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Member: Becky Grainger  
Member: Andy Alton



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## **Kirklevington and Castle Leavington Parish Newsletter**

Welcome to your quarterly edition Parish Newsletter.

Firstly, thank-you for all the people who have commented on the previous Newsletter, and we are very pleased it was so well received, if there is something you would like to see reported on in these newsletters please let us know or send an email to the address above. We cannot remind people enough though that the website is updated very frequently, and all the latest news is added on the front page as soon as it is known, we acknowledge that not everyone has access to a computer and so we will continue to provide a paper copy of the newsletters also.

We would like to formally welcome Damian Hadfield and Andy Alton to the Parish council, both stepped into the vacant positions after the last newsletter, if you would also be interested in joining us, please let us know and we can add your details to the waiting list for future positions.

Let's start this newsletter with some success stories,

- On the land south of the Yarm School playing fields (off Kirklevington Hall Drive) we had Theakston's with an already approved planning application for 100 houses 16/1959/OUT & now 20/0813/REM, trying to increase this number to **300** - 18/0910/OUT, tripling the size of the original application. We are pleased to announce this was **REFUSED** by SBC so a huge thank-you to all the people that lobbied and took the time to join us in writing to the council and objecting to the application. It seems that the proposed traffic mitigation for Leven Rd turned out to be just too much for Highways Agency to accept, also cited reasons were "1. Additional traffic movements will increase queuing and congestion, severe adverse impact on residents amenity. 2. Proposed offsite works at Leven Rd would have significant detrimental impact on the character of the road adversely affecting the visual amenities of the area." We all know they may try to appeal the decision but for now we can be satisfied we have all made this far more difficult and costly for the builders at least, luckily the Highways Agency do hold a lot of authority on such decisions so an appeal would be particularly challenging.
- Forest Lane – we are also delighted to announce that Forest Lane has now been approved for resurfacing works, we do not have a firm timescale for this as yet but it will be within the next 18 months, it is worth waiting for as rather than patching it up, we expect the full length, 1.1km of it (from the crown to near the railway bridge) to be done – this is a massive win for us as with all the budget cuts very few roads indeed are being repaired so to get this is excellent news!

- We are still working with Story homes about all the concerns raised by many of our residents – particularly around the start times of the contractors. This has been escalated to the Development Director of SBC who has assured us it has been dealt with and of further required action being taken if the contractor do not comply. We fully understand and appreciate that the builders need to get on with the job in hand, but we have had reports of contractors starting as early as 6am and more normally 7am, when in fact they are only permitted to work from 8am to 6pm Mon-Fri, and 9am to 1pm on a Saturday (no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays). Everyone deserves a good night's sleep.
- You may recall we reported on an idea by SBC to make Pump Lane back to 2-way traffic (in part) as it was thought a 2-way continuous loop around St Martins Green was a good idea. We have managed to hold this off for a while whilst it is investigated further and the decision will be taken to cabinet – nobody seems to want this, including Story's. It is actually quite a complicated matter so will take some time to fully resolve but we assure you we are working on it. In the meantime, we will keep the mesh fence 'gate' closed as there were just too many people driving the wrong way up Forest Lane and we want to avoid an unnecessary accident.
- We have now managed to get the collapsed footpath opposite the end of Town End Close repaired, so it is safe again. As part of this same work, we also arranged for the small drainage ditch there to be dredged and cleaned out as it has been untouched for years, you will see the water now flows normally again, we have exposed 4x rainwater pipes at the header wall that have probably been blocked for a long time in the process. There is a known issue with the water levels in the ditch and this is being looked in to and we also acknowledge that the area is badly overgrown with weeds now; but we are in discussions with Stockton Council about the longer-term use of this land. One of our councillors identified that a main drain from Kirklevington Mews/Court has actually been blocked/buried for some time in this area (since the building work began) and has been diligently working with the council to get it exposed again – this has been done now but remedial works remain to be completed.
- Forest Lane continues to be a concern with poor parking at school times and road rage incidents, mixed with narrow footpaths; this has resulted in an accident outside of the school where a child was clipped by a delivery van – we are doing everything we can as a Parish council to help sort the issues (including the repairs to the water mains and the upcoming resurfacing work), please do your bit in return by parking considerately and watching your speed. This month we thought it prudent to share the below information. We are continuing to monitor traffic volumes eastbound on Forest Lane (started 6<sup>th</sup> Feb) the numbers may surprise you. We have shared them this month for your interest but remember this is only in one direction and doesn't cover all of Forest Lane or all the cul-de-sacs.

