

# EARSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

[www.earswick.org](http://www.earswick.org)

**February 2015 – NEWSLETTER**

## Local Plan

At a recent meeting of the City of York's Local Plan Working Group, members voted by six to five to include safeguarded land in the Local Plan, including the site in Earswick. This decision was taken despite a legal row between City of York Council and the Earswick Action Group who, on behalf of Earswick residents, presented their own legal opinion objecting to the proposals.

Committee members saw legal advice from their planning barrister, which said without safeguarded land, York's Local Plan would likely be branded "unsound" and rejected by a Government inspector.

But the Earswick Action Group representatives at the meeting challenged that opinion, saying legal advice from their own barrister argued that the council's plans did not follow national planning law, and safeguarding land would just encourage developers to bring their schemes for greenbelt land forward sooner.

York Outer MP Julian Sturdy echoed these points, and said local councils categorically did not need to safeguard development sites like this.

The council's planning bosses said that while it was true that law did not demand safeguarded sites in Local Plans, York's unique position in having no land which was not either in the greenbelt, or in an urban area, meant they had little choice but to safeguard land in order to protect the rest of the greenbelt in the future.

The Earswick Action Group categorically reject this view and together with the support of the Parish Council will continue to fight to have the site in Earswick removed from the Local Plan.

On a brighter note council planning officials publicly warned councillors that a fresh plan of sites to be included in the Local Plan is not likely to get to a full council meeting before May's elections, meaning a new administration

could choose to radically redraw the proposals.

Officials also said that new figures from the Office of National Statistics, due to be published within the next few weeks, could drastically change the population projections, meaning the figures for future housing demand could change significantly.

To view the papers presented to the Council by the Action Group on behalf of residents in Earswick go to [www.keepearswickrural.wordpress.com](http://www.keepearswickrural.wordpress.com)

## Neighbourhood Plan

At the December meeting the Parish Council approved the formation of a Sub-Group to examine the creation of a statutory Neighbourhood Plan for Earswick.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced statutory Neighbourhood Planning in England. It enables communities, such as ourselves, to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan for our area and is intended to give us more of a say in the development of our local area (within certain limits and parameters).

These plans will be used to decide the future of where we live giving opportunities to:

- choose where we want new homes, shops and offices to be built
- have our say on what new buildings should look like
- grant planning permission for the new buildings we want to see go ahead.

The Parish Council is looking for volunteers to represent all parts of the village on the sub-group. If you would like to take part and help to shape the future of your village or simply find out what a Neighbourhood Plan is all about, come along to the **Neighbourhood Plan Workshop that is being held in Earswick Village Hall on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm. Everyone welcome.**

## Parish Council Website

The Parish has a new website. Launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> February the new site for all Parish news, events and general village information can now be found at:

[www.earswick.org](http://www.earswick.org) (same as the old site but without the “uk” bit at the end), or by typing “earswick” into your search engine.

The new site is much more pleasant to look at, has lots of photos of the village and is far easier to use by simply clicking onto any of the many drop down boxes.

Use the website to find out what the Parish Council do by reading the agendas and minutes and how you can have your say in local matters.

To keep up to date with all the latest news in the village or to find out what’s on at the Village Hall simply go to the website.

There is also a Directory page that has a wealth of information and contact details for various companies and services in and around Earswick and the York area.

Want to find out the bus times or to check for traffic holdups in the York area then the Transport link will take you straight to the information.

## Council Tax – Annual Parish Precept

The precept for this coming financial year will remain unchanged at £14,250. Over the 4 year term of office of the current Parish Council the annual parish precept has been reduced by 15%.

Most of the precept is spent on maintaining the fabric of Earswick, this includes grass cutting, maintenance of the play area and 30 acres of public open spaces as well as the general upkeep and repair of Council property such as bus shelters, litter and grit bins and seats. The Parish Council also gives financial support to local organisations such as the Scented Garden and Village Hall Committees.

Whilst in part this is due to good financial governance by the Parish Council we have also been able to keep maintenance costs to a minimum due to the unselfish hard work of a few dedicated residents/volunteers and parish

councillors and their families, who regularly give up their time and effort in order to help keep Earswick a pleasant environment for us all to live in.

## Parish Council Elections

The next elections for the Parish Council will take place on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015**.

The Nomination process commences on **Monday, 16 March 2015** and the deadline for submission of nominations is **4pm on Thursday, 9 April**.

A local councillor elected at an ordinary election serves for four years unless before the end of that period he/she resigns, becomes disqualified or otherwise vacates office.

