



NOTE OF PARISH FORUM MEETING

West Burton Village Hall
7:00-9:00pm, Tuesday 25th October 2016

Attendees:

Parishes

Jane Ritchie		Chair, Burton cum Walden PC
	}	Clerk, Aysgarth & District PC
Gillian Harrison	}	Clerk, Bainbridge PC
	}	Clerk, Carperby cum Thoresby PC
	}	Clerk, Castle Bolton with East & West Bolton PM
Mary Fawbert		Chair, East Witton PC
Richard Wells		East Witton PC
Steve Sheldon		Vice-Chair, Carperby cum Thoresby PC
Linda Cooper		Aysgarth & District PC
Graham Roberts		Clerk, Carlton Highdale PC
Gina Roberts		Carlton Highdale resident
Graham Dalton		Dent PC

YDNPA

Carl Lis	Chairman
Ian McPherson	Deputy Chairman
David Butterworth	CEO
Gary Smith	Director of Conservation & Community
Peter Stockton	Head of Sustainable Development
Julie Payne	Committees Officer
Sam Parfitt	PA to CEO & Chairman (notetaker)

[Ian McPherson](#) (Chair of the Forum) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The agenda for the meeting comprised the following topics:-

1. Conversion of roadside barns (Peter Stockton)

An update was given following a significant expansion of local planning policy since October 2015, specifically relating to the conversion of suitable 'roadside' barns for local housing (new Local Plan Policy L2). 'Roadside' excludes buildings that are not in close proximity to a road or track, ie isolated 'field barns'. Proposals for change of use to housing will be subject to a local occupancy condition.

More isolated field barns or other traditional buildings may still be permissible for less intensive uses that do not need direct vehicular access or parking, eg barn 'pods', horses, camping barns etc.

Since the introduction of this policy twelve months ago, quite a few consents have now been granted and more applications are being submitted each week. It is evident that there is pent up demand.

There was some concern expressed by councillors that there were grey areas within the interpretation of the policy and that the NPA should strictly adhere to the precise wording e.g. in relation to the creation of new openings in barns. Peter Stockton advised that there will always be cases where the final design does not quite meet the exact wording of the policy. The policy is an attempt to try and address important issues around local housing and conservation of traditional buildings in the landscape. Officers and Members try to be as consistent as possible when applying policy, but there will always be cases where flexibility is necessary in order to find acceptable solutions to meet the policy objectives.

It was highlighted that some derelict barns will require an initial structural survey to ensure that conversion will not amount to reconstruction.

Attention was drawn to the NPA's ['Design Guide'](#) - setting out detailed design guidance to support the Local Plan's policies; and ['Traditional Farm Buildings Toolkit'](#). These documents give helpful guidance on options available and people are encouraged to examine them prior to applying for planning permission.

Further modifications have been submitted to the Inspector as a consequence of the public hearings on the draft [Local Plan](#). The Inspector's report is expected in December. Once received, the new policies will be promoted in early 2017, these also include:-

- Allocated housing sites (mix of house types)
- Business sites
- Farm and land management flexibilities
- Visitor accommodation
- Wensleydale Railway – developing transport corridors

2. Sustainable Development Fund (Gary Smith)

A reminder that the NPA has a fund of £175,000 available each year to support local projects that promote a more sustainable way of living, working or enjoying the National Park. Now in its 15th year of operation. Over £80,000 has been given to 11 projects so far this year. Anyone can apply for a grant (other than another public body). Examples of projects funded so far include: railings at West Burton, Downholme Village signs, Briquette maker at Royal Oak Furniture – enhancing the economic viability of the business; and [B4RN hyperfast community broadband](#) scheme, which has developed in the western area of the Park. It is a non-profit community benefit society, offering its customers a fibre optic broadband network (10 times faster than BT provision).

Councillors are encouraged to tell people about the [Sustainable Development Fund](#).

3. **National Park vacancy for Richmondshire Parishes Member** (David Butterworth)

A reminder that there is currently a vacancy for the Richmondshire parish seat. The election process is being managed by the Yorkshire Local Councils Associations (YLCA) on behalf of the Authority. Deadline for receipt of nominations is Friday 28 October. As at 25 October, 2 nominations had been received so there will be an election for the position, and a hustings meeting will take place at 7pm on Tuesday 1 November (7pm) at the National Park offices in Bainbridge. Parish representatives are encouraged to go along and hear from candidates and ask them questions. Deadline for return of ballot papers will be 2 December.

4. **High Nature Value Farming in Wensleydale** (Gary Smith)

Background was given to [High Nature Value Farming in the Northern Upland Chain](#).

On behalf of the Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership, the NPA is testing out a new 'results-based payment scheme' for the uplands. The project is a national pilot, largely funded by the EU, and managed by Natural England.

With the current agri-environment schemes the farmer gets paid for doing what they're told; payments are fixed; and are paid even if the 'prescription' doesn't work. With the results-based approach the farmer and advisor work together; the farmer decides the best way to manage the land to get the desired results; the better the results, the higher the payment. This approach also rewards previous good management (because those farmers will be able to get the higher payments straightaway).

Wensleydale was selected for the pilot because:-

- It is a hotspot for curlew and other wading birds, whose numbers are declining in other parts of the country.
- It is a hotspot for upland hay meadows – most of which are only found in the Dales and North Pennines now.
- A lot of farmers have recently come out of agri-environment schemes (and the pilot could only be run on farms that are not in an existing scheme).

19 farmers have signed up to the pilot; giving a total of 41 sites across those 19 farms. The agreements will last for 2 years, with the project being monitored closely. A report on this pilot will be produced in 2018 and the outcomes publicised in order to influence Government with the future of farming subsidy post-2020.

5. **Affordable housing**

Cllr Ritchie expressed concern about the sale of Housing Association properties, and is seeking clarification on the position regarding Section 106 restrictions or whether there is anything that can be done to stop these properties from being sold on as holiday homes. She has recently met with Rishi Sunak MP and asked for a definitive answer from Government on this issue.

Peter Stockton believed there was an exemption in National Parks and AONBs whereby housing tenants don't have the right to buy, although he hadn't confirmed the legal position on this. [*Having subsequently checked, there is no exemption in National Parks or AONBs. However, it is considered that the Right to Buy would not normally override any of the NPA's existing Section 106 agreements, most of which restrict*

schemes to affordable housing for designated categories of local need. This effectively prevents Housing Association stock from being sold on the open market].

Peter Stockton raised the opportunity for community-led housing schemes. There is government money to support these schemes, although so far there have been very few schemes in Yorkshire. This may be because many parishes in North Yorkshire tend to be small and a lot of volunteer time is required. These schemes are exempt from right to buy and national rent controls. Peter to provide details to Jane Ritchie of the contact at North Yorkshire Housing as they are the lead in this area.

Councillors suggested community-led housing should feature on the agenda of the next Upper Dales Partnership Forum and Peter Stockton be invited to attend to advise from a planning policy perspective.

There was a general consensus that housing should be available to local people but an awareness that communities need to be sustainable, dependent on 'new blood' in the area.

6. National Park Management Plan (Gary Smith)

The Management Plan, which was last adopted in 2013, sets out the long term vision for the National Park. A new Plan is required by 2018, and the review process will start next year. As part of this process, the Authority and its partners will be seeking views from residents, visitors and organisations to gain an insight into the issues they feel are important for the future of the Park. This will, of course, include parish councils. In the meantime, Parish Councils are encouraged to look at the existing [plan](#).