

THE AISLABY, MIDDLETON AND WRELTON PARISH PLAN REVISITED 2019-20

In 2019 the Parish Council representing the combined parishes of Aislaby, Middleton and Wrelton undertook to review the Parish Plan that was published over a decade earlier in 2008 (a summary of which is available to view on the Parish Council website at aislaby-middleton-wrelton.ryedaleconnect.org.uk).

The aim was to re-evaluate what is, or is not, important to residents within the community, to provide a framework within which representatives of our community can make informed decisions or push for change to help improve and protect the quality of life within our three parishes.

To help canvass opinion about a range of possible issues, a questionnaire was distributed in August 2019 to 328 households. 91 (29%) questionnaires were returned. A summary of the results are given at the end of this document and the full results can be found on the Parish Council website.

The information provided will be of benefit not only to the Parish Council but also to our District and County councillors, and individuals or groups that require to demonstrate support or seek guidance on the way in which the community feels about current or potential future issues.

Following, we provide an update on the major concerns raised in the original plan, outline some of the opinions given in the 2019 survey, and provide information about where responsibilities lie for some of the amenities and services within our community and where further information can be sought.

The areas that were deemed to be the most important across all three communities in the 2019 survey were: for the village halls to be retained as key venues for local groups and community events; for public transport services to be maintained; for the pavements in the villages to be kept in good repair; for fly-tipping to be tackled, the latter being a particular concern for Wrelton residents. The perennial issue of traffic speed along the A170 through Aislaby and Middleton was again rated as highly important by residents of those particular villages but, understandably, not so by residents of Wrelton and, therefore, did not rate so highly overall. Traffic management, road safety (particularly in regards to the junctions off the main road) and parking were the most common issues highlighted by additional comments made on the survey.

Unforeseen at the time of the review was the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the upshot of which has been the important role of the two village hall committees and village newsletters as hubs for providing support and important information for the communities.

AMENITIES:

1. The village halls to be retained as key venues for local groups and community events

Evident from the 2019 survey and subsequent events, our two village halls are key assets within, and provide many social benefits for, our communities. Both the upkeep of the halls and their surrounds, and many social events are provided by volunteers, and the more that step forward to help the better for all. Fund raising for, and the upkeep of, the Christmas Lights provided in Aislaby & Middleton and the playground in Wrelton also come under the

auspices of the respective village hall committees.

Information about events taking place at the halls and within the wider communities can be found in the Middleton & Aislaby Village Hall and Wrelton Wrambler newsletters, delivered monthly to households throughout the respective villages. The newsletters are also available by email and on the regularly updated websites along with full details of events at middletonandaislabylvillagehall.weebly.com and wreltonvillage.uk.

2. Public transport services to be retained

In 2008 about half of the parishioners used public transport. Now, maintaining public transport services is regarded as one of the most important issues for those without a car and for those seeking to reduce car usage. Good information can be found on the North Yorkshire County Council webpage, www.northyorks.gov.uk/public-transport, particularly about bus services and bus passes (which are issued and administered by the council and available at Pickering library)

For those with mobility problems or an opportunity for a job, apprenticeship, training or further education with no accessible transport, then Ryedale Community Transport may be able to help. See www.ryedalect.org or phone 01653 699059 for details.

3. To have a Post office in Middleton

As in 2008, responses to the 2019 survey show how very important the Post Office is to the community and an overwhelming desire for one to be retained in the future.

4. To have a local pub or café within the community

Again results from the 2019 survey demonstrate how important having a pub or café is for many with over half of the respondents considering this as very important.

As with any commercial ventures, the post office, pubs, tea room or even shop and fuel services can only continue if supported.

5. Church and chapel

In the 2019 survey, 2/3rds of Middleton parish respondents said that it was very important for our places of worship and their environments to be maintained. This echoed the sentiment expressed in the 2008 Parish Plan that, apart from the need for worship and regardless of religious belief, it is felt that the Parish Church (which is of national historic importance) and its churchyard provide a significant contribution to village life and need to be kept in good condition and repair.

More information can be found on mkmbparishes.co.uk for St Andrew's Church and middletonchapel.com for Ryedale Evangelical Church.

6. Play areas

Providing play areas for young children was viewed as a major concern in the 2008 Parish Plan, following which the excellent playground behind Wrelton Village Hall was created and maintained by a group of volunteers. The stewardship of the playground now lies with the Wrelton Village Hall committee and its upkeep is reliant on their fundraising efforts, voluntary contributions by users, and going forward, an element of council tax receipts administered by the Parish Council. Although desire for a playground in Middleton was made in 2008 and expressed in comments made in the 2019 survey, it would require a site to become available and a group to set it up, neither of which is yet to be forthcoming.

