00
Surplus/Deficit for Year	-£25.00	-£25.00
Balance Brought Forward	£539.10	£564.10
Balance Carried Forward	£514.10	£539.10
Represented By:		
Co-op Bank Account	£514.10	£539.10
Cash Balance	£0.00	£0.00
Debtors	£0.00	£0.00
Creditors	£0.00	£0.00
Total Assets	£514.10	£539.10