

**THORP ARCH ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017**  
**Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: J. Richardson (Chair), M. Smyth, Amy Crooks, A. Rodger

**OTHERS:** Cllr Alan Lamb, Cllr Gerald Wilkinson, PCSO Emma Leighton, Peter Locke TAG, Roland Blackburn – Neighbourhood Plan, Gaby Morrison – Causeway and Village Society, Jill Tarr – Tennis Club, Val Howse – YCA, Adam Gough – Cricket Club, plus 50 members of the public (Thorp Arch Residents).

**APOLOGIES:** Graham Duxbury, Diane Pellew – Prison Governor, HMP Wealstun

**IN ATTENDANCE:** T. Wormley (Clerk)

**I. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 25th April 2016, had been agreed as correct at the Council meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

None

**3. POLICE REPORT – PCSO EMMA LEIGHTON**

The crime figures for Thorp Arch from 1st March 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017:

Burglary dwelling	1
Burglary other	15
Robbery	0
Theft of motor vehicle	1
Theft from motor vehicle	3
Criminal damage	2
Theft	8
TOTAL	30

A total of 30 crimes have been recorded over the last twelve months which is a very low figure in comparison to the rest of the Leeds district.

The only crime which is high but not above average is Burglary Other. The majority of these were on the Thorp Arch Trading estate. The police regularly patrol this area to help try and combat these type of offences and crime prevention advice is given out.

The Wetherby ward beat manager is PC2414 Ben Chamberlain and the Wetherby Ward PCSOs are PCSO187 Emma Leighton, PCSO212 Gaynor Duffy, PCSO939 Lou Crossland and Rachel Kent who will be joining us soon.

#### **4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman provided a summary of the main events of the year.

Keynote events of the year:

The first baby born to an active serving member of the Parish Council, Amy Surtees(Crooks).  
Congratulations to Oliver and Amy on the birth of Arthur Surtees.

TATE

Last year we were able to report the withdrawal of the application by Rockspring of its Application for a 2000 home development proposal but warned of a further Application in the offing for a development of 900 homes. This did materialise and the Council has lodged a powerful objection to this Application, alongside many objections from TAG and individual residents. To date, Rockspring have not been able to persuade Leeds City Council of the merits of their Application and in order to have matters determined, Rockspring have appealed to the Secretary of State for a Public Inquiry into the Application's non-determination by Leeds City Council as well as submitting a new but identical Application to run alongside the appeal. The Parish Council has continued to work closely with TAG on both TATE and Site Allocation Plan matters.

Site Allocation Process (SAP)

The withdrawal of the Headley Hall site from the SAP and the inclusion amongst others of:

- A major site at Parlington for residential development of c 1700 homes
- The Housing Community Association (HCA) site HG2-227 (land to the north of Wealstun Prison) for residential development of 142 homes
- TATE remaining as an Employment designated site

All are major features of the SAP from this Parish Council's viewpoint.

The SAP has received the approval of Leeds City Council Executive Board and has now been sent for examination by the Secretary of State. Critical to that examination will be the judgement on the 5-year land supply currently available to Leeds for residential development. As ever on such strategic planning matters, the timetable is slipping.

Again, the Parish Council has worked hard to keep on top of this process and is very grateful also for the separate and detailed work undertaken by TAG

There has been much publicity about the Government's White Paper addressing the need for more homes, the maintenance or otherwise of greenbelt and the need to get brownfield sites built on. There will undoubtedly be further twists and surprises as the next few months go by and to which this Parish Council, TAG, other neighbouring Councils and indeed Leeds City Council will need to respond. We will be looking for support from our Ward Councillors and we remain indebted to the continued support from residents.

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

It is important that the NP is in place as soon as is practical and the Steering Group is working hard to that end. The Plan has now been officially signed off by the Parish Council and was formally submitted to Leeds City Council on 5th April for inspection. Assuming LCC approve the Plan, it will then be sent out for independent examination.

The Parish Council is very grateful to everyone who has served on the NPSG and in particular to Graham Duxbury. The concept of Neighbourhood Plans remains a good one but there is widespread frustration with the process, with the bureaucracy of planning regulation, with the costs of employing expert consultants, with the politics, with the conflicts of interest and ultimately with the time spent. Your patience and perseverance is to be applauded. Thank you very much.

