

Chair: Nigel De Badgecoe
Vice Chair: Neil Clement
Clerk: Ruth Mazonas
Member: Jenny Smith
Member: Alistair McClee
Member: Becky Rogerson
Member: Liz Blanchard
Member: Karen Shields



Date: May 2026

Kirkcommunity@gmail.com

www.kirkcommunity.co.uk

Kirklevington and Castle Leavington Parish Council

Annual Report of the Chairman

May 2025 – April 2026

As has been the theme for the last few years, much time has been spent investigating, consulting and collaborating on the objections to large scale planning applications in the Parish. Naturally we know we cannot overturn these Gargantuan building companies coming along with their unlimited budgets and legal teams, but we can at least endeavour to influence and shape the applications for the betterment of the entire Parish community, and not just the builders P&L.

Last year we saw the 145 homes on the Story site already completed and occupied, 97 homes on the Taylor Wimpey side almost completed (ironically, they are still 'almost' complete with a definite slow down in activity) many occupied already. We saw building (still ongoing) at the top of Grove Bank as 10 executive houses and bungalows are being constructed, again several are already occupied. Then last year we saw the beginning of another major development headed by Duchy homes, called Hallwood Meadows, located just south of Yarm School Rugby fields, near what was, the Shell roundabout (Now Esso). As we would expect we were subjected to a long period of inconvenience with roadworks, tailbacks, closures and filthy roads.

Slightly differently is the, now approved, Kirklevington Hall development (formerly known as Judges Hotel) - 25/1001/FUL, This was sold to Theakston Developments and they stated that the site needed significant investment in order to maintain the historic building and its upkeep, promptly followed by an application to build 25 self build plots and the installation of 20 wooden lodges. This would "fund the renovation and improvement of the former hotel and bring it up to a five star standard". Our relationship with the property owner has been much more amicable as we work with them to secure an alternative walkway\cyclepath through their grounds to negate the needs for the dangerous bends immediately alongside their site and the A67. We also feel the hotel will be a bonus for the surrounding area and hopefully provide some job opportunities for our younger generation. We did not object to this application but did consult heavily with them and SBC around the new path, however the application was ultimately granted anyway without any need for any commitment on their side, we can only hope they will honour previous conversations and continue the discussions.

The latest grave concern is the ongoing application from Taylor Wimpey, once again - 25/1330/FUL (Land East of Holdenfields Farm), but this time for ~600 houses by Hutchinson Hobbs farm shop. This

application is out of size and character for the area and has so many negative points to list here – but some salient points would be the introduction of additional traffic lights or roundabouts on Green Lane, a SIGNIFICANT increase in the amount of traffic in general and on the crossroads roundabout, the lack of amenities and eroding greenspace. One other concern is the suggestion of a new link road to join near the layby on the A67 (south of Judges) across to the proposed development site. Naturally this new main road would cut through a field and immediately give way to more new houses on either side of it, it would then egress on to a narrow country lane with bad visibility and a blind summit. This has just very recently been refused by SBC and unsurprisingly immediately taken to appeal by the builder and will be handled by way of a seven day inquiry very soon.

We are also seeing other applications, not strictly in our Parish, but still bordering and contributing to traffic on our roads, including 495 more homes next to Morley Carr - 25/2399/OUT (Near Green Lane (Gladman Developments) and 138 houses on Glaisdale Road Riding Centre - 25/2537/OUT, these total 1,278 more houses planned all in the same immediate area. This does not include the frequently submitted retirement village on Leven Bank for 215 homes and a 68 bed care home as this seems to be an ever moving goalpost.

I have updated the previous report about the number of vehicles using Forest Lane, based on our SID (traffic Counter) from the junction of Pump Lane\Forest Lane we can see the below average figures
*Please note that this only captures traffic information from eastbound traffic along Forest Lane and does not include anything from Highgrove, Jasmine Fields, or Springfield Grove. One could realistically assume we can double these numbers for a return journey and add a percentage for the additional traffic not captured from the roads above or those heading westbound.

<u>Date</u>	<u>% Speeders</u>	<u>Traffic total*</u>	<u>Average per day</u>
May 21/ April 22	1.92	369,364	1024
May 22/ April 23	1.80	390,126	1069
May 23/ April 24	1.67	409,822	1120
May 24/ April 25	1.53	442,849	1214
May 25/ April 26	1.37	471,182	1334

The Kirklevington to Conyers\Yarm\Stockton Number 7 Arriva bus service has now been running for over three and a half years (began on 30th October 2022) so we are now well past half way through the 'guaranteed service agreement', We should now be mobilising to work with SBC\Arriva to secure its future, though we half expect it to reduce to an hourly service at some point.