If you are thinking of becoming a councillor or would be interested in knowing more then come along to the next Parish Council meeting in March to see what is involved or contact the Parish Clerk or any of the Parish Councillors for more information. Details of “The Role of a Parish Councillor” can also be found on the Parish website.

## Tennis Courts

The village has two tennis courts that are extremely popular during the spring and summer.

In order to assist with the maintenance and upkeep of the courts, the charge from April 2015 is to be increased to £25 per annum per household.

Please follow the link from the Facilities section on the website to the Tennis Court Membership application form or for more information on how to join contact the Parish Clerk. Membership is open to all residents of Earswick with only a few places available for non-residents at a cost of £50 per annum.

## Neighbourhood Watch

Most households in Earswick village are members of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. The new coordinator for the village scheme is Bill Gambold and there is a street coordinator for every ten or so houses throughout the village. If you are unsure who is the coordinator for your area then Bill will be able to advise you. He can be contacted on 765024 or email [gambolds@hotmail.com](mailto:gambolds@hotmail.com).

The Parish Council would like to express its thanks and gratitude to Pat Norman who held the post of Neighbourhood Watch coordinator for a number of years and who has recently retired from this position.

Residents are encouraged to note any unusual activity or suspicious vehicles, to speak to strangers with an offer to help, thus indicating their presence has been noted and to report any suspicious signs or sounds to the police or to the local coordinator.

Earswick currently enjoys a very low crime rate when compared to adjacent villages, but it is important to maintain an active Neighbourhood Watch Scheme if we want this to continue.

As well as keeping a watch out for any unusual activity residents are reminded that they also have a responsibility for the behavior of anyone visiting their premises, whether invited or not.

The noticeboard located outside the Village Hall was vandalised and damaged beyond repair on the evening of Saturday 20th December 2014 by a large group of youths of both sexes who had been refused entry to a party on the Fosslands estate. Property was also damaged at a number of other residences and a violent assault was carried out on a resident who tried to intervene.

If this situation should occur in the future the Parish Council would request that the resident hosting the party should call the Police on 101 to prevent any unsociable behavior spilling over into other parts of the village.

## Playscheme

The Parish Council together with a group of residents is investigating the possibility of constructing a new play/sports area on the Sports field that would be aimed specifically

for older children.

Detailed designs and costings have been undertaken with the final cost likely to be in the order of £40-50k. Whilst there may be an opportunity for some funding to be made available from companies such as the National Lottery and Yorventure the Parish may still be required to fund around half of the costs. The Parish Council has so far set aside £8000 towards this scheme.

As this is a substantial investment for such a small village a **residents meeting will be held on Saturday 14th March at 3.30-4.30pm in the Village Hall** to discuss this proposal.

## Centenary Wood

To commemorate the one hundred year anniversary of the start of the First World War, on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014, 100 trees were planted in the open space area behind the Scented Garden. This area has now been renamed Centenary Wood and will be planted with Poppy seeds and other wildflowers over the coming months.

Bird boxes, insect homes for beetles and hibernation sites for hedgehogs have already been provided in this area. In time it is hoped that this area will develop into a permanent wildlife zone that can be enjoyed by all residents for generations to come.

## Coffee Mornings

The increasingly popular coffee mornings take place on the first Monday of every month in the Village Hall from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Anyone is welcome to come along for a drink, biscuit and a chit chat.

Dates confirmed so far are:

Monday 2nd March 2015

Monday 13th April 2015 (change of date)

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015

The coffee mornings recently raised £76.05 for the POPPY APPEAL.

## **Parish Councillors**

Cllr Derek Jones – Chairman, 41 Earswick Chase – Tel: 01904 767767

Cllr Sian Wiseman – Vice Chairman, 10 Shilton Garth Close – Tel: 01904 761010

Cllr Pat Leveson – 9 Shilton Garth Close – Tel: 01904 764344

Cllr Kate Pace – 80 Earswick Chase – Tel: 01904 750719

Cllr Gill Offler – 26 Stablers Walk – Tel: 01904 760898

Mrs Joanne Fisher – Clerk, 24 Lock House Lane – Tel: 01904 758615

## **Parish Council Meeting Dates in 2015**

16<sup>th</sup> March

18<sup>th</sup> May

15<sup>th</sup> June

13<sup>th</sup> July

14<sup>th</sup> September

12<sup>th</sup> October

9<sup>th</sup> November

7<sup>th</sup> December

All Council meetings take place in the Village Hall at 7.30pm and are open to the public.