

Association Officers

President: Kenelm Storey

Vice- Presidents: Ashley Burgess OBE John Greenway Peter Sowray MBE Peter Steveney

Chairman: Robert Hall

Deputy Chairman Membership & Fundraising: Claire Docwra

Deputy Chairman Political: Keane Duncan

Treasurer: Sue Graham

1st November 2021

Dear Member

This is my first newsletter since our previous Chairman's untimely death. Linda Folwell died in May; and I think the officers of the Association are still in shock over her premature death. I was elected in June to succeed her, and they are big shoes to step into!

We also had to say a sad farewell to Lady Clarissa Collin, a stalwart vice president of the Association for many years who was a larger-than-life person loved by all. She died in July, and I represented the Association at her funeral at Helmsley Parish Church.

At that AGM in June (held by Zoom) the following were elected to serve as officers of the Association:

President: Kenelm Storey

Chairman: Robert Hall

Deputy Chairman Political: Keane Duncan

Deputy Chairman Membership and Fundraising: Claire Docwra

Treasurer: Sue Graham

We are still returning to normal (whatever that might mean), with our first face to face Executive meeting for 18 months being held in mid-October. I have to say all the officers were extremely pleased to see everyone! Officer meetings are now held in the office, with both Melanie and Gilly now returning to working in Town Street.

Party Conference

Was well attended in Manchester over the first weekend of October. A number of officers attended the first physical party conference for two years. By all accounts, (I was not able to attend being on holiday), it was felt to have been a success, reinforced by recent polls which show the Party to be well ahead.

Local Government Reorganisation

Most of you will be aware that the government had decided, following consultations, to create a large single unitary authority based around North Yorkshire. This will mean that all the District Councils in the county will disappear. Elections will be held in May 2022 for the new shadow authority which will gradually take on the responsibilities of the District Councils - completing this task by April 2023. We do not yet know what the ward structure will be for Thirsk and Malton (which as you know encompasses all of Ryedale, parts of Hambleton and Scarborough), however we believe there will probably be 15 or 16 wards in the Thirsk and Malton boundaries of the new unitary authority. We have started the process of interviewing candidates who wish to stand in the elections in May 2022, and hope that all candidates will have been selected and approved by the end of the year, to enable them to have at least four months to work their wards!

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Boundary Commission Review 2023

You may be aware that the Boundary Commission is in the process reviewing constituencies across England. They do this on a regular basis and as you can imagine it's quite a complex process – perhaps similar to three-dimensional chess. Their role is to equalise across the country all the constituencies to between 69,000 and 77,000 electors. As Thirsk and Malton is increasing its population, some quite radical changes have been suggested, which the Party have tried to change. It is now with the Boundary Commission to review these representations, with the next set of proposals due to be published in the spring of 2022.

Fund Raising

It is still not easy and remains patchy throughout the constituency. There remains some nervousness to attend gatherings, which is lessening as time goes on. In mid-October I attended a very enjoyable evening hosted by the Filey Supper Club with over 45 attending. We need more of these! There are a number of events being planned for the next three months, and I would encourage you to attend them if you feel able. You will find a list enclosed.

Membership

Has declined marginally over the summer, we now have 720 members which makes us the second highest membership in North Yorkshire. (Richmond Constituency has the highest). The collection of membership subscriptions is now moving towards being taken over completely by Central Office, which, whilst I understand the reasons behind it, does loosen the ties that we in the office have with our local members.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)

You will have heard that Philip Allott, the PFCC for North Yorkshire resigned last month. Following a selection process carried out by the Area Council Executive and staff from the Candidates team in CCHQ, our selected Conservative candidate is Zoe Metcalfe who is both a Harrogate Borough Councillor and NYCC Councillor. The election will take place on 25th November, and we wish her well.

Forthcoming By-Elections

We have two by-elections in the constituency before the end of the month. **Greg White**, currently the county councillor for Pickering Division, is standing in **Cropton Ward** (RDC). This election will be held on Thursday 18th, and he has opposition from the Green Party and the Liberals. It is imperative that we win this seat which many of you will know was held by the late Cllr John Clark. On the same day as the PFCC election, the **Raskelf and White Horse** by election will take place in Hambleton. Our candidate is **Pippa James** who is standing for the first time. This seat has become available due to the resignation of Jill Mortimer MP and although it has often been uncontested in the past, this time we are challenged by the Lib Dems and a Green candidate so again we need to run a strategic campaign. We hope that members will be able to offer support to both these excellent candidates – please contact the office to find out where and when the help is needed.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Officers and the staff for all their hard work over the last 12 months. It has been a difficult time for everyone, and it will take time for us all to get back to some form of normality. Gilly and Mel have been really very supportive of me personally and all the officers during this trying time.

Kind regards



Robert Hall
Chairman