



March 2024 Newsletter

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It has been a busy month with this proving to be quite a lengthy newsletter as your councillors wish to ensure your awareness of a number of factors affecting yourselves and the parish.

Stray Ferret article

Some of you may have seen the excellent article written by the Stray Ferret's (which exists as a Harrogate news platform) senior journalist, John Grainger, with his introduction:

"There's always plenty of debate about how best to manage the development of Harrogate but no-one – according to the Stray Ferret's archive – has ever suggested building a settlement the size of Boroughbridge, Masham and the whole of Nidderdale on the edge of our town.

And yet that's exactly what is happening. The 'western arc' – a patchwork of huge development sites forming a near-contiguous band stretching from RHS Harlow Carr round to Yew Tree Lane – is scheduled to bring about 4,000 new homes to the town.

Multiply that figure by the UK's average household size of 2.4 and you get 9,600 people – not far shy of 9,760, which is the combined population of those places."

The article includes a graphic summary of the dire situation which currently exists with the approximate 750 houses already completed. It is hard to imagine the impact on the area once the 4,000 homes will be built in the next few years. A number of quotes are made which include those from Mr Rene Dziabas of HAPARA (Harlow and Pannal Ash Residents Association) and our own Chairman, Cathy Burrell, who states *"It's a mess, fundamentally. There's no joined-up thinking. The roads are at complete capacity. The council is developing a plan with the developers, but the developers will always say their developments won't have a huge impact on the surrounding area, because it's in their interests – they'll be able to build more."*

The article continues:

"Parish councillor Cathy Burrell feels that in failing to adequately address residents' concerns, North Yorkshire Council is reneging on its commitment to the Parish Charter which lays out how it will work in partnership with parish councils to "promote an active democracy to ensure all members of every North Yorkshire community are able to have a say in our future and to help develop a shared vision, identity and sense of belonging".

She said: *"When North Yorkshire Council came into being [on April 1, 2023], we were told that the parish would have more say in the matters affecting us. But they're just not listening to us. They said they would, but they're not."*

Please find the link here for the full article <https://thestrayferret.co.uk/how-harrogates-new-town-is-fuelling-worries-about-roads/> and which will also be included on our website (<http://www.pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk/>) under the News tab / Newsletters.

Pannal Green

A constructive and helpful site meeting has recently taken place with councillors and NYC's new Woodlands Manager when possible arborist work was discussed. We thank her very much for her visit and look forward to continuing this positive relationship in the future in discussion of some tree planting in the area. In conclusion, the Parish Council will organise removal of the cherry bolters under the walnut tree in addition to some minimal bough tidying and removal and also stump grinding to remove tripping hazards. It is felt this modest amount of work will make a considerable aesthetic difference to the appearance of the area in addition to making it a more comfortable one to enjoy.

The Green benches are currently in need of repair and this will be undertaken during the next month with replacement of some of the worn slats.

Celebrating and Protecting our Rights of Way

One of the most attractive features of our parish is the extensive network of paths, on public rights of way, that run through and around the village and wider parish. The benefits for physical and mental health from exercise in the beautiful countryside are well documented so maintaining the quality and accessibility of the network of paths available to us is something the Parish Council have resolved to try and do something about.

There are threats in many places from over-development, neglect or active blocking of rights of way and other long-established paths. It's a national problem <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-67937253> and anecdotal feedback is that more needs to be done here to protect our paths locally also. Highways authorities in Councils are responsible for maintaining rights of way, but we can help in identifying and reporting problems and working with the Council on solutions.

From the many walkers, dog walkers, parents exploring with children in the parish we are **looking for volunteers to get involved in this work** to protect and improve our rights of way. Please look at the ideas we have below and let us know if you can give even a little time to help out by emailing the parish clerk at parishclerk@pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk.

- Walking all the paths in the parish to specifically look for accessibility issues, impassible surfaces, blockages, barriers and maintenance issues
- Identifying 'missing links' where small route changes or additions would open up new routes
- Working with NYC Highways on how to tackle improvements including where the Parish Council can add resources
- Identifying/recommending good circular routes starting and finishing in the parish with the potential to produce a guide to routes in a booklet and online
- Positive promotion of our paths or campaigning for improvements through parish websites and social media

If you're interested to find out more in general here are some places to look:

Open Spaces Society guidance <https://www.oss.org.uk/need-to-know-more/information-hub/rights-of-way-impassable-paths/>

You can already report a right of way issue to NYC at this site (which also explains the NYC responsibilities) <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/public-rights-way/rights-way-maintenance>

Update regarding arrangements for D-Day anniversary celebrations (Thursday 6th June) and a family "Fun Day" (Sunday 9th June)

Your Chairman confirmed that arrangements are well in-hand for this June weekend celebration with Bar B Q facilities to be organised and provided by the Cricket Club, music provision has been booked together with a bouncy castle, bar provision, ice cream van and a dog show. In addition, there will be various children's games and stalls with a small-prize tombola and raffle. There is still much to do and we will keep you informed as time progresses.

