

WICKERSLEY NORTH WARD

Covering Wickersley, Bramley, Flanderwell,
Sunnyside, Brecks and Woodlaithes



Councillor
Sue Ellis



Councillor
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Councillor
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Report to Full Council

May 2022

Ward priorities (2021-2022)

1. Improving community safety by continuing to address crime and anti-social behaviour
2. Improving our streets and green spaces, so the community can access and enjoy them
3. Promote opportunities for bringing people together, enhancing community spirit and improving mental and physical wellbeing
4. Support a clean and safe climate through improving the local environment

How these ward priorities were agreed

We consulted with members of the public to assess their ward priorities, whilst taking into consideration intelligence from Parish Councils, voluntary and statutory sector partners. We reflected on the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic had on community need. Essentially, we wanted to know the best way to support the community.

As a result, we adapted our way of working, so that plans could be delivered safely within changing Government guidelines, as we emerge from the pandemic; ensuring that constituents felt safe but continued to engage in and benefit from a range of community projects, whilst adjusting to a new way of life.



How these ward priorities support the Thriving Neighbourhoods strategy

Our aim is to put communities at the heart of everything we do and to make people healthier, happier, safer and proud by:

- Working with communities on the things that matter to them
- Listening and working together to make a difference
- Supporting people from different backgrounds to get on well together

With the pandemic changing the way of working, it was crucial to ensure that projects & activities focussed on bringing people together, reducing the sense of isolation, brought joy to people and celebrated the sense of community, whilst showcasing volunteers within Wickersley North ward.

The projects outlined below, demonstrate how neighbourhood working, even in particularly challenging and uncertain times have allowed us to lead on and support essential community initiatives, such as recognising the Wickersley Heroes, coordinating Sunnyside Foodbank & working with local schools during the pandemic to ensure that children had the equipment to learn from home. Whilst interjecting fun & togetherness through community-wide projects, like the Scarecrow Challenge, were equally essential in bringing joy to the ward.



Working in partnership

As local Councillors during the pandemic we worked with many other organisations that were assisting local people in our area. This included our parish councils – Wickersley, Bramley and Dalton. Whilst dealing with residents' issues we worked with key organisations like the Job Centre, Housing, Rotherham United Community Sports Trust to name just a few.

A key partner was South Yorkshire Police. We carried out regular speed watches within the ward and have worked collaboratively to reduce the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour on Wickersley North residents.

Progress so far

Sunnyside Food Bank is now a well-established community group, Sunnyside Supplies, providing a Social Supermarket and Community Café to the local community. Feedback from volunteers and attendees shows how essential this service is, providing healthy, affordable groceries, a range of valuable volunteer roles and a much-needed place to come together for those who are lonely or socially isolated. The group is well attended, including single-parents and older people.



Cyber poverty is often hidden, but many children do not have access to internet or suitable equipment to work from, often sharing with family members or relying on hand-held devices. Funds donated to Flanderwell Junior School to purchase laptops enabled children from low-income families to access learning away from school, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nuisance off-road vehicles were tackled through joint work with local police. A cooperative approach from partners has reduced the number of off-road vehicles around the former Silverwood Pit site; Police operations have taken place and a barrier was installed on Elton Lane/Flanderwell Lane public right of way to block access from that point. Progress & further measures continue to be monitored through monthly partnership meetings.

In 2020-21, the installation of a **solar light in Wickersley Park** provided a safer environment during dark nights. Since then, Wickersley Parish Council requested funding for 5 additional lights for the park, which are now in place and further improving visibility and safety in the park.

Erecting bunting across the ward to celebrate **Yorkshire Day** was a simple, yet effective way of bringing joy to the community, especially to those who had been isolating for some time and had limited contact with family, friends or neighbours. Similarly, the **Scarecrow Challenge** in October 2021 enabled residents of all ages to create, collaborate and celebrate each other's constructions. Some brilliant scarecrows were displayed across the ward.

In 2020-21, "**Wickersley Heroes**", residents who went above & beyond to support their community, were recognised and thanked for their outstanding contributions during the pandemic, as they came forward to support neighbours and really embodied true community spirit.

And finally, through 3 '**Blitz Days**' and 3 community skips across the ward, we have encouraged a safer and cleaner environment for everyone to enjoy.

In summary, we have successfully adapted our way of working & listened to our constituents in particularly challenging times, as environments, ways of working, learning, and living have dramatically changed.