<b>Month</b>	<b>No of Vehicles</b>	<b>Days in month</b>	<b>Average per day</b>	<b>No. Speeders over 30Mph</b>	<b>Max Speed recorded</b>
February	15,834	/23	688 pd	289 (1.8%)	55 Mph
March	28,448	/31	918 pd	442 (1.6%)	50 Mph
April	29,612	/30	987 pd	535 (1.8%)	55 Mph
May	32,353	/31	1043 pd	444 (1.4%)	55 Mph

- As we have just alluded to above – we have been working with Northumbrian Water on repairing all known water leaks, this includes Forest Lane, St Martins Way and Pump Lane. If you know of any we have missed please let us know or you can report them yourself directly on their easy-to-use portal at <https://nwlcommunityportal.co.uk/Leaks> - its a great service.

- We are still working with Story's on the Public Right of Way around the south side of the school, their contractor is dragging their heels but we are assured it will get done (if only in part) we'll then look in to ways of trying to get the job completed so its resolved once and for all, this sort of work is costly so may take us longer than we hope for to get resolved.
- You may have noticed there has been work going on the Banks/Taylor Wimpey site to the west of St Martins Way, this was not building work but actually the archaeological survey – this is a precursor to real building work starting but as we write no decision has been made on their application to increase the number of houses from 90 to 97 nor on our requests to change their means of access in the interest of Road/Child safety.
- As mentioned in our previous Newsletter we include a questionnaire this month which we would really encourage you to take the time to complete please. Since there has been a lot of changes on the Parish Council since this exercise was last completed, much has also changed in the Parish. This is your opportunity to say what's on your mind, what we can do better and indeed what we are doing well – I must stress that we cannot overturn planning applications and we are as frustrated as you but we can try to make the Parish a nicer place to live and with that in mind please let us know if you have any ideas on how we can help do this. This might be wanting more flowers planting around the Parish, more seating areas, hanging baskets, communal activities such as Kirkfest etc, all ideas are genuinely welcomed.
- The Village Hall have kindly provided us with a letterbox for the return of the questionnaires. The mailbox can also be used as an additional means of contacting the council and Village Hall Committee with messages \ feedback at ANY time of the year - if a great Parish idea pops into your head, pop it in the box, leave your details and we can respond if needed.

Playpark - Work is underway to make the playpark a communal point not just for children but adults alike. As a result of a very generous donation from the **William Hall Trust** we are looking to provide a dedicated paved area with benches and room to park wheelchairs and prams. The Parish council will also take the opportunity to contribute by replacing the old picnic benches with something weatherproof and paved access to better cater for the elderly, disabled and groups.

- In the meantime, the existing old picnic benches have been propped up so they are level
- The roundabout that was stiff/faulty has been repaired and maintained.
- There have also been a few small fences added around the hedge line, this is to protect some small shrubs that are growing there to fill the gaps in the damaged hedge.
- Please remind children NOT to play in the churchyard or their footpath.
- PLEASE report lost property found in the playpark (and around the Parish in general) we have an accumulation of baseball caps, clothing and teddies etc, so if you've lost anything please get in touch. There's a lost & found page on the website if you are missing anything.

### **Miscellaneous**

- A plea from our bin men – please only put glass in the blue bins – tins\cans should go in the white bags – it adds hours on to their day sorting through everything so let's help do our bit.
- A gentle reminder please to all residents to keep your hedges trimmed back near public footpaths – enforcement action can be taken against you by Care-for-your area if you do not maintain your hedges and nobody wants that, so please keep on top of them – too many people are having to step on the road to avoid them.

