



*Village hall*

## Community Activities – Sports and Leisure

The majority of sports and leisure opportunities in the village are centred around the Fosslands estate of Earswick. The Village Hall, Scented Garden, Tennis Courts, Children's playground, Bmx track and Sports field are all located here.

Present activities in the Village Hall which is situated in a picturesque spot overlooking the River Foss, include Puppy Dog training, Keep Fit classes, Hip Hop for children and adults, Circuit training and a Drama class for children.

The Hall is well maintained and has full disabled facilities, including a recently installed Induction Loop system for the hard of hearing. Alcohol may be consumed on the premises but must not be sold unless a licence has been applied for.

Whilst its central location makes walking to it comparatively easy from most areas of the village there is also ample free car parking.

The building is owned by the Parish Council who lease it to a separate village hall committee. This body is a registered charity who administer the village hall for "the use of the inhabitants of the village of Earswick.... with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants". The village hall also hosts the ever-popular annual Quiz and has recently been the focal point for the Royal Wedding and Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

At the rear of the village hall is a children's play area with swings, climbing frame and slide.



*Children's play area*

The Scented Garden, located close to the village hall, is a recent addition to the village's amenities having been constructed out of the former bowling green. It provides a quiet haven for those seeking peace and solitude. The garden is administered by a committee who are always on the look out for new members or anyone who is able to spend some time helping out in the garden.

The village has good sports facilities for its size. We have a playing field located at the end of Lockhouse Lane which includes a 5 a side sized football field complete with goalposts and nets, exercise equipment and a BMX track.

Two tennis courts, located between the village hall and the river, are also available to the residents of Earswick for a small annual fee per household.



*Tennis courts*

In addition the village also has over 30 acres of public open space with designated footpaths and riverside walks.

The Questionnaire responses showed little enthusiasm for more recreational facilities being provided in the village. However where these could be provided at minimal cost or through the provision of grants then the Parish Council will look closely at the top five suggestions identified by residents. These are:

- Marking out of a Fitness/Jogging trail
- More smaller children's play equipment
- Provision of older children's play equipment on the Sports field
- Provision of Inducted Loop Hearing System in the village hall
- More benches on the Public Open space

There was a greater desire for more community-based events such as those listed below:

- Annual village fete/Summer Fair
- Treasure Hunt
- More quizzes
- Gardening club
- Book club
- Bridge club
- Chess club
- Pensioners Group
- Parent and toddler group
- Tennis club/Tennis tournament
- Christmas tree
- Information booklet for newcomers to the village

The majority of requests identified above can simply be organised by a group of interested residents themselves and do not necessarily require input from the Parish Council. If you would like to start up one of these groups or clubs then why

not put an article in the Parish Newsletter, on the website or place a poster on the Noticeboards asking for like-minded people to join you. Funding for such activities or for groups may be available from the Parish Council. Contact the Parish Clerk for details or more advice.

With regard to the Scented Garden some 54% of respondents indicated that they used the garden on a regular or occasional basis. Suggestions for improving the garden included:

- Longer opening hours, particularly in the summer months
- Provision of a shelter or shaded area to sit in
- More scented plants
- Labelling of plants
- Planting of trees or bulbs in the grassed areas

It needs to be emphasised that because something has been requested by a number of residents it does not automatically ensure that it will be possible to secure the necessary funds to provide the improvement, no matter how desirable it may be. Inclusion in the Action Plan does not necessarily mean automatic adoption.



*Scented Garden*

## Communications

Parish Council meetings are held once a month in the Village Hall and are advertised on the noticeboards situated throughout the village. Members of the public are welcome to attend and have 15 minutes in total at the beginning of the meeting to comment on any item on the Agenda or on any topic of their choosing so long as it relates specifically to the village. Residents can also elect to speak on a specific item on the agenda during the meeting by prior arrangement with the Clerk.

The Parish Council also has its own website, [www.Earswick.org.uk](http://www.Earswick.org.uk) which contains details on a wide variety of subjects which are of relevance to residents and visitors to the village.

The Parish Council also publishes a quarterly newsletter that contains current information regarding news and events.

From time to time various organisations in the village use letterdrops to individual households to promote and inform residents of specific events happening in the village.

The Village Hall committee hold meetings about 4 times a year, these are also advertised on the noticeboards and the public are welcome to attend.