Last reporting year we installed 2x Defibrillators, one at the Bus stop of the village green and another at the junction of Hornbeam Drive\Green Lane. However, no more were added in this reporting period, so I believe it would be sensible to start looking for some additional locations. The biggest issue we face here is finding suitable locations that belong to SBC rather than individual developments as the street furniture is still not adopted in most cases. The sites need to be close to housing developments or areas where there is a large concentration of people, such as a school, I propose we continue to work with CPAD in Ingleby Barwick to identify and fund additional sites.

Last year we worked with SBC to submit another TRO for a speed reduction from 40mph to 30mph around The Crown towards Picton. All required approvals have since been realised, and the work is now planned to go ahead this year, early indications point towards June. Too many accidents are happening there and seem to be becoming more frequent and more serious in nature as time goes

on. As a Parish Council we are looking at a significant investment to fund these works, however we recently learned that our fellow Yarm ward councillors will be able to make a very generous grant towards the cost of these works. The scheme will require additional streetlighting, white gateway style signs at the roadside, road markings and new road signage.

Last year saw a flurry of activity from BT\Openreach in installing fibre to many households in the village. This was following a long campaign spearheaded by KPC to help accelerate these works. Sadly not all of the village was able to benefit from this upgrade with additional tranches of work scheduled for the latter part of this year or early 2027 as the whole head end system in the BT exchange needs upgrading first.

The PC have ordered another new noticeboard, this time to replace the one at the junction of Strathmore and the Green – as the original wooden one is looking tired and flaking now

We have conducted a trial to help keep our street cleaner by installing 3x dog poo bag dispensers around the village – so far a lot of bag rolls are being used but we should identify if these are being blown away in the wind, stolen or actually used as hoped, I certainly do not recall receiving any related complaints recently so who knows.... (if this is successful we should expand the trial and have a dozen around the village)

We are looking to run both Kirkfest & the Halloween events again this year. Kirkfest will be spread over the weekend of 12-14th June, we will be repeating last year's 'new' race night event, and to-date we have had no news from the school on their fete day.

As I am now ending my fifth year as Parish Chair, I have decided this year **not** to put my name forward for re-election but to stand down from the position to allow for people with more free time to take over and keep up the momentum.

Following on from last year's chairman's report I think it would be timely to copy it again here and reflect on what we have jointly achieved in the last five years with pride; here in Kirklevington. In this time alone we have provided all of the below and no doubt so much more that I forgotten.

Playpark upgrades including new fitness equipment for all ages, a new Christmas Tree (with permanent electrics), extended the concrete paths and seating areas, added numerous new tables to accommodate, elderly, disabled and groups, plus a communal flagpole for events. Installed CCTV, defibs, new signage and noticeboards, maintained flowers pots, provided bulbs and planted areas, introduced new speed limits and assisted with bus service We have also helped SMGRA (St Martins Green Residents Association) with supporting and facilitating their meetings and helping progress any issues; and helped support several teenagers through their bronze Duke of Edinburgh awards. We have also spent much time supporting residents with issues with anything from maintaining the Kirk pond to nuisance vehicles, double yellow lines around Pump Lane, fighting to maintain our one way system, promoting fibre broadband, securing road re-surfacing works (special thanks to our then ward councillor) and who could forget the PRow round the south eastern side of the school that used to completely flood, this was dug, drainage installed, and a new footpath provided. As a Parish Council we also plan and host events such as Kirkfest, Jubilees, Halloween, Christmas and with miscellaneous celebrations supporting the church, with remembrance events and so forth.

Unfortunately we also have had to spend too much of our time representing our residents in opposing many building applications, and whilst we are not winning the battles with the big builders we are influencing the outcomes of any approvals.

So much goes on silently behind the scenes by so many to make all this happen, so as always, I would like to end with a big thank-you to all members of the Parish Council for their continued involvement and specifically to Ruth Mazonas who works tirelessly behind the scenes as clerk and responsible financial officer to the Parish Council. I would further like to thank the William Hall Trust for their continued support and grants towards numerous projects in the village; Also, I would like to acknowledge the great work of our litter pickers in the Parish, local historians, choir, church helpers, St Martins Green Residents Association, Environment Groups, The Crown and the many people who take time to trim the grass verges, water the plants, tidy up after disrespectful dog owner etc. – it is all duly noted and appreciated by everyone. A special shout out should also go to our amazing Conservative Ward Councillors who's attendance at our monthly meetings, guidance, financial support and mentoring has been appreciated more than words can say – It's been an absolute pleasure.

So, for the last time I will sign off as chairman and hand over the reins, I proudly say that it has been an honour to serve the residents of Kirklevington Parish as Chair for the last five years and wish the next Chair every continued success in the role.

With sincere thanks

Nigel De Badgecoe

(Chair January 2021 – April 2026)