- There has been a reported incident of Picton Stell being polluted somewhere upstream of Kirklevington, the Environment Agency are very much aware and investigating.
- A public foot bridge has been deliberately vandalised between Forest Lane and Green Lane – this has been reported and is being investigated.
- A big thankyou to various members of our Parish Council who volunteer their time to cut the grass in the playpark and Village Hall, this saves the parish council around £1000 per year!
- **The boundaries commission are planning to change the existing boundary so that Castle Leavington, Kirklevington Grange, Kirklevington Hall and all the new housing estates south of Green Lane (including the forthcoming Theakston's estate south of Yarm School Rugby fields) will move into the Yarm wards and out of the Kirklevington Parish – naturally this is causing some major opposition as the Parish boundaries have been in place for many hundreds of years – we are consulting with the council as to what this may mean in reality. PLEASE have your say here; <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/> - and select Stockton On tees Borough Council from the list. We still do not know if it is the Parish or just the Ward boundaries being affected, nor do the council as this is proposed from a government level.**
- We are still pushing for a pedestrian crossing on Green Lane for use by everyone, this is obviously crucial for school children attending Conyers but also for all pedestrians continuing on to Healaugh Park shops, Yarm High Street and the Doctor's surgery etc – it is long overdue but a tough battle to win. Not only do we need a safe crossing but safer cycle routes also!
- We have received a couple of requests around the street names/layout of the Story's estate – we provided a map below and, on the website, so you can see how it will look and be named.



- A final reminder that if you have any questions for the Parish Council or Village Hall committee, please just email [Kirkcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:Kirkcommunity@gmail.com) which is a shared mailbox – likewise if you don't know how to get hold of the Church (as an example) or need any general Parish related questions answering; we would be happy to forward the mails on. We have also now provided a general feedback\comments postbox at the village hall entrance if you prefer traditional mail.



## Kirklevington & Castle Levington Parish Questionnaire



The information from this questionnaire will only be used by the Parish Council to understand the needs of the Parish/Village to serve you better. We will collate the information and share the results – we ask for your details below but **the form can remain anonymous** if you prefer - although the street name would be useful to understand for demographics.

This is your Parish/Village, so please have your say! Your input is vital in us understanding what we can try to do to make our community life better. Thank you for your support.

**Please post your completed forms to the Village Hall letter box (by the main entrance) or scan/email them in to us at [kirkcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:kirkcommunity@gmail.com) / call 07785 226030 if you would prefer us collect your responses.**

### On the whole (please circle your preferred answer)

In the most general sense, do you find Kirklevington & Castle Levington Parish a pleasant place to live?      **Yes**      **No**

If you were to give the Parish a rating between 0 & 10 (0 being the lowest and 10 being excellent) how would you rate it?      **1**      **2**      **3**      **4**      **5**      **6**      **7**      **8**      **9**      **10**

What would you like to see more of in the Parish/Village, what do we need to improve, what can we change, what can we fix? .....

Please list up to five factors, pleasing/concerning you as a result of living in Kirklevington Parish

- 1) .....
- 2) .....
- 3) .....
- 4) .....
- 5) .....

### Parish Council

Do you have a good understanding of what the Parish Council do/are responsible for?      **YES**      **NO**

Do you know how to contact the Parish Council?      **YES**      **NO**

Have you had any communication with the Parish Council over the past year?      **YES**      **NO**

### **Parish Council (Cont'd)**

If YES: Did you find the Parish Council supportive? YES NO

Did you find it easy to get your issue understood? YES NO

Was your issue resolved to your satisfaction? YES NO

If NO to any question, please provide further details: .....

Have you visited the new Parish website [www.kirkcommunity.co.uk](http://www.kirkcommunity.co.uk) this year? YES NO

If Yes did you find it useful / informative? YES NO

is there any content missing or something else you would like to see? .....

### **Planning**

There have been many planning concerns recently (outside of our control), if they concerned you, did you communicate with the Parish Council? YES NO

did you regard their response as helpful? YES NO

If NO, please provide details: .....

Did you write to Stockton Borough council to object / favour the application(s) YES NO

### **Social events**

Do you believe the Parish Council should aim to foster a greater Community spirit? YES NO

If YES, do you have any ideas to help the Parish Council achieve this? .....

Have you supported any social event organised in the Parish in the past three years e.g. Kirkfest, Blues & Rock in the Garden, Halloween Trail, Scarecrow Competition, School Fete, BBQ on the green?

If YES, which event(s) would you like again? .....

If NO, please explain why you were not attracted by the invitation.....

Can you suggest new events you would like to see? .....

Would you participate? YES NO

## **Communications**

The Parish Council aims to communicate their activities by means of Newsletters, Website and Notice boards (we have 1x on 'The Green', 1x at the Village Hall) Thinking about this year do you find the quarterly newsletters;

Of good frequency?                      YES      NO

Informative?                                YES      NO

Additional comments welcome: .....

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## **Have you read notices displayed on the Notice boards during the past year?**

If YES, did you find the information useful?                      YES      NO

If NO, please explain .....