The response from the Questionnaire indicated that on the whole residents were satisfied with the various ways in which the Parish Council communicated with parishioners.

There is a good take up of internet access in the village and it is likely that the use of the internet for local communications and information distribution will increase in future years with more and more households looking to receive communications from the Parish Council via email. This is an area we are currently exploring.

Around half of the households who responded indicated that they were aware of the Parish Council website with about 20% of the village accessing it on a regular basis.

Suggestions for improving communications centred mostly on improving the website:

- More frequent updating of website
- More news on current events
- Improved links to City of York Council services sites
- Open forum page for residents

## Development

At the present time the area around Earswick is mainly Green Belt. The village is bounded to the south by the City of York Northern Ring Road and Huntington Village, to the west by the River Foss and to the North by Strensall Army Barracks and Towthorpe/Strensall Village. Farmland lies to the east of the village. Most recent developments have been to provide executive style housing on the Fosslands and Garden Village estates.

The Questionnaire results show that most residents had firm views on the subject of possible further development with almost two thirds of respondents being against any further housing development. The main reasons being:

- Village already overpopulated
- Reduction in green spaces
- Increase in traffic pollution
- Infrastructure already at capacity

Residents did however indicate that some localised development might be acceptable on the land next to Willow Grove. To include:

- Village Store
- Church
- Public House/Restaurant
- Community Centre

The Parish Council will take into account these views when considering future planning applications and will ensure that all possible influence is exerted to discourage any inappropriate development.

## Traffic and Travel

The Questionnaire posed ten questions in respect of Travel and Traffic.

Over 90% of replies indicated that they travelled to work or school by car. Whilst it could have been anticipated that the private car would be the most common mode of transport the degree of use is quite surprising. It is regrettable that more residents do not choose to cycle to work or school given the health and financial benefits that can accrue from this activity. The main reason given for this is the difficulty of having to cross the A1237 Ring Road. It is likely that more people would cycle if an underpass were provided across this major junction.

A lesser-cost alternative to constructing an underpass across the A1237 would be to construct a cycle path along the route of the River Foss from the bottom of The Village to the bridge near All Saints Church in Huntington. Whilst this path is known to be prone to flooding in the winter months over 50% of residents did indicate that the provision of such a route would encourage them to cycle more.

Such a path would also have the added benefit of opening up the access to the Flower Meadow.

This proposal is fully supported by the Parish Council and we will make our residents backing for this known to City of York Council who would have to provide the necessary funding.

With regard to Public Transport while only a few respondents confirmed that they regularly used the bus to travel to work/school it would appear that the majority of residents do however use the bus service on occasions to travel to and from the village.

Earswick enjoys a regular bus service to and from York. Some 81% of respondents were satisfied with the bus timetable but nearly everyone agreed that the reliability of the service could be improved. Suggestions for improving the service included:

- Better evening service
- Later last bus at weekends
- Bus link to Monks Cross and Clifton Moor

As far as Traffic was concerned there was almost a fifty-fifty split in respondents

who didn't want to change the speed limit along Strensall Road,, from the Towthorpe junction compared to those who did. However there was a clear majority of 3 to 1 in favour of introducing a 20mph speed limit on local roads within the village. Over 75% of residents also voted in favour of installing a speed control sign on the approach to Garden Village from Strensall.

Suggestions for improving traffic management through the village included:

- Cyclists to use the footpaths
- Speed humps to be installed at both approaches into the village
- Improved STOP sign near roundabout from Strensall
- Re-position the bus stop opposite the entrance to The Village

Other traffic concerns included:

- Speeding traffic and noise on Strensall Road
- Speed of visitors going along Earswick Chase to the village hall
- Cars parking too near junctions, particularly at the end of The Village

The majority of residents also believed that the road surfaces and footpaths in the village were of a reasonable or good standard. The only road where residents raised concern was in The Village where a number of patchwork repairs have been carried out over the years.



*The Village*

## Environment



There was an enthusiastic response to the Questionnaire with regard to environmental issues. All respondents felt that the general appearance of the village was very reasonable however most agreed that dog mess on our pavements or on the public open spaces was becoming a problem even though there are plenty of dog bins. It is essential that all dog owners clear up after their dogs and discourage fouling on pavements and on the play areas and open spaces where human infection becomes a real risk. The Parish Council has asked the Dog Warden to step up patrols around the village.