Planning Applications

Generally within the Village for property improvements, tree trimming etc are quite numerous and the Parish Council is fortunate in being able to rely on Graham Duxbury's expertise and advice in dealing with this case work. Apart from TATE, the most significant planning application has been on the HCA site (the old prison social club site) which is ongoing for 23 houses, all within that envisaged by the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Parish Council has serious reservations

about the inclusion within the SAP of the larger HCA site HG2-227 for an overall development of 142 houses and it will be watching carefully how this Application evolves.

#### Crime

The Parish has a low incidence of crime compared to many others within Outer North East Leeds and for that matter within West Yorkshire as a whole. Where needed, we are happy to call on the services of our local police personnel albeit we recognise the high demand and weakened resources West Yorkshire Police currently have at their disposal.

Speeding remains an issue and the Parish Council is taking steps to apprehend offenders, especially on Church Causeway leading through to Walton.

Cold Calling as such is not a crime but where it includes abusive behaviour, residents are encouraged to advise the Police of an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incident.

#### Highways and Footpaths and Infrastructure

The efforts of the Parish Council, led in large part by Cllr Andrew Rodger, have had some very positive results in the past year, with the stand-out success being the resurfacing of the footpaths and highway of the whole of Church Causeway from the War Memorial through to Walton. LCC Highways have also made significant improvements on Wood Lane (prompted possibly by the Tour de Yorkshire passing through Thorp Arch) albeit the advance notice given for such roadworks could have been better!

Traffic congestion has been more noticeable in the Village, especially at the pinch spot of the Bridge, and this has been drawn repeatedly to the attention of LCC Planners as they consider the TATE Application.

We remain indebted to the services of Colin Sanderson who ensures our greens are maintained and to all who contribute to the bulb planting and the litter cleaning, both of which help to show off the village at its best. Those dogwalkers in Thorp Arch (and there are many) will be pleased at the addition of additional dog waste bins.

You might recall that last year I was optimistic that we might be able to persuade BT Openreach to place all of Thorp Arch on the list for early installation of Superfast Broadband. That optimism was misplaced and there is little to suggest it will be installed within the next few years. The Parish Council believes however that the speeds currently available to residents are sufficiently acceptable for the time being.

#### Community Projects

The Parish Council was pleased to be able to support the project to commemorate the Centenary of the Somme Offensive combined with the publication of Robert and Bethan Williams book "Thorp Arch: The Fallen of the First World War". There are additional copies available tonight if anyone wishes to make a late purchase.

The Parish Council is working on ideas for projects in the Village, one being the installation of a Heritage Map similar to the one in evidence in Boston Spa, another being for improvements to the War Memorial site on the Green. Such projects do require careful management and funding, so the availability of Grants will be explored. The site of the old telephone kiosk may will be considered as a possible location for the Heritage Map.

A resident mentioned last year his interest in the establishment of what are called Community Assets which if properly identified and registered with Leeds City Council can then be bid for (NOT BUY) on the open market by the community as and when such asset comes up for sale. We invited residents to nominate any suitable ideas of appropriate assets and I have to report that The Pax Inn has now been successfully added to the list of Assets of Community Value. It will remain on the List for 5 years at which a subsequent application could be made. This means that should the owners of the property decide to dispose of it, the Parish Council will be notified and then have a six-week period in which to declare an interest to purchase it. If this were to occur, there will then be a six-month moratorium granted so that an open-market bid can be prepared.

## Finance

The Parish Council maintains tight control over its finances, a report on which will be given by the Clerk. In the new financial year just started, residents will be aware not only of the increase in Council Tax levied by Leeds City Council but within the overall increase there has been a further rise in our Parish Precept from £13,200 to £17,020. This increase is very regrettable but is due partly to two factors:

- Additional provision for costs arising in regard to the Neighbourhood Plan
- A new provision of £2500 to cater for the possible election costs in 2019 in the event of a contested election similar to that which occurred in 2015. A further provision will be necessary next year of a similar amount given the advice received from LCC that such election costs if incurred would be c.£5000.

Consequently, the annual increase in the local Parish charge (Band D Household) is £9.86 taking the total charge to a total of £ 45.37 p.a.

