

CRAKEHALL WITH LANGTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT – MAY 2023

Following is a brief summary of some of the things that the Parish Council has dealt with over the last year, to try and improve the lives of the communities it serves:

On Thursday 5th May 2022 Parish Council elections were held throughout the Hambleton District Council area. In the event the Crakehall and Langthorne Parish Councils were uncontested and Councillors Beal, Randall, Shaw and Wilson were re-elected unopposed in Crakehall and Councillor Stirke in Langthorne. Councillor Neale was co-opted onto the Parish Council at the meeting of 18th May 2022 being the only candidate. Despite having served as Chairman for the limit of 2 years from May 2020 to May 2022, I was re-elected as Chairman at the May 2022 AGM when it was pointed out that post-elections this was now a new council and the 2 year limit was therefore renewed.

The most significant event to occur during the year was the submission of Outline Planning Application (with All Matters Reserved Except Access) for the Erection of 20 No. Dwellings on land to the south of Station Road, Great Crakehall by Preston Baker Planning on behalf of Mr R Pounder and Richard Roberts Ltd. The first the Parish Council was aware of the proposed development was when the agent for Richard Roberts Ltd, Hugh Roberts, appeared unannounced at the 11th November, 2022 Parish Council meeting. Mr Roberts informed the PC he wished to make early contact with the PC and wanted to raise awareness of the proposal for a house building development on Station Road and that a Planning Application was expected early in the New Year. The meeting was informed that at this stage various feasibility studies had been carried out for varying numbers of house between 4 and 20. The Planning Application was formally submitted on 10th February, 2023 and on Friday 3rd March, 2023 a public meeting was held in the Village Hall, where the developer Richard Roberts Ltd presented the proposed development plans and answered the public's questions. The PC subsequently called an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting which was held on Tuesday 7th March, 2023 for the PC to ascertain parishioners views on the proposed development, prior to submitting the PC's response to the Hambleton Planning Committee by the closing dates for comments of 20th March, 2023 (The PC had obtained a weeks extension to the closing date which was previously the 13th March, 2023). A total of 28 parishioners attended the EPC meeting and when asked unanimously voted to oppose the proposed development. The PC then voted to oppose the development and the Parish Council response was submitted via the Hambleton Planning Portal on 16th March, 2023.

On 14th March, 2023 North Yorkshire Highways recommended refusal of planning permission stating *'It is the opinion of the Local Highway Authority that the carriageways on the approach and within the vicinity to the proposed development site in both directions are not suitable to accommodate the additional vehicles associated with a 20 dwelling residential development . Consequently, the Local Highway Authority recommends that Planning Permission is REFUSED for the following reasons: ROADS LEADING TO THE SITE The Planning Authority considers that the roads leading to the site are by reason of their insufficient widths are considered unsuitable for the traffic which would be likely to be generated by this proposal'*.

Subsequently on 2nd May 2023 the developer submitted a consultants report in response to NYCC Highways Comments, which attempts to refute NYCC Highways recommendation for refusal by the introduction of traffic calming measures at the pinch point at Manor Farm. I do not believe that this report should have any validity in the Planning process as it was not submitted as part of the original planning application of 10th February, 2023. I have sought clarification from our North Yorkshire County Councillor, John Weighell, but at the time of writing have yet to receive a response.

In January 2023 the Parish Clerk met with representatives of Northern Powergrid and their sub contractor to walk around the village and gain a better appreciation of the work to be done to replace the overhead power cables with a new underground cable. The clerk communicated with Northern Powergrid to make it absolutely clear that, while the Parish Council has given permission for work to take place on land owned by the council, it is solely the responsibility of Northern Powergrid to communicate with affected householders regarding access restrictions, supply interruption and any works that may need to be done on privately owned land to connect the new supply cable. A public meeting was held on February 24th, 2023 to allow parishioners to view the proposed works and question Northern Powergrid on how the works would affect them. The work is scheduled to begin during the school holidays in July 2023. A second public meeting has been scheduled for 27th June at 7:15pm in the Village Hall.

The Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) was continuously deployed throughout the year at the 3 sites in the village (Little Crakehall, Crakehall Green and Hackforth Road). Data collected by the VAS shows that although speeding continues to be an issue the percentage of vehicles that speed through Crakehall remains on average less than 5% at Crakehall Green and 6% at Little Crakehall, with weekends seeing the highest percentage of speeding vehicles.

NY Police continued surveillance at the Little Crakehall site in the village by motorcycle patrols. During 2022 they made 9 visits to Crakehall recording 222 speeding offences, an average of 24.6 per visit. This was a reduction from the 311 speeding offences recorded in 17 visits made in 2021, which was an average of 18.3 per visit. We will continue to liaise with NY Police to encourage further speeding enforcement in the village.