With regard to the fortnightly refuse collections over 85% of replies were satisfied with the service but nearly 80% of households still had to make a trip to the local tip, mostly on a monthly basis. Bulky items, which could not be fitted into the normal waste bins and garden refuse, were the cause of most trips. City of York Council do offer a Household Waste Special Collection Service for collecting bulky household items although a charge does apply. Interestingly only one respondent advocated a return to weekly grey bin collections.

Encouragingly 54% of people who replied to the Questionnaire were prepared to take part in a clean up day of the village and it is intended that these will take place three times a year in February, June and October. Precise dates will be advertised in the Parish Council Newsletter.



*River Access Land*

In November 2011 residents and Parish Councillors planted 700 trees and 500 daffodil bulbs on the River Access Land between the rear of Shilton Garth Close and the Ring Road. The trees consist of a mixture of silver birch, field maple, alder, cherry, rowan and thorns.

As a result of the Questionnaire a group of volunteers have formed the Earswick Environment Group to act as an advisory body to the Parish Council on all aspects of environmental issues, including Ecology, Energy, Transport, Education, Horticulture and Community.

One of the environments group's recommendations is to develop the piece of land between the rear of Earswick Chase and the rear of The Village into a "Wildlife Zone". The area will be tidied up and future initiatives could involve putting up bird boxes, insect homes for beetles and bumblebees and hibernation sites for hedgehogs.



*Enclosed Open Space*

Other actions being considered by the environment group include:

- Planting wildflower seeds in the Wood and Flower Meadow.
- Erecting noticeboards identifying Flower, Fauna, Wildlife etc
- Establishing nature trails linking the Wood, Flower Meadow, Pond and Scented Garden



*Flower Meadow*

All of the above environmental activity requires a great deal of volunteer support. If we want to improve and maintain the Earswick environment we need **your** help and support to make a difference.

## Crime

Earswick is a very safe place to live in. It has a relatively low level of crime rate with only 15% of households having been victims of crime in the last two years, mostly from burglary. Despite this the vast majority of respondents to the Questionnaire felt that the village is not well policed. Residents expressed a range of demands for a better service from the Police with most people wanting to know how to contact the local area PCSO and have more visible patrols of the village, especially at night. The Parish Council have held meetings with North Yorkshire Police to address these issues and as a result patrols of the village have been increased at night. To contact your local PCSO or to report non- emergency crimes simply ring **101**.

Crime related issues that concerned residents most were:

- Unsolicited salesmen
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Anti-social behaviour

The village operates a very good Neighbourhood Watch Scheme that covers all areas of the village, with over 30 co-ordinators each responsible for around 10 houses. If you are not sure who your Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator is or if you wish to volunteer to help, contact the Parish Clerk.

From the responses to the Questionnaire it became clear that there were a number of people who were not aware of the facilities that already existed in the village. For example some residents raised the need for a collection service for larger/bulky items of waste without realising that such a facility already exists through the City of York Council. Others raised the possibility of having keep-fit/exercise classes in the village hall. Again these are already available. Answers to address both of these points were included in the October 2011 Newsletter. We are also talking to the Village Hall committee about providing a regular updated list of classes/events taking place at the village hall that can be included on the Parish Council website, in the Newsletter and placed on Noticeboards.

The Parish Council were also asked to look into the possibility of providing an Inducted Loop Hearing system in the Village Hall and to provide more benches on the Public Open Spaces. A successful bid was made for Ward Funding for both these items. The loop system has now been installed in the Village Hall and two new benches have been located around the pond.

Over 80% of people who replied to the survey indicated that they supported the formation of an Environment group within the village. This has now happened and details of their initial proposals are included in the Parish Plan.

## Quick Wins

The main thrust of the Parish Plan is about gathering the views of the community and developing long-term action plans to enable the ideas to be implemented. The responses received from the questionnaire were very thoughtful and gave all of us much to consider. However during the analysis it became clear that there were some points being raised that did not require the full and involved process of the Parish Plan and action could be taken to enable some visible results from the consultation process to be achieved quickly.