## Community Activities

### Causeway

We are all delighted with the continuing success of Causeway and the way that Gaby and Paula are seeking to work closely with all of us. John Clayton's efforts on the advertising should be mentioned in despatches. The Village Diary and the availability of the digital database of residents remain very important to the Parish Council and us all. Gaby and Paula have advised that they wish to step down from their responsibility for Causeway at the end of 2017 so succession planning is, I believe, underway.

### Village Society:

Gaby and her Team help to sustain the enthusiasm within the village for all ongoing activities. The Parish Council is very grateful to Village Society for all that they provide for our community.

### Relationships with other Parish Councils

The Council has sought to work well with our neighbouring Parishes in Walton and Boston Spa and I am pleased to say that there has been greater unity of purpose in our respective attitudes to the development proposals at TATE, particularly on highways issues.

### In Conclusion

Once again, I should like to thank all my fellow Councillors (Margaret, Amy, Graham and Andrew) and our Clerk (Tina) for working so well together and with patience, understanding and humour. We appreciate the interest and the support from all residents and in particular to those of you who are here tonight.

## **5. SUMMARY OF FINANCES – CLERK**

The clerk provided a summary of finances and circulated an unaudited summary of accounts for the year 2016/17.

Total income for the year was £16,608 which was lower than the previous year, mainly due to Neighbourhood Plan grants in 2015/16. There was a higher VAT refund in 2015/16, again due to Neighbourhood Plan expenditure in that year. Similarly, expenditure was lower in 2016/17 due to previous years spend on the Neighbourhood Plan.

The closing bank balance at the end of the year was £15,073.

The precept for this year has been increased from £13,200 to £17,020.

## **6. TAG UPDATE – PETER LOCKE**

I would like to thank the TAG team for all their hard work and to all residents who have written objections. I would also like to thank our ward Cllrs for their support.

The first application was made in 2013 for 2000 houses. It was finally withdrawn in 2016 and replaced with a smaller application. The reason given by Rockspring for withdrawal was that land for the relief road could not be obtained, although this was known at the end of 2013. A new application was submitted in August 2016, with a 16-week period for LCC to decide, as an environmental impact assessment was required. LCC failed to determine the

application within the time limit. Rockspring appealed for non-determination, and requested a public inquiry. TAG continue to believe that our best chance of defeating the application is via a Public Inquiry, so we are delighted with this turn of events. Whilst proceeding with the appeal, Rockspring have also re-submitted their previous application under a new number - thus 'twin-tracking' the process.

The public enquiry will be held in September 2017, hopefully in Boston Spa Village Hall. It will last for 10 days. TAG are a 'Rule 6' party which means we can speak, submit evidence, and question other parties' witnesses, as well as call our own. TAG have until the 27<sup>th</sup> May to put forward our 'Statement of Case.'

The next step is for the planners to present their 'reasons for refusal' to the LCC City Plans Panel, explaining why they didn't determine the application. Their reasons are the inadequate local Highways, the absence of S106 and viability information, and because of the poor accessibility of the site. TAG believe that contamination of the site, and its implications on deliverability and the ecology, are also very significant issues, and will present them to the Inquiry. Meanwhile Natural England have informed planners that the site maybe designated as an SSSI area.

The final decision will be made by the Secretary of State, who has already announced he will 'recover the application', around February 2018.

## **7. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – ROLAND BLACKBURN**

I am presenting this update on behalf of Graham Duxbury, Chairman of the Steering Group. Graham wanted me to stress that we owe our thanks for the progress we have made, to all members of the Steering Group – past and present as well as to John Pendleton who has supported us with the production of the Plan documents and to David Gluck our consultant who has guided us through the maze which is the Neighbourhood Planning process.

Last autumn we undertook what is called pre-submission consultation under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. This consultation involved all residents, stakeholders and statutory consultees and lasted six weeks and we would like to thank everyone who responded.

The Steering Group received many comments which resulted in some small but significant changes to the policies to add clarity and strengthen their intent.

All the comments and the responses can be viewed on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

It is probably worth noting that in the Neighbourhood Development Plan the old Prison Social Club site was identified and supported for a modest residential development, to provide 20 to 30 dwellings (which has a current live planning application for 23 homes). However in the Leeds City Council Site Allocation Plan (SAP) Submission Draft which has been forwarded to the Secretary of State, the Old Prison Social Club has been allocated to provide 142 homes.

The Neighbourhood Plan has an interest in part of this site (HG2 -227) because we have said that we wish there to be a playing field, allotments and an access path as part of the designated Local Green Spaces.

