

## **County Councillor report July 2023**

### **Local Highways/Public Rights of Way (PRoW) issues**

I am currently awaiting confirmation of a schedule for surface dressing repairs on Duke Street, specifically outside Elite Bathrooms showroom. While not strictly meeting the intervention criteria for immediate repair, highways officers agreed at a site visit it did warrant repair due to the impact of such a long stretch of highway being affected.

Issues raised and proposed solutions regarding access and nuisance parking issues on Victoria Street, including improved parking orders and a passing place are with Highways engineers awaiting their response. This has been an increasing problem as behavioural changes along this stretch of road have failed to appreciate the importance to commercial, agricultural and of course emergency service traffic being able to move freely along the road as a main access to properties in Upper Settle and along Malham Moor.

Several other highway repairs have been assessed and on the repair schedule, including a number of third-party access covers.

A report regarding overgrown foliage on the footpath running between the Football club and High school sports field has been raised with (PRoW) I will hope to have a response in the coming week as to a proposed solution.

### **Action for Market Towns**

A meeting of stakeholders previously involved in the Action for Market Town initiative was held recently at the Langcliffe enterprise centre, with the intention of picking up the work started prior to the Pandemic.

While some projects including access/interpretation works on Castleberg Crag and the commissioning of the new Settle and District Chamber of Trade website were completed, other proposals were not worked through before covid lockdowns brought the initiative to a halt.

Now as we return to business-as-usual post covid, albeit in the face of a tough economic climate and a society that is still adjusting to the “new normal”, I have asked that the new North Yorkshire Council looks to complete the work started by its predecessor in Economic Development matters, Craven District Council.

A further meeting has been scheduled where updates from delivery partners and potential future projects might be discussed and refined prior to submission for consideration by NYC.

It is hoped that this may in future form a suitable forum to bring together a variety of stakeholders from the area to look at how best to promote and improve economic activity in the area.

### **Council secures £14.5m to improve housing energy efficiency**

A multi-million-pound package of funding has been secured to deliver energy efficiency improvements to homes in a bid to step up the fight against climate change.

The Government's Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) has seen £14.5 million awarded to North Yorkshire Council, and the funding is available to 700 homes across North Yorkshire to help properties worst affected by problems such as poor-quality insulation and inefficient heating systems.

The money will finance the introduction of a wide range of improvements from insulation and solar panels to air source heat pumps and smart heating controls. These measures can save residents money on their energy bills whilst also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The scheme aims to help households reduce energy use and counter the cost-of-living crisis by providing the opportunity to save money on their energy bills

Private rented properties are eligible to apply, although landlords must contribute at least a third of the total cost of the upgrade. To qualify for the new scheme, residents must have a household income of £31,000 or less, or via other eligibility checks. Properties must also be technically suitable for the measures available in the scheme and have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or below.

Residents who are interested in applying to the Home Upgrade Grant can do so on North Yorkshire Council's website at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/hug2](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/hug2)

A climate change strategy was adopted by North Yorkshire Council and can be found online at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/environment-and-neighbourhoods/climate-change/climate-change-strategy-2023-2030](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/environment-and-neighbourhoods/climate-change/climate-change-strategy-2023-2030)

The strategy outlines how North Yorkshire can capture and store carbon, as well as placing a renewed emphasis on biodiversity and taking advantage of the huge natural resources across England's largest county. It is aimed at helping to achieve an ambition of the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership that the region can become the first "carbon negative" area, helping the nation's ultimate aim of achieving a net zero target for carbon emissions by 2050.

## **A new approach to managing speed limits in North Yorkshire**

An ambitious new approach to managing speed limits across England's largest county is set to be approved.

A new speed management strategy will be drawn up to guide a countywide review of speed limits across towns, villages and rural roads, subject to approval by North Yorkshire Council's executive members on Tuesday, July 4. This will generate a rolling pipeline of safety improvement schemes for delivery, with local communities and their elected representatives involved from the outset and placed at the heart of proposals.

The proposed strategy follows an extensive review of the council's 20mph limit and zone policy, approved in January 2022.

North Yorkshire Council's executive member for highways and transport, Cllr Duncan was asked to review this policy in November following a request by Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee. He pledged to consider factors including road safety, the environment, value for money and enforcement.

The review consulted with all 90 elected North Yorkshire councillors, with most supporting lower speed limits around schools and high-footfall areas.

Concern was expressed by councillors about a suggested default 20mph speed limit, while those in favour of this were not unanimous about where a default limit should apply.

What started as a review into 20mph limits became more encompassing, as the scope widened to look at ways to improve the way we set speed limits generally.

Following cross-party feedback and a review of experiences elsewhere, the proposal is not to introduce 20mph as the default speed limit in every town and village. There is however a recognition of the key role 20mph speed limits and zones play in terms of road safety, active travel and wellbeing, and our new approach will allow more of these to be introduced over time.

In all cases, new 20mph limits and zones will comply with Department for Transport guidelines and have community support after public consultation.

20mph limits will be fully embedded into our new approach, while ensuring these are not the only option that can be considered to improve road safety. The proposed approach appreciates the diverse nature of North Yorkshire's communities rather than assuming one size fits all locations.

## **Plans unveiled to invest in care services in the Craven area**

New proposals for an Extra Care housing scheme in Gargrave are part of a number of measures which North Yorkshire Council is set to put in place to expand care services in the Craven area.

Members of the authority's executive are being asked to approve proposals to go out to the market for a new Extra Care housing scheme that would deliver around 30 new homes for older people on a site at Eshton Road in Gargrave.

Subject to approval, community consultations and a procurement exercise will be launched for the Gargrave plans as the council marks 20 years of Extra Care housing in North Yorkshire, with the intention to expand beyond the 28 schemes and 1,500 apartments and bungalows that are already in place countywide.

The schemes help people to remain living independently in their local communities and offer both purpose-built housing as well as care and support for residents, and some developments also host a local library, a shop or a café.

It is also expected that further accommodation for working-age adults with care needs will be built on different sites, including in Gargrave, in the future. The move is part of the council's policy to provide more care for people in their own homes, and the council has also been working with care providers to increase the home care services available in the area.

Under the plans for Craven, Neville House elderly people's home in Gargrave will close on a planned basis, with the remaining residents being offered a move to a new home and care staff having the opportunity for other roles in the adult social care service. It is also expected that

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Consultations have now begun with all permanent residents and their families to find the most suitable alternative accommodation and it is anticipated Neville House will stop delivering services at some point in the autumn of this year. There would be capacity for all residents to move to another council-run home in Skipton, with their individual circumstances being taken into account.

The council employs 26 staff at Neville House and they are also set to be consulted about their future, with alternative employment due to be offered within the authority wherever possible.

The new Extra Care development in Gargrave is expected to become operational in 2026 and the new arrangements should bring savings of £150,000 a year when the new arrangements are in place.

## **Let's Talk Transport – Final Call**

A final reminder the Let's Talk Transport consultation which looks to help shape North Yorkshires transport strategy ends this month on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

People can complete the survey online at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/LetsTalkNY](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/LetsTalkNY)

Paper copies are available from your local library. Paper copies and copies in accessible formats can also be requested by emailing [letstalk@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:letstalk@northyorks.gov.uk), calling 01609 536400 or writing to: Let's Talk, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AD.