## QUICK WINS ACTION PLAN

Ref	Action	How it will be tackled	Priority	Partners	Timescale	Lead Responsibility	Rsource implications
QW1	Disposal of bulky refuse items	CYC offer Household waste special collection service. Publicise in Newsletter	High	City of York Council (CYC)	Done	Councillor Derek Jones	None
QW2	Communicate village hall events	Comprehensive listing for the month ahead to be included on website and noticeboards	High	Village Hall Committee	To be in place by end of March 2012	Councillor Kate Pace	None
QW3	Installation of Inducted loop hearing System in the village Hall	Application made for ward funding and granted	High	Ward Councillors Village Hall Committee	Done	Councillor Sian Wiseman	Ward funding
QW4	More benches on the public Open spaces	Application made for ward funding and granted	High	Ward Councillors	Done	Councillor Sian Wiseman	Ward funding
QW5	Formation of Earswick Environment group	Contact to be made with volunteers identified in the Village Survey	High	Residents	Done	Councillor Kate Pace	Initial funding already sourced

## ACTION PLANS

Community Activities – Sports and Leisure							
Ref	Action	How it will be tackled	Priority	Partners	Timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resource implications
SL1	Mark out Fitness/Jogging trail	Noticeboard to be erected near village hall with trail marked	Low	Ebororienteerers	Summer 2013	Councillor Phil Sapsford	Possible sponsorship
SL2	Provision of additional play equipment for younger children	Investigate space available in play area. Consult with parents on type of equipment.	Low	CYC Residents	Summer 2014	Parish Council	Ward funding or grants
SL3	Provision of older children's play area on the sports field	Discuss location with residents. Investigate funding opportunities	Low	CYC Residents		Parish Council	Ward funding or grants
SL4	Compile and make available an information pack for newcomers	A booklet is to be prepared in the form of a welcome pack, listing services and opportunities available in the village and local surroundings.	Medium	Other village groups	Summer 2012	Councillor Pat Leveson	Charge Local businesses for advertising. Parish Council grant.
SL5							
SL6	Hold an annual fete/summer fair	Reconvene the social group set up to organise last year's fete	High	Parish Council Local community Businesses	Summer 2012 and thereafter	Councillor Derek Jones	Self-financing
SL7	Organise a treasure hunt	Discuss with village groups. Could be used for fund raising	Medium	Village Hall Committee Scented garden Committee Environment Group Social Group	To be announced	Councillors Sapsford and Pace	Community fund raising
SL8	Organise more quizzes	Discuss with village groups as a means to raise funds	Medium	Village Hall Committee Scented Garden Committee Environment Group Social group	To be announced	Councillors Sapsford and pace	Community fund raising
SL9	Start a: Book club Chess Club Gardening Club Bridge Club	Article in Parish Council newsletter seeking residents to form relevant clubs	Medium	Residents Parish Council	May/June 2012	Councillor Pat Leveson	Possible Parish Council grant to start club/group off then self financing



SL 10	Start a Pensioners Group	Advertise idea in Parish Council newsletter	Medium	Residents Parish Council	May June 2012	Councillor Pat Leveson	Self funding, possible start up grant
SL 11	Start a Parents and Toddler group	Advertise idea in Parish Council newsletter	Medium	Residents Parish Council	May/June 2012	Councillor Pat Leveson	Self funding, possible start up grant
SL 12	Organise a Tennis club/tennis tournament	Discuss with tennis members to determine interest and feasibility	Medium	Tennis members	2013	Parish Clerk	Members time
SL 13	Arrange for a Christmas tree to be erected annually on the village green	Discuss with management committee for Fosslands and investigate costs	High	Fossland Farm Management Company	Christmas 2012 and thereafter	Councillor Derek Jones	Fosslands Farm and Parish Council
SL 14	Scented garden to stay open longer	Pass on residents wishes to the garden committee	High	Scented Garden Committee	ASAP	Councillor Phil Sapsford	Volunteers required to open and shut gates
SL 15	Provide shelter/shaded area in the scented garden	Assist and support garden committee in their application for ward funding	Medium	Scented Garden Committee	Summer 2012	Councillor Phil Sapsford	Ward funding Parish Council grant
SL 16	More scented plants in the scented garden	Discuss with garden committee	Medium	Scented Garden Committee	2012	Councillor Phil Sapsford	106 money available via grant system
SL 17	Plants in scented garden to be labelled	Discuss with garden committee	Medium	Scented Garden Committee	2012	Councillor Phil Sapsford	Low cost
SL 18	Trees or bulbs to be planted in grassed areas in scented garden	Investigate possibility of CYC providing bulbs	Medium	Scented Garden Committee	Autumn 2012	Councillor Phil Sapsford	CYC to provide bulbs or use Parish Council funding