The Steering Group is now in a position to publish its proposals in the form of the 'Submission Draft March 2017' which was submitted to Leeds City Council on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

Publicity for the Thorp Arch Neighbourhood Plan began today Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017 and will run for 6 weeks until Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 5pm. It will then be sent for independent examination.

The Plan will be available to view on the Parish Council/ Neighbourhood Plan website:

[www.thorparchnp.org.uk](http://www.thorparchnp.org.uk) and printed copies are available to view at Wetherby and Boston Spa libraries, Lady Elisabeth Hastings school and you will be able to request a loan of a copy (for 48 hours) from Graham Duxbury.

The independent examiner will be appointed shortly to examine the Plan and then, subject to any proposed modifications and the Plan meeting the Basic Conditions of the regulations, the Plan

will come back to be voted on by residents in a referendum. A 'yes' vote by over 50% of those who vote will see the Plan become a legal and statutory part of the Leeds Local Plan. We anticipate that the independent examination will be carried out in June and the referendum could be held in September - but the referendum date does depend on how many responses the Plan receives at the Regulation 16 stage. On behalf of the Steering Group I would like to express my thanks to Graham Duxbury for his leadership and to say that during the last 12 months we have made considerable progress and the end of the process does now seem to be in sight.

## **8. CAUSEWAY – GABY MORRISON**

Both Paula and I have received some lovely feedback from residents about Causeway. The challenge for us is to make each issue a little bit different and we are delighted by the variety of submissions which we have received over the past year and a half. We hope that we are approachable enough that anyone with an idea or a story can e mail us or catch us when we are out and about.

As well as the articles, we try to ensure that we carry all the news and information which our community needs. Causeway is delivered to every house in our Village, ensuring that no one misses out on what is going on.

Causeway depends on a huge number of volunteers – from John Pendleton, who puts our word document into the appropriate shape for printing, our proof reading team headed by Ian Hall, John Clayton who organises the advertising and the delivery teams in Thorp Arch and Walton. The Causeway team is now looking for two new volunteers, to take over from Paula and I in January. We were very fortunate in that we had a fantastic handover from Anne Watts and she continued to help us by writing articles and proof reading for quite a long time. Paula and I would aim to provide a handover that was as good as the one we got. We would help as much as needed and ease the path of the new editors. Please think about whether you could take this role on. If no one steps forward Causeway will stop at the end of the year, which would be such a great shame.

## **9. VILLAGE SOCIETY AND VILLAGE DIARY– GABY MORRISON**

The Village Society has had another busy year, organising events enjoyed by all ages across our village community.

We started the year 2016/7 with a cake sale at the Pax during the Tour de Yorkshire. It was a Friday so we were unsure how many people would be watching the tour but it turned out that quite a few people were 'working from home' that day, so we raised a significant amount towards the firework display for later in the year. We also supported the efforts of Paula Letts who was coordinating fundraising for the RNLI, which was the official charity of the Tour last year.

Summer is normally a quieter time for the VS and we sprang back to life in the autumn with a full program of events...the annual cricket match against the tennis club (they won) – thanks to TABS for letting us use the pitch, the fireworks (possibly the most popular event which we organise) – thanks to Will West and Sam Dove for setting us the fireworks and to Tom Kilby for lending his field again, and the always popular carols around the Green. Our other pre-Christmas event was the afternoon tea at the dress rehearsal for the LEH nativity play. We also held an antiques roadshow style event with supper which was very successful.

Since Christmas we have had a quiz and supper evening at the Pax which, as always, was well supported.

During the year, we organise two afternoons aimed at continuing to make our village lovely to live in. One, in Spring, is our annual litter pick. There is a gruesome amount of litter dropped, particularly along Wood Lane and Church Causeway and we know that during the year lots of our

village dog walkers pick up whatever they can. But once a year we do a massive clear up, taking everything that we gather to the tip.

In Autumn, we continue with our bulb planting program. The Green and the verges along the roads are full of daffodils and crocuses in Spring and it is a truly gorgeous sight. We always need volunteers at these afternoons and we would love it if we had a few more.

During the year you may have noticed that the old telephone box on The Village has disappeared. We had, after consultation with the village decided to put a planter in the space. However, we have been asked by the PC to hold fire until some decisions have been made about where to put the heritage noticeboard, if we have one.

