

WALTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) held on Thursday 1st May 2025 at 7.00pm at Walton Village Hall

Present – Councillors: Richard Prudhoe, Mark Wake, Ed Kilby, Edward Simpson.

Apologies: Cllr David Aspland.

Guests: Ward Councillor Norma Harrington. Cllr Alan Lamb arrived at 19:25. Cllr Stables sent her apologies.

In attendance: Deborah Marshall (Clerk to the Parish Council)

Eight members of the public were in attendance.

1. Welcome

Vice Chairman Cllr Prudhoe welcomed the guests, Councillors and members of the public to the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes of the APM held on 13 May 2024

It was resolved that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13 May 2024 be accepted and approved as a true record, agreed by all.

3. Ward Councillor Update

Cllr Harrington provided an update from LCC Highways. It has been suggested that Springs Lane be closed to traffic half way down to prevent HGVs from cutting through the village. Access to the farm will be permitted from both sides. LCC Highways are currently undertaking modelling to assess how the closure will affect traffic movements. If the modelling results in a satisfactory outcome, the proposal will go out for public consultation.

A heavy downpour in February caused significant surface water flooding in Wetherby which impacted roads and some residents' properties. Climate change means that incidents of flash flooding are now more frequent. The drainage system in Leeds is not able to cope with high volumes of water over short periods. The Ward Councillors are working with the LCC Resilience Team to advise and engage the Parish Councils on flood prevention and will attend the NE Parish Council Forum later in the year. The project will also include addressing the drainage issues in Walton.

4. Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr Prudhoe presented the Annual Report (Appendix 1). This was welcomed by the Parish Council.

5. Public Open Forum - to include village developments

Darran Clemitt, the new owner of the Fox and Hounds presented his plans for the refurbishment of the Fox and Hounds. A planning application has been submitted to LCC for the conversion of an existing barn to a one-bedroom holiday let and the construction of a

new building with two holiday lets above a parking undercroft. The new building has been designed sympathetically to replicate the original buildings that once stood on the site. The car park will include 2 EV charging points and one disabled space. Tarmacking will also be reduced and replaced with permeable garden and gravel areas to allow surface water to soak into the ground rather than into the drainage system. It is hoped that work can start as soon as possible once the application has been approved.

One resident asked about planning application 24/07396/FU to increase the size of the Smiddy Hill Farm Shop. It was confirmed that the change of conditions to expand the floor area had been approved. Construction work will commence in the coming weeks.

6. Close.

With no further business Cllr Prudhoe declared the meeting closed at 19:34

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....

Appendix 1.

Chairman's Report 2025

May I begin by once again thanking all our Parish Councillors for their hard work and dedication over the past year.

It was with great sadness that we lost Councillor Stephen Sharp this year, after his long battle with ill health. Stephen was a tremendous asset to the Parish Council, bringing a unique set of skills that helped achieve many improvements across the village — not least his major contributions to the creation of the cycle track and the playground. He will be greatly missed by us all.

However, Stephen would be the first to remind us that Parish Council work must continue. I am very pleased to welcome Siobhan Riley as our newest Councillor. With her background in property and her active involvement in village matters over the past three years, I am sure her enthusiasm and insight will be of great benefit to the Parish. I am confident Stephen would have thoroughly approved of her appointment.

A big thank you also to Deborah, our Parish Clerk. Her dedication and professionalism ensure that everything we do is compliant, allowing councillors to focus their energies on making a difference rather than getting tied up in administration.

Our local Ward Councillors — Alan, Norma, and Penny — have also been incredibly supportive this year, particularly with key issues like highways and drainage. Their ability to connect us with the right people in local and statutory authorities has made a real difference in getting our concerns heard and addressed.

Looking back over the year, I'm delighted to report that crime in the village remains negligible — we continue to live in one of the safest communities in the area.

We're also excited that the village pub is expected to reopen this summer, restoring a key community hub that we've sorely missed over the past few years.

The Village Hall, under the leadership of Brian, Mark, and the committee, has had an excellent year. The transformational refurbishment carried out last year is now bearing fruit, with the Hall hosting a wide range of events, including the Christmas lights switch-on and Bonfire Night, both of which were huge successes. Larger events such as weddings are also increasing, raising the village's profile and generating vital income. This funding supports not just the Hall, but also the community garden, playground, and other village amenities, helping ensure a sustainable future.

The cycle path continues to be well-used, and I would like to thank the companies that renewed their sponsorships, supporting a structured maintenance programme. Our community spirit has been on full display too — just last month, more than 20 villagers came together to plant an additional 600 whips, an incredible show of effort and teamwork.

Of course, challenges remain. Drainage and highways continue to be two of the biggest concerns, particularly as we look towards future developments. Progress is slow but steady: we have built strong links with Yorkshire Water through regular working party meetings led by Brodie Clarke, and through their work we are now making sure that planning authorities are fully aware of our outdated drainage system before making decisions.

On highways, new signage has been provided and will be installed shortly. We are also exploring the possible closure of Springs Lane to reduce through traffic — a proposal that the village will be fully consulted on over the next 12 months.

In terms of development, the Parish Council remains firmly in favour of appropriate and well-considered projects. It is pleasing to see work finally starting on the Springs Lane housing site. We have also received a revised application for a more compliant housing scheme at Walnut Farm, which will need careful village review. Additionally, the glamping site and the new village shop/café — both granted on appeal — remain subject to conditions, particularly around drainage, before they can proceed.

Although it can be frustrating when our Parish Plan is sometimes overridden by broader policies, I remain firmly of the view that positive, appropriate development can enhance the social, economic, and environmental well-being of our village.

As you can see, there is plenty going on. My sincere thanks to everyone involved with Walton Parish Council and to all those who give their time, energy, and commitment to making Walton such a wonderful place to live.

Thank you.