Communications							
Ref	Action	How it will be tackled	Priority	Partners	Timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resource implications
C1	Improve usage of Parish Council website	Publicise website in Parish Council newsletter. Update website more frequently.  Increase features available.	High	Village Groups  Parish council	By end 2012	Parish clerk	Time and effort
C2	Utilise email as means of communication from the Parish Council to residents.	Establish distribution list of those residents who indicated that they wish to receive email communications.	Medium	Residents	By end 2012	Parish Clerk	Time required to input data

Traffic and Travel							
Ref	Action	How it will be tackled	Priority	Partners	Timescale	Lead Responsibility	Resource implications
T1	Consider construction of a cycle path along the river from the end of The Village to All Saints Church, Huntingdon.	Parish Council to lobby CYC	High	CYC Earswick Parish Council Huntington Parish Council Ward Councillors	Ongoing	Councillor Sian Wiseman	High cost of construction
T2	Monitor speed of traffic from Towthorpe to Garden Village.	Continue to monitor the situation and request police carry out regular speed checks.	High	CYC North Yorkshire Police	Ongoing	Councillor Derek Jones	None
T3	Consider 20mph speed limit on local estate roads.	Make CYC aware of the wishes of Earswick residents	High	CYC	Ongoing	Councillor Derek Jones	None
T4	Install a speed control sign on the approach from Strensall	Consult with Highways and investigate funding options.	High	CYC	Ongoing	Councillor Derek Jones	
T5	Improve road and pavement maintenance	We will carry out regular inspections of roads within the village and prepare reports for CYC	High	CYC Parish Council	Ongoing	Councillor Sian Wiseman	None
T6	Consider parking restrictions near junction of the Village and Strensall Road	Request CYC undertake survey and identify and rectify any problems	High	CYC Parish Council Owners of houses affected	Done	Councillor Sian Wiseman	None

Environment							
Ref	Action	How it will be tackled	Priority	Partners	Timescale	Lead responsibility	Resource implications
E1	Creation of a wildlife zone in the Enclosed Open Space	Feasibility study to be carried out by the Environment Group. If approved area to be cleaned up and turned into a wildlife area by volunteers and the Environment Group	High	Parish Council Environment Group Residents Local schools	2013	Councillor Kate Pace	Initial funding by Parish Council Grants
E2	Brighten area around the "Earswick" signs at entrances to the village	Planting of flowers	High	Environment Group	Done	Councillor Kate Pace	None
E3	Plant wildflower seeds in the Wood and Flower Meadow	Identify areas to be planted Set up maintenance and watering programme	Medium	Parish Council Environment Group	2012-2015	Councillor Kate Pace	Funding available
E4	Erect noticeboards identifying flora/fauna etc.in wildlife areas plus River Foss	Seek advice from appropriate conservation bodies. Identify locations	Medium	Environment Group River Foss Society Parish Council	2012 - 2014	Councillor Kate Pace	Ward funding and/or Parish funding Grants Sponsorship
E5	Establish nature trails and walks around the village	Create pathways linking the wood, flower meadow , pond and scented garden plus wildlife zone (if approved). Signpost pathways and trails. Produce a guide to walks in and around Earswick	Medium	Environment Group CYC Parish Council	2012 – 2015	Councillor Kate Pace	Ward funding and/or Parish funding Grants Sponsorship

Crime							
Ref	Action	How it will be tackled	Priority	Partners	Timescale	Lead responsibility	Resource implications
CR1	Higher police profile and awareness	Invite local police team to attend Parish Council meetings Publicise police contact information Request higher police presence	High	Parish Council North Yorkshire Police Neighbourhood Watch	Ongoing	Councillor Pat Leveson	None
CR2	Control of unsolicited salesmen	Advice to be circulated in Parish Newsletter	High	Parish Council CYC Trading Standards	Done	Councillor Pat Leveson	None