Repair of Spring Lane wall

It is with some considerable frustration – felt particularly by our parish clerk – that we inform you that NYC Highways Area Manager after a number of weeks of slow response to emails has now commented in an email received last week:

"Our local Public Rights of Way (PROW) officer is in discussion regarding both the fence and the wall repair. I have been made aware of the agreements you have sent through and also understand that the footpath is permissive on private land. Once these discussions have concluded we will ensure updates are sent to the Parish Council. Whilst I do appreciate the length of time it is taking to resolve this, I can assure you the wall damage has been reviewed and is not deemed as a direct safety issue to the highway."

The Parish Council, together with parishioners, are fully aware – following a period of some two years since the incident occurred – that there is no highway safety issue. Is it possible that the April newsletter could contain more constructive information?

Your community needs you . . .

Our thanks to Cllr Elatia Sharkey in leading the council on its Community Resilience Planning which, as you may be aware, will be a Plan which addresses in times of dire need (such as localised or widespread flooding / sustained power outages / severe community disruption caused by natural or even man-caused disaster) how support and assistance may be provided within the parish.

To this end, we need to hear from you, please, if you have 1) first aid or medical experience, 2) equipment such as CAB radio, 3) building, 4) plumbing skills, 5) search and rescue and 6) access to farm equipment. Or, are you great in a crisis?

In compiling our resilience plan we are looking for – and will be dependent on – volunteers who are able to be called on in the event of an incident. We would be delighted to hear from you if you feel you could provide assistance; please email Jane at parishclerk@pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk in the first instance. We will very much appreciate your consideration, thank you.

Movement of dog / waste bin on Station Road

In conclusion – and following a further site meeting – the all-party acceptable decision has been reached that NYC will relocate the bin a little further up Station Road and in close proximity to the footpath “finger post” opposite Mill Lane entrance. This will be “third time lucky” for this bin having been moved away from the bench – and for obvious reasons with regard to seating comfort – to its current position and with a final resting place which will hopefully encourage PROW dog walkers’ use thereby reducing the droppage of poo bags on the footpath and in the parish.

Community “wishlist”

We would very much like to hear from you and will welcome *any* suggestions you would like to make regarding ideas / needs / wants that you feel would enhance your parish community. Please bounce any thoughts to us at parishclerk@pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk.

Almsford Bank Stables - Development Appeal

We need to alert you again to the sustained efforts by current developer Square Feet Limited in making an appeal for Outline planning permission for 17 houses on land which, if developed, would not only set a precedent for further development as the land falls within a much larger area of ownership, would markedly affect the gateway entrance to Harrogate and the Crimble Viaduct aspect but would also threaten coalescence between Pannal and Harrogate.

There have been considerable efforts made to develop this land with a 1983 application for a single dwelling which was refused by the then Harrogate Borough Council and an appeal dismissed in 1984. In 2021 an application for 65 houses was withdrawn and a 2022 application for 35 houses was refused. The current application and for which the appeal is made is for *access to the site* together with 17 houses which was submitted in 2023 (23 / 01082 / OUTMAJ) and against which your Parish Council made strong objections. Councillors believe that this development would harm the character and appearance of its surroundings including the Crimble Valley Special Landscape Area and that, specifically, there are no mitigating features which could address their pursuit of access / egress from the A61 and on a particularly fast stretch and with a steep gradient. As we know, vehicular movement on this road is becoming increasingly busy and, during peak times, heavily congested – a situation exacerbated by the huge development in the aforementioned Western Arc area of Harrogate.

Should you wish to view the current application please follow the link:

<https://uniformonline.harrogate.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RRNRQ6HYKYD00>

If you wish to make comments regarding the appeal then it will be online at

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk> where you must quote the Appeal Ref: APP/U2750/W/24/3339198 and submit any representations no later than 4th April 2024.

SIDs / Community Speedwatch

As parishioners are aware, your councillors monitor the data from four SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices) located on Church Lane, Main Street, Spring Lane and Burn Bridge Road. We are very grateful to Mr Peter Talbot who so helpfully and efficiently downloads the data and makes sense of it for us on a regular basis.

We are hoping that Community Speedwatch will undertake a session/s on Walton Park as an initial step before seeking placement of a SID in that area which, of course, requires siting on private ground as opposed to the public highway as NYC don't permit additional "street furniture" unless instigated by their offices. The SID siting needs good two-way visibility to ensure speed records are logged and reassurance can be given that their installation is not overly intrusive. If you are able to assist then please do contact Jane at parishclerk@pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk. Thank you.