The weekend of June 2nd – 5th, 2022 marked the Platinum Jubilee celebration for Queen Elizabeth II. The PC purchased commemorative mugs which were given to all the under 16 residents of Crakehall with Langthorne parish. The PC also purchased commemorative roundels which were displayed through the village for the Jubilee weekend. A Jubilee beacon was lit on the Village Green on Friday 2nd, June and a commemorative group photograph was taken on the Village Green on Sunday 5th June. The photograph was made available for download to parishioners via the www.crakehall.org.uk website. A print of the photograph was also framed and placed in the Village Hall. In Langthorne a village barbeque was held and a beacon lit on the evening of Friday 2nd June at Poplar Farm and on Monday 5th June there was an outdoor lunch at West Farm when a village photograph was taken. Langthorne villagers made donations for a village bench to be purchased, with the response being enough that a wooden bench and two flower tubs were purchased, along with a commemorative plaque for the Jubilee.

May 2023 saw the Coronation of King Charles III and commemorative mugs were again purchased by the PC and distributed to the under 16 residents of Crakehall with Langthorne, with the remainder sold off to interested parishioners. In Langthorne over the Coronation weekend a barbeque was held on the evening of Friday 5th at Poplar Farm and an outdoor lunch party on the Bank Holiday Monday at West Farm.

In January 2023 a parishioner reported to the Parish Council that a gap had appeared between the pavement tarmac and the retaining wall of the Crakehall Beck in Little Crakehall. At the January Parish Council meeting the Parish Clerk was asked to contact North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) regarding this matter. I am pleased to say that NYCC took this seriously and on 8th March were on site with a diver to inspect and effect a temporary repair, as it was discovered that the wall has been undercut in places by the beck. Sandbags were placed and pinned in place by the diver to prevent further erosion of the base of the wall.

Grass cutting services provided by Farm and Land Services in the village proved satisfactory. Tenders were issued to 3 contractors for the renewal of the grass cutting contract in Only Farm and Lan Services submitted a bid and therefore were awarded the contract in March 2023.

After concerns raised by residents, remedial work was carried out to trees outside the Old Police House by Rennison Tree Services. Remedial work was also carried out to trees on The Batts. A full survey of all the trees on the Green, The Batts and the Cemetery is scheduled for 2023.

In July 2022 the PC received a report that Giant Hogweed had been seen on The Batts and a specialist contractor was contacted to deal with the matter. Unfortunately, in May 2023 further occurrences were reported and will again be dealt with by the specialist.

Turning to the Parish Council's financial position, expenditures this year have again been quite low. The council has therefore succeeded in maintaining a contingency of £10,000 in its general reserves which is in line with national guidelines. This means that routine expenditure and maintenance can be covered by the precept as usual with the contingency reserved for non-routine and special / emergency projects.

I would just like to acknowledge the (generally unsung) work of members of our community who help keep the village as one of the best kept villages in the Lower Dales:

In May 2022 the Clerk to the Parish Council, Chris McGee, expressed his wish to step down from the role. In June 2022 the post was advertised to interested parties and on 1st August, 2022 Richard Bocking was formally installed as the new Clerk to the Parish Council. The Parish Council wish to thank Chris for his commitment and work as clerk over the four years from 2018 to 2022.

I wish to thank Fellow Councillors and in particular our new clerk, Richard Bocking, without whose sterling efforts the Parish Council would not function. Whilst we acknowledge that we cannot please all of the people all of the time, we endeavour to do our best and act in what we believe is the best interests of our villages.

Rob Exelby for the donation of the village Green Christmas tree.

Paul Kind who continues to maintain the wild flower area on The Batts and many other odd jobs.

Barrie Morris for his efforts in cleaning and renovating the Old Chapel in the Cemetery.

Candice Ventham for assistance in distributing the Platinum Jubilee and Coronation mugs.

Malcolm and Kay Dennis who, amongst other things, look after the planters attached to various railings and lamp posts throughout the village.

Mick Lumley for his efforts in dealing with a large fallen tree branch on the Village Green.

In July 2022 I had the pleasure of presenting Myra Shields with the first Honorary Burgess certificate issued by the Parish Council, in recognition of her enormous contribution to village life.

On April 1st, 2023 the new North Yorkshire County Council came into effect and Hambleton District Council ceased to exist. I wish to thank Hambleton District Councillors Mike Barningham and John Noone for their valuable input to Parish Council meetings.

Apologies in advance for anyone that I have forgotten to mention.

The PC greatly values the input of parishioners to bring issues to our attention.

The PC does its best to inform parishioners of the activities and decisions of the PC by posting information on the village notice boards, via the All Crakehall Great and Small Facebook page and the www.crakehall.org website. Unfortunately, the production of the bi monthly newsletter has fallen by the wayside somewhat but the aim is to reinstate this as soon as possible. If parishioners can think of any other means we can inform them of the Parish Council activities please let us know.

David Shaw (Chairman, Crakehall with Langthorne Parish Council)