7. Cycle path between Sinnington and Pickering

Seen as a major concern in 2008, few people expressed a real interest in having a cycle path in 2019. Perhaps this comes through a feeling that there is little chance of it becoming a reality, and people being discouraged from cycling locally by the prospect of having little option than to negotiate the A170 at some point in any journey. Recent Government decisions to invest in new cycle routes or cycle ways might prove a catalyst for future initiatives and would be worthy of investigation.

ENVIRONMENT

The local environment is important to people with fly-tipping, footpath and pavement maintenance and grass cutting all appearing as concerns in the 2019 survey, and nearly 70% of Middleton residents citing it very important to retain street lighting.

1. Fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is dealt with by Ryedale District Council. For more information and to report instances see www.ryedale.gov.uk/environment/pollution/flytipping.

2. Pavements and roads

The maintenance of our pavements and roads, including street, drain and gully cleaning or clearing of weeds, is the responsibility of North Yorkshire County Council. For more information or to report potholes, road condition, pavement or kerb issues see www.northyorks.gov.uk/roads-and-pavements.

3. Footpaths and public rights of way

Outside of the National Park, it is the responsibility of North Yorkshire County Council to make sure paths are free from obstructions and vegetation on the surface is kept under control, that gates and stiles are easy to use and in good condition and to install signs and waymark paths. Landowners are responsible for cutting back vegetation from the sides and from above so that it does not inconvenience the public or prevent the right of way from being apparent, and to maintain stiles and gates in a safe condition. For more information or to report a rights of way issue see www.northyorks.gov.uk/rights-way-maintenance.

4. Grass cutting, verge, hedge and tree maintenance

Across our parishes North Yorkshire County Council are responsible for maintaining highway grass verges plus keeping safe hedges and trees growing within the highway (including verges and footways). NYCC now only cut grass up to 5 times a year on main traffic routes and junctions where visibility is impaired. Hedges and trees grown to mark a boundary with private property are the responsibility of the individual landowner or occupier; the council will only get involved and contact the owner if they represent a health and safety hazard.

To view the NYCC grass cutting map or report an issue online see www.northyorks.gov.uk/grass-cutting-verge-hedge-and-tree-maintenance

Grass around the pond at Middleton has been cut by volunteers under the auspices of the Village Hall committee, and Wrelton's village green has been maintained by a group of volunteers. Both are supported by grants from the Parish Council to cover expenses.

5. Street lighting

North Yorkshire County Council is responsible for maintaining the majority of street lights in North Yorkshire, identifiable by a number painted in black on a yellow background on the lamp post. NYCC has a programme to replace all sodium lights with LED which will cost 40% less to run. They will be kept on at night on main traffic routes and road junctions but, once installed, lights in other places will go off between midnight and 5am.

To report a problem with a street light see www.northyorks.gov.uk/report-street-light-problem.

6. Fracking

2019 began with the very real prospect of fracking taking place close to our community. Nearly 2/3rds of responders to the survey from across all three parishes saw it as very important to prevent fracking from taking place under, within or near our villages. While the contentious issue of extracting gas shale has abated for now, there is a clear message from within our community that it is not welcome in the future.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

1. Speed limits

Speeding, speed limits and traffic management were the major concerns highlighted in the 2008 Parish plan. Over the years the Parish Council and most recently Aislaby residents have tried without success to get North Yorkshire County Council to make changes to speed limits. Despite the inherent dangers presented by narrow footpaths, junctions with restricted visibility and difficulties with crossing the road to reach neighbours and amenities, and disturbing levels of road noise, the authorities have deemed that there have not been enough serious accidents to consider reducing the 40mph limit on the A170 through Aislaby and Middleton. Similarly, the results of a traffic speed survey in 2015 were considered to be within an acceptable tolerance and no further action was taken. In the 2019 Parish Survey 70% of Aislaby and Middleton residents considered it very important to have a 30mph speed limit on the A170 and this was the subject that attracted most additional comments. However a 20 mph limit within the villages did not find universal favour.

While opportunities will continue to be sought to petition for a reduced speed limit, individuals concerned about speeding can get more information at www.northyorks.gov.uk/speed-limits-speeding-and-road-safety-concerns and learn how to take part in a community speed watch.