Information, below, from Pannal Village Hall:

"Pannal Community Car Park: please note changes early April '24

Background

The Council is not renewing its lease of the Car Park opposite the Village Hall and so, to prevent it falling into the hands of a third party, the Village Hall is taking on the lease from 1st April '24.

This has not been an easy decision as the costs are difficult for us to manage but we wish to protect this community asset which is of benefit both to hall users and local residents.

Therefore, we have entered into an agreement with a Car Park Operator who will introduce a small daily parking charge for "non" Village Hall cars who use the big lower car park. The Village Hall charity will then get a share of the parking income to offset our rent and insurance costs etc.

How will it work?

The small charge of £2.50/day will apply only in the big lower car park, 6am to 6pm Monday to Saturday with Sundays and Bank Holidays free. The first 20 mins will also be free of charge.

So, from early in April all cars using the lower car park area will have their reg numbers recorded by a camera and during charge periods they will have to pay £2.50/day via a RingGo parking app on their phones.

To avoid this charge, Village Hall users who need to use the lower area will be able to enter their reg numbers on an ipad in the Village Hall and this will "cancel" their charge.

The small top car park (opposite the Hall) will remain free and reserved for Village Hall users.

Will there be more spaces for Village Hall users?

We don't know how people will respond to the new charges. We do know that some existing users from the building site may move onto their own land off Thirkill Drive.

Also, some "park and ride" train commuters may relocate to other stations further along the track such as Hornbeam Park and Weeton.

If our £2.50/day charge does not free up space, we will then need to increase our charge to match the existing £3/day Railtrack charge on the Co-op side of the tracks and, as this car park is currently under used, some cars will then move across there.

What next?

Once the new flats are occupied the Council has promised to undertake a wider Parking Study and introduce restrictions to help residents with on street parking issues. We hope this will then make the layby area opposite the Hall available for Hall and Post Office users.

Conclusions

The Village Hall is a charity run entirely by volunteers. We have no profit motive for this car park, we just want to continue to provide good facilities at the Hall and we have been pushed into this action by the Council's decision not to renew its lease.

This is a difficult problem and we are trying to act in the best interests of both Hall users and local residents. We know that any changes may cause initial problems but until matters settle down we hope that you will bear with us and continue to give us your support."

NYC's Local bus service provision

Following their last year's review and renewal of local bus service contracts in the area of Harrogate and outlying areas a summary of any changes made will be included on the Parish Council website for your information and under the News tab / Newsletters. NYC confirm that the services relate only to those currently provided by the authority and do not relate to commercial (non-funded) services.

NYC request for information to be contained in newsletters

*“The York and North Yorkshire Mayor will be chosen by you in the first York and North Yorkshire Mayoral election on **Thursday 2 May 2024**.*

The Mayor will lead the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, with investment of £540 million to be spent over the next 30 years. The Mayor and Combined Authority will have powers and responsibilities devolved to them by central government. This includes powers to improve the supply and quality of housing and funds to improve transport.

*You must be registered to vote in this election by **16 April 2024**.*

Find out if you are registered and how to vote at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/mayoralelection>

You can cast your vote however it suits you – in person, by post or by proxy, which is when you identify someone to vote on your behalf.

If you are voting in person you will need to bring a Photo ID to your polling station. You can make sure you have an accepted form of identification here, <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/your-council/elections-and-voting/how-vote>

*If you don't have an accepted form of identification, you can apply for free voter ID by **5pm on Wednesday 24 April**. Apply for free voter ID here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>*

You can vote from home if you can't or don't want to go to your polling station on election day.

*Registering to vote by post is easy - you'll simply need to prove your identity. Apply for a new postal vote or cancel an existing one, before the deadline of 5pm on **Wednesday 17 April** at*

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/your-council/elections-and-voting/apply-postal-vote>

You can apply for a trusted friend or family member to cast your vote by proxy at your polling station at

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/your-council/elections-and-voting/apply-proxy-vote>

*Apply for a proxy vote for this election before the deadline of 5pm on **Wednesday 24 April**.*

*You can also call **0300 131 2 131** (please say 'Election' when prompted) to request information about how to vote.*

Accessible formats are available on request.”

Best wishes

Cllr Cathy Burrell (Chairman of the Parish Council), Cllr Neil Permain (Vice Chairman) and Councillors Steve Cobb, Andrew Farrar, Elatia Sharkey, Cliff Trotter and Helen Hayes

For reference, the most recent newsletter is always posted on the Village Notice Board (at the Village Hall) and all newsletters are posted on the website here: <http://www.pannalandburnbridge-pc.gov.uk/Documents.aspx>

Also, if you use Facebook, please join our group where you'll get any breaking news more quickly than through these periodic newsletters:

<https://www.facebook.com/Pannal-and-Burn-Bridge-Parish-Council-1655335551445518/>