## **What is the best way to communicate with you?**

Paper newsletter      YES      NO                                      Noticeboard                      YES      NO

Social media              YES      NO                                      Parish Council Website      YES      NO

Other: Please specify .....

## **Other activities** (note these are not necessarily available to all due to service/private management company involvement)

Would you be supportive of a Bulb planting programme                      YES      NO

If NO, please explain your objection .....

If YES, would you be willing to help plant bulbs provided / donations?                      YES      NO

Would you be supportive of a Parish Spring Clean?                      YES      NO

If YES, would you be willing to help clean, fix, tidy public spaces                      YES      NO

Do you feel we have enough litter bins? (note SBC no longer do separate bins for dog waste and general -they are all mixed use)      YES      NO

If no - where do you feel new bins would be best situated? .....

## **Parish ideas**

Would you like to see any exercise/fitness equipment in the playground?      YES      NO

Would you like to see a book swap facility?                      YES      NO

If YES, which of these facilities would you use? .....

### **Kirklevington Village Hall**

Have you attended an event at the village hall? YES NO

Are you aware that a list of activities, contact details, & other hall information is all available via the "www.kirkcommunity.co.uk" website? YES NO

Are you a member of a social group that makes regular use of the hall? YES NO

Have you ever hired the hall for a private function? YES NO

Have you ever hired the hall for a Parish or other social function? YES NO

Would you like to see additional interest/activity groups run at the hall? If so what ?

Are there any facilities\equipment not currently available that you'd like the hall to provide? What?

The hall was founded, & is governed, by an independent charitable deed. Would you be interested in becoming a hall trustee? YES NO

### **Downsides**

Circle which of the following factors do you find detrimental to your enjoyment of life in the Parish?

Speeding traffic                      Parking issues                      Barking dogs

Litter                                      Noise, other than loud music                      Loud music

Dog waste on pavements                      Development                      Crime

Anti social behaviour                      Others, please list:

**Your help welcomed** (Would you be willing to help the Parish Council with any of the following activities?)

Becoming a Parish Councillor if vacancies arise? YES NO

As a litter picker YES NO

Bulb Planting YES NO

Parish Spring Clean YES NO

As a potential Newsletter distributor YES NO

As someone who would like to suggest/help arrange social activities e.g. Kirkfest YES NO

As someone with specialist knowledge, who would offer advice on relevant issues (Please specify)

(If you are willing to help with any of the above, please provide contact details on the last page.)



## **Demographics**

We would very much appreciate it if you could complete the following demographic questions. This information will demonstrate that we have gained the views of a cross section of the population.

Please provide your street name.....

Please indicate the total number of people in your household by age group.

Age	0-4	5-10	11-16	17-21	22-39	40-59	60-64	65-74	75-79	80+
Male										
Female										
Number										

Please circle any of the below items that you would like to see or that concern you – there is room on the last page to elaborate on any of these items

## **TRAFFIC**

Traffic Calming measures

Road safety / Speeding

Street lighting

Traffic Volume

Litter / Bins

Pavements

HGV Lorries

Road Surfaces

Car Parking

Safety of Pedestrians,

Cyclists, Riders

Other - Specify

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Litter

Pavements

Trees, Hedges etc

Parish Green Spaces

Rights of Way

Other - Specify

## **SERVICES**

Gutters and Drains

Public Transport

Refuse Collection

Recycling

Library Bus

Police

Neighbourhood Watch

Play Area

Additional Notice Board

Facilities for Elderly

Additional seating

Paper Newsletter

Electronic Newsletter

Parish Website

Others Wanted - Specify

**Ward boundary changes**

Are you aware of the boundaries commission’s proposal to change the existing boundaries so that Castle Levington, Prison, Judges and all the new housing estates south of Green Lane (including the forthcoming estate near Yarm Rugby fields) move into the Yarm ward and out of the Kirklevington Parish/Ward?      YES      NO

How do you feel about this?      In favour      Neutral      Against

**Additional Comments**

The below is your free space to write anything you feel you would like to share that may not have been covered anywhere above – Please have a think as all feedback is welcomed (good or bad);

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*please provide your contact details below (optional) however - If you would like to be contacted about any of your responses, please be sure to provide at least one means of contact information.*

Name .....

Address .....

Email ..... Telephone .....

**Thank you for completing this survey. Your support is very much appreciated by  
Kirklevington & Castle Levington Parish Council.**