2. Parking

Parking on verges and on pavements is a contentious issue – particularly with a lack of safe parking along the A170. Half of the responders to the survey said that it was important for cars not to be parked on or blocking pavements, and half were less concerned. Parking on a pavement is not currently illegal outside London unless restricted by a local bylaw, but you can be prosecuted if seen mounting a pavement or if causing an obstruction. Consideration should always be given to those using the pavement, particularly if it restricts those who are less mobile or those with pushchairs, for example, and worse if they are forced to pass by going into the road.

HOUSING

While the Parish Council is consulted on planning matters, Ryedale District Council is responsible for making the decisions. The Ryedale Plan, created by Ryedale District Council, has allocated areas for new housing based around Pickering, Malton, Norton, Helmsley and specific 'service' villages where an appropriate infrastructure exists to support growth. To preserve the character of the area and recognising the importance of tourism and agriculture any other development, including within our parishes, is restricted to village 'development limits' and only justified where a clear local need exists. More information can be found at www.ryedale.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy.html.

The 2008 Parish Plan outlined the view that residents were keen to preserve the appearance of our villages, but there was also some support for small, sympathetic development of affordable housing if there was a proven need. In the 2019 survey, with just 3 comments from young people and just 28% of the respondents citing affordable housing as being very important, it is difficult to identify a proven need, especially with such houses being built in such close proximity to Pickering.

Although many issues that may arise, particularly as highlighted within the environment section above, can and should be reported directly to the relevant authority, issues can also be reported to the Parish Council so that they can monitor and pursue such issues on behalf of residents.

Below is a summary of the responses to the main questions asked within the survey. The full results and the additional comments made can be viewed on the Parish Council website aislaby-middleton-wrelton.ryedaleconnect.org.uk.

Aislaby, Middleton and Wrelton Parish Council Parish Plan Steering Group, August 2020.

2019 AISLABY, MIDDLETON & WRELTON PARISHES SURVEY

Summary of Questionnaire Statistics ordered by % scoring 'very important' of overall responses

Questions were scored...

- 5 *Very important*
- 4 *Would be nice to have*
- 3 *Not bothered either way*
- 2 *Not worth spending money on*
- 1 *Not at all important*

Questionnaires delivered: 328
Responses: 91 Rate: 29%

How important is it to you...

	OVERALL		AISLABY		MIDDLETON		WRELTON	
	% scoring 5	Average Score						
• for the village halls to be retained as key venues for local groups and community events?	80%	4.69	89%	4.78	82%	4.78	76%	4.61
• for public transport services to be maintained?	79%	4.70	78%	4.78	80%	4.71	79%	4.71
• for fly-tipping to be tackled?	71%	4.65	56%	4.44	67%	4.60	79%	4.71
• for pavements in the villages to be kept in good repair?	70%	4.66	67%	4.67	71%	4.71	71%	4.61
• to prevent fracking from taking place under, within or near our villages?	65%	4.20	56%	4.11	67%	4.19	62%	4.18
• to have a post office in Middleton?	62%	4.45	67%	4.67	69%	4.58	47%	4.11
• to retain street lighting in the villages?	58%	4.19	56%	4.00	69%	4.44	47%	3.89
• to have a local pub or café within the community?	54%	4.34	78%	4.78	57%	4.45	50%	4.18
• to have a 30mph speed limit on the A170 through Aislaby and Middleton?	54%	4.01	78%	4.44	69%	4.40	26%	3.29
• for our places of worship (church and chapels) and their environments (such as St Andrews' churchyard) to be maintained?	53%	4.29	44%	4.22	67%	4.49	38%	4.07
• for cars not to be parked on, or blocking pavements?	48%	3.92	33%	3.44	51%	4.11	50%	3.93
• to keep communal areas (e.g. grassed areas) tidy where they are not looked after voluntarily?	46%	4.28	33%	3.78	44%	4.29	48%	4.46
• for footpaths, including stiles and gates, to be maintained?	42%	4.28	44%	4.44	36%	4.14	50%	4.46
• to have a 20mph speed limit on the minor roads within the villages?	36%	3.63	0%	2.67	40%	3.78	38%	3.64
• to have a small development of affordable homes for local people within your village?	28%	3.57	22%	3.44	27%	3.50	29%	3.75
• to have a cycle path that links Pickering with the three villages and Sinnington?	22%	3.47	22%	3.33	11%	3.27	35%	3.75