Our next event will be this Saturday when we are having a cake sale at the Pax to coincide with the Tour coming though.

David Watts is retiring from the Village Society at our AGM this coming Wednesday. Although David hasn't lived in Thorp Arch for the last 19 years he has worked tirelessly for the village and I know that we have a huge amount to thank him for.

### **10. TENNIS CLUB – JILL TARR**

Thorp Arch Lawn Tennis Club is open to all residents of Thorp Arch. We currently have about 20 live family memberships which are subscribed at £45 per year. We have a single court located along the footpath opposite The Pax. Membership entitles the member to play on the court without charge, although we do ask that a £2 fee is collected from adult guests and deposited with Jane Clayton at 13 The Village. Usage of the court is not heavy and there is also a simple booking arrangement if you want to make firm arrangements in advance.

Over recent years we have invested to upgrade the pavilion and last Summer spent over £2,000 on improving the playing surface. A significant portion of our funds comes from a 200 club, administered by Wendy Kemp with tickets available from Committee Members named below. Each Summer we hold an American Tournament followed by a BBQ which is open to villagers and members alike for a fee which covers food. Further details of this event - 9 July 2017 - will be found in upcoming editions of The Causeway. In addition, TALTC play The Village Society in a cricket match and we are always looking out for volunteer players looking to play socially. This is likely to be on Sunday 17 September at Tabs CC (details to be confirmed).

Anybody keen to find out more details can contact The Chairman - Rob Seldon on 07768 264 216. Other Committee Members are Jane Clayton, Jane and Mark Freeman, Jill Tarr, Amanda Waind, Richard and Ed West, Lynne Broadbent, Gaby Morrison - to whom The Club is grateful.

### **11. YCA – VAL HOWSE**

The Thorp Arch & Walton ladies group has been in existence for over 87 years, having formed in 1930 as a Women's Institute and then converting to the Yorkshire Countrywomen's Association in 1983.

The group's ethos has remained unchanged throughout its long history and remains committed to friendship and support of both our members and our community.

Thorp Arch & Walton members don't fit the stereotypical public image of the WI or YCA of knitting, jam and Jerusalem, we have a diverse set of interests and activities.

We always welcome new members, particularly from the younger women in the community who perhaps dismiss the group as being old fashioned and as a consequence miss out on the support and friendship a multi-generational group can offer.

2016/17 has again been a busy year, our membership continues to flourish with over 65 members and we have enjoyed many interesting and entertaining meetings with speakers on subjects as varied as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Yorkshire Dialects, Rape Seed Oil production and a First Aid demonstration.

We'd like to thank the community for their terrific support of our annual summer coffee morning fund raiser, this year held at Park Cottage. We had over 200 visitors. If you were one of them, we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did and we look forward to seeing you on Saturday 24 June at Bridgmount in Thorp Arch Park, we hope the weather is kind again.

September will see a change in venue for the group as the school has decided to cease third party evening lettings. We are extremely disappointed that our meeting place for the last 87 years is no longer available, especially as this means there is now no community venue in the village, but we do respect the Governors' decision. We will miss the school and would like to thank the staff for their support over the years, we intend to continue supporting the school and taking an interest in the pupil's activities.

To conclude, the group has another busy programme and we look forward to welcoming new members and reporting on our adventures at next year's parish meeting.

## **12. CRICKET CLUB – ADAM GOUGH**

There are three key areas that the cricket club is currently concerned with.

### Coaching

We run a number of coaching activities, and the numbers are increasing. Children are coached on Wednesday evening. Our head coach has played in the Bradford League. Master classes are planned for summer. New members are always welcome.

### Funding

We currently have £15,000, which comes mainly from sponsorship and fundraising. We have organised a number of events including a testimonial match which we held last year and will do again this summer on the 19<sup>th</sup> August.

### Investment in the Ground

The cricket wicket has been improved and two volunteers have been trained up as groundsmen. We have bought a new roller for the grass, which has significantly improved the quality of the pitch. Unfortunately, the club's facilities are in need of improvement. The first team cannot be promoted until the facilities have been upgraded. This is currently our biggest challenge. We are also struggling to obtain a lease. We need a 25-year lease and are in discussions with Carta Jonas.

The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their contributions.

Signed:

Date: