

WHELDRAKE PARISH, WHELDRAKE WARD OF THE UNITARY AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF YORK

Report prepared by the Chairman of the Parish Council for the annual meeting of the Parish for the year 2015/2016

Local Plan

The plan has been undergoing revision following the change in control of the City of York Council (CYC) in 2015. The annual housing target has been reduced. The Parish Council is represented on the outer York Parish Councils Alliance which will submit comments on the new draft. The Ward Member is also a member of the CYC Local Plan Working Group.

A timetable has indicated that the first draft should emerge in late spring 2016 with a target for the approved plan to be ready for submission to the government inspector later in 2016 and adoption to follow a year later.

Village Hall

At the well attended EGM of the Wheldrake Recreation Association (WRA) in June 2015 there was no support for a suggestion to build a new village hall. It was agreed that the existing facilities should be restored and upgraded. A planning application was submitted and approved. By October fund raising had realised £60,000 which enabled tenders to be invited for phase 1 of the project. Unfortunately a large section of the roof collapsed in the severe autumn weather although floor protection works had fortunately been carried out. As a result of a magnificent fund raising effort and successful grant funding work on phase 1 which started at the beginning of 2016 is now well advanced including completion of the new roof and an extension.

Work on phase 2 commenced in early April to upgrade and extend the changing rooms and toilet block with a negotiated hand over date of 26 August. The Parish Council will provide some of the funding for this phase raised by means of a substantial increase in the 2016/2017 precept.

Village Design Statement

This excellent document, produced by a Parish volunteer group was officially launched after approval and adoption by City of York Council.

Community Assets

The Parish Council have nominated the village shop, White Rose House and Wheldrake Woods to be included in the CYC register

Wheldrake Play Park

In its third year the 'Friends of Wheldrake Park' have continued their splendid work having secured a second large grant from Yoreventure. The toddler area has been upgraded and an additional roundabout and dragon swing installed elsewhere. The school took part in a poster campaign in the winter to discourage littering in the park.

Highways and Speeding

A scheme has been agreed between the Parish Council, Ward Member and CYC to improve the gateways at the east and west ends of the village. This will involve some changes to the road layout (west), changed road markings and changed signage to more clearly indicate the start of the 30mph zones..

Outside the school the time limited no waiting zone has been extended and the existing road markings refreshed.

Community Emergency Plan

Under the Chairmanship of a Parish Councillor a group has been established to draw up a scheme which will enable the village to activate a plan in the event of a major incident. This would complement actions taken by the professional services

Dog Fouling

Whilst not a problem throughout the village there have been concerns about some locations. This has been the unwillingness among a minority of dog owners to scoop up or the throwing of packages including on several occasions into the old telephone box.

The Parish Council has resolved to report any identified offenders who may then face prosecution.

Permitted Development

Outside of the village Conservation Area government relaxation of PD rules has enabled larger extensions to be built without planning consent. Objections and concerns have been raised by some residents with respect to extensions at upper levels which they consider have reduced their privacy and lowered property values. Specific concerns have been forwarded to the CYC Planning Directorate and the local MP by the Parish Council.

Planning Approval for a major development in the green belt

The October 2015 application for a large egg laying farm near Hagg Wood was approved by the CYC planning committee in April despite strong objections from the PC, CPRE and many residents of the Parish and beyond. There are many conditions which are classed as reserved matters and which will require separate approval

Crime

The local PCSO has been proactive and has also dealt with a number of incidents. Whilst the level of crime has been low there have been burglaries at the Industrial estate, the Lewis tree surgeons depot on Benjy Lane and at Gothic Farm.

Christmas Lights

The display was moved to a new location with the practical and financial support of York Linings and Mr Bill Agar.

The PC is as usual very appreciative of the work done by the team led by David Dick to maintain, erect and dismantle the lights.

Trees

Further tree planting has been carried out by David Liptrott with some financial support for tree purchase from the PC.

Additional TPOs have been placed by CYC on a number of trees in the village.

Rights of Way

It is hoped that the claimed ROW from Church Lane/North Lane to Sparrow Hall Farm, will be added to the definitive map during the coming 12 months.

There has been little or no progress on the claimed path from Church Lane to Thorganby Lane.

Parish Council Website

A dedicated site is being launched The existing Wheldrake site will continue for Village organisations and social events.

Oil and Gas Exploration

After a major government appraisal licences have been offered to a number of commercial organisations for exploration and possible later exploitation. Limitations have been imposed on the location of operations particularly where there are sites for nature conservation such as the Lower Derwent Valley. The Company, Cuadrilla are currently in negotiation with respect to local licencing of some blocks. Cuadrilla have informed the PC of their proposed interest. CPRE have offered to provide an opportunity for Parish Council representatives to be advised of the possible timetable for exploratory surveys. Any drilling works will require planning approval but it is unlikely based on government information that this will take place in Wheldrake Parish; however this does not preclude some exploitation by directional drilling at some future date.

David Randon

Chairman, Wheldrake Parish Council