

HESLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD IN THE MEETING ROOM ON TUESDAY 20 MAY 2025 AT 7.30 P.M.

Present:

Mr D Blacketer, Mrs P Bramley, Mr R Bramley, Mr J Garner, Ms B Heap, Mr T Pearcy and Mr C Pell

In attendance:

Fiona Hill - Parish Clerk

APM2025/1

Apologies

Mrs Z Richards

City of York Council Ward Councillor Kate Ravilious

Lucy Marsh - Parishioner

APM2025/2

Minutes of the APM 2024

Resolved – Approved (Unanimous)

APM2025/3

Annual Report

“York’s Local Plan, adopted in February this year, will significantly affect Heslington by removing over 350 hectares prime agricultural land in Heslington Parish taken out of food production. Approximately 3,600 new houses are to be built within the Parish, along with the necessary infrastructure and required mitigation for building on the countryside. Our ward Councillor, Kate Ravillious, has assured the Parish Council that we will be involved in the master planning and consultation of any sizable housing planning application that comes forward.

The Neighbourhood Plan, previously on hold pending the adoption of the City of York Local Plan, can now proceed. We are updating the documentation with a planning consultant and CYC to comply with regulations. With CYC's assistance, we expect to soon send out the Draft Neighbourhood Plan for consultation with all residents and other stakeholders.

The Meeting Room needs a new roof, and the Parish Council has employed Hare's to carry out the work starting mid-July through August. The contractor is working with us to minimize disruption, and we apologize in advance for any short-term inconvenience. The approximate cost is £35,500.00. The Meeting Room is a valuable community asset, and we would greatly appreciate your help with the cost; any donation is appreciated and will make a difference.

Details on how to donate will be available shortly. Please give as generously as you're able. Changes in Main Street have begun. The NatWest Bank has become a convenience store, and Barclay's Bank is converting into a private dental practice. The planning application to turn the Norwegian Centre (The Hive) and 5/5A Main St into student accommodation has been put on hold following objections from the Parish Council, residents, and the village trust. York Council is making further enquiries. The Post Office is up for sale, and we hope a buyer will be found before August to keep the business running as it is a great benefit for residents. The safer crossing project at the Outgang has been completed, along with the refurbishment of the double yellow lines. Ten trees along Main St South received care and maintenance to promote their growth.

Quickline has been working within the Parish to connect properties on Common Lane, Long Lane, and Langwith Stray to fibre broadband. However, none of the properties are connected yet. Many of these properties are businesses, which currently receive an average of 4-6 Mbps, while the minimum recommended speed is 10 Mbps, making it difficult to work efficiently.

This project has left six properties between the bottom half of Long Lane and the first half of Langwith Stray in a "no man's land." The Parish Council continues to press for the remaining properties on Long Lane and Langwith Stray to receive fibre connections.

The Parish Council is pleased to have provided grants this year, to include £300 for the Christmas Tree and £900 to the village trust to arrange A Big Lunch for residents in June.

Clr Rose Hilton has decided to step down. We thank her for her hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence as a Parish Councillor.

This does mean the Parish Council will have a vacancy. If you are interested, please contact the Clerk heslingtonpc@outlook.com for further details. We would very much encourage you to come along to a Parish Council meeting, 3rd Tuesday each month starting at 7.30pm, to understand how business is conducted.

My thanks, as always go to Councillors, our Clerk, our Lengthsman, our Ward Councillor and residents for their help and support throughout the year”.

Pauline Bramley – Chairman – Heslington Parish Council

Heslington Church

“Our Vicar, Adam Romanis, retired last August. We are still negotiating with York Diocese in the process for appointing a new one, who will probably be shared with St. Hilda’s Church, Tang Hall. Our Churchyard is nearly full: there are only 4 grave spaces left. York University have kindly agreed to give us 20m of Dean’s Acre, East of the existing churchyard, which should last another 100 years. We have now been given Planning Permission for change of use. This has cost about £10,000, which has exhausted our reserves. We will be making an appeal to parishioners to pay for a hedge and gates to mark the new boundary, and to make a hole from the existing churchyard wall into the extension. (We are now seeking permission from York Diocese for this.) Anyone who has lived in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Heslington (Heslington Village, Badger Hill and Newland Park) has the right to be buried there. More urgently, the sewer pipe became blocked, so we could not use the toilets or sinks for a month, while we discovered where the blockage lay, and inserted a new pipe to by pass the blockage, avoiding disturbing any graves (difficult!). We now have to re-turf the disturbed areas”.
(Rev.) Peter Mott

“Heslington Village Trust is a registered charity the Objectives of which are:

- 1. To promote high standards of architecture and planning in the Parish of Heslington (being the area covered by the Parish Council).*
- 2. To stimulate public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of the village and its surroundings.*
- 3. To encourage the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of public amenity or historic interest.*

Planning Applications

There were numerous residential applications, none of which the Trust objected to and were granted consent, including Botland House and Lowfield House. A number of planning applications worthy of comment were submitted in the year to 31st March. The Trust has commented on the following planning applications since the last AGM:

- The Charles XII. Periodically the brewery who own the pub apply for an extension of opening hours. The Trust objected, citing previous failed applications and the impact on residents, and the brewery withdrew the application.*
- NatWest Bank. Despite the Trust’s objection, consent was granted to convert the premises to a convenience store, with a licence to sell alcohol and open until 8.00pm. The Trust advised residents to monitor the situation to see if any undue disturbance resulted from this. Unanswered questions were also raised about the access to and location of waste bins.*
- Barclays Bank. Consent was granted to convert the premises to a dental surgery, despite the Trust raising questions about dedicated parking [there is none], and the accuracy of the proposal drawings. The Trust also regretted the missed opportunity to improve the appearance of one of the least attractive buildings in Main Street.*
- The Hive, including 5/5a Main Street. This was without doubt the most contentious application, to convert and extend the buildings to create 34 student beds, not least because had the Heslington Parish Neighbourhood Plan been adopted, it would have prevented student housing on this site. Although subsequently reduced in scope to 26 student beds by omitting the extension, the CYC Planning Committee decision at the meeting was to ‘Defer’. This was on the grounds that the recently adopted Local Plan required all employment sites applying for a change of use be advertised for 18 months, and The Hive had only been advertised for sale by the university for 7 months before purchase by the applicant. Furthermore, the need for off-campus student housing must be demonstrated. The Trust intends to write to CYC seeking clarification as to what happens now and within what time frame.*
- Heslington Church Cemetery. The Trust submitted a response to expansion of the cemetery suggesting expansion onto Church Field rather than onto Dean’s Acre due to HVT remit to protect the environs of the village and part of Dean’s Acre previously being lost to the road through the Science Park. Further information was provided by the Church at the OGM and a vote was taken to withdraw the objection, which the Trust did. Subsequently, it was confirmed that decisions on the Trust’s response to planning applications are devolved to the Executive Committee, not membership, although clearly the Executive Committee can take membership views*

into consideration. Letters of apology were subsequently received by both The Trust and Nick Allen recognising errors made by the Church and its architects in suggesting The Trust (and Nick personally) acted improperly, which was appreciated.

Heslington Memories

Excellent progress has been made by the working group of Cath Blacketer, Rosie Gilligan and John Lawton, and the book "Heslington Memories – Revisited" has been assembled and printed by Kindle Direct Printing and is available for sale through The Trust and at the Heslington BIG LUNCH on Sunday June 8, 2025. In addition to Donald Ward's original work, new contributions from the Percy family, Don Shaw, George Smith and Chris and Sally Hawkeswell add new stories and material. The Fulford and Heslington Ward Committee generously supported the project with a grant of £400, which will cover the printing costs. We are sure that it will be popular with all who love our village and its history.

Village Summer Party

The Party on Sunday 25 August 2024 created the opportunity for residents to meet up. Plant, cake and craft sales on the day generated £310. Thanks again to all members and volunteers who supported the day.

Annual leaf sweep

The Trust organised the annual village leaf sweep in November 2024. Many thanks to all who took part.

Christmas tree

The Trust, in collaboration with the Parish Council and Sinclair Properties split the cost for the Village Christmas Tree, which was on display outside of Sinclair's Main Offices, Main Street for the holiday period. Many thanks to Sinclair's and the PC for their funding of the tree and to Tom Percy for help with setting it up and taking it down.

Remit of the Village Trust

Amendments to the Constitution were sent to the Charity Commission. The amendments relating to 'Trustee benefit' and 'Liability Insurance' were rejected as they are not required as these matters are already satisfactorily covered by the Charities Act 2022. The new proposed objective "To facilitate local community events and activities." was rejected as it did not sufficiently indicate the charitable benefit of the events and activities that the Trust is organising. An alternative wording is being drafted and will be reviewed by the charity commission before members being asked to consider the adoption of the new wording.

Finances

The 2024/25 accounts for Heslington Village Trust showed a small gain (£100), after ring fencing grants from both the Heslington Parish Council and the Fulford and Heslington Ward committee. These grant funds have helped support the 2024 Village Party and the launch of a new publication 'HESLINGTON MEMORIES — Revisited'. They are also supporting the 2025 Big Lunch. The Trust has no regular source or income and continues to rely on much appreciated support from donations and grants for its activities".

Florian Block, Chairman

APM2025/5 Parishioners question and answer session:

The Hive - What are the next steps? Would there be a further consultation?

The Parish Council would ask Cllr Ravilious to seek the answers from City of York Council

Is the Parish Council concerned that the village could lose its Post Office?

Yes, but it is unsure what it can do, so would speak to Cllr Ravilious to seek guidance from City of York Council.

Chairman's Signature

Date