



STRENSALL WITH TOWTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

The Village Hall, Northfields, Strensall, York YO325XW
e-mail: strensalltowthorpePC@outlook.com
phone: 01904 491569
Chairman : Mr A H Fisher

MINUTES OF AN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 14th APRIL 2026 AT 7.00 PM

Councillors Present:

Andrew Bolton	Chris Chambers
Anthony Drake	Tony Fisher ¹
Sarah Glynn	Graham Green
Simon Hide	Lawrence Mattinson
Alan May	John Shirbon

In Attendance: Fiona Hill – Parish Clerk

Public Present: 2

¹ City of York Councillor

25/327 a) To receive apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting:

Thomas Carmichael and Daniel Pillai

b) To consider the approval of reasons given for absence:

Resolved / Approved (Unanimous)

25/328 To discuss the casual vacancy: Nothing to report

25/329 To receive any declarations of interest under the Parish Council Code of Conduct or Members register of interests:

Cllr Chambers – Fencing/Neighbour, Carnival Grant/Committee Member

25/330 a) To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 10th March 2026:

Resolved / Approved (Unanimous)

b) To endorse the approved Planning Committee minutes of 10th March 2026:

(Meeting Cancelled 24th March 2026)

Resolved / Endorsed (Unanimous)

25/331 Public participation on any subject relating to the agenda: None

Approved

Chairman

Date.....

25/332 To receive matters raised by/with City of York Ward Councillors:

Cllr Fisher would speak to Yorkshire Water about their recent works in the village and suggest they check locally before finalizing their traffic management scheme regarding road closures. The MOD had advised that the boardwalk on Strensall Common is beyond economic repair and is to be removed.

Cllr Fisher had asked CYC to reinstate the bollards alongside the woodland area, to discourage lorry parking, as it appears that drivers are currently using it as a toilet. Cllr Fisher continues to report potholes.

Cllr Fisher had asked CYC to introduce a booking system at Strensall Tip, as it was now experiencing traffic chaos, due to the introduction of a booking system at James Street Tip. Cllr Fisher reported that Yorkshire Water was upgrading “Haxby Warbutts”, which would involve approximately 1100 lorry journeys and he had suggested they use Lords Moor Lane and not the village.

25/333 To discuss matters raised by/with Yorkshire Local Councils Association (YLCA)

Nothing to report

25/334 To discuss and, if necessary, agree action on matters arising/ongoing issues:

a) North Yorkshire Police monthly reports – March 2026 report received

b) Community Memorial Garden

CYC – Progress on land transfer / lease – Nothing to report since the last meeting

Fencing - Fox Handyman Services and Oakwood Landscaping failed to quote, so the Parish Clerk will continue to try to obtain quotes

Signage – deferred to a future meeting meeting

The Parish Clerk had uploaded this statement to Facebook (Parish Council and Community pages), with comments disabled:

“Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council is in the processing of arranging to lease from City of York Council, the area of land along York Road. Work is ongoing to turn this into a Community Memorial Garden. The original idea to plant wildflowers was abandoned, as the soil is too fertile for them to thrive. Going forward, two more benches, a circular footpath and memorial trees/bushes will be added. To maintain a safe space for volunteers, the Parish Council is planning to erect a fence/gate, which will be locked periodically. In addition, the Parish Council will be erecting signage to confirm that dogs are not welcome in this area. There are numerous other open spaces, within Strensall, where dogs are permitted, including Hallard Way, which is close by. If you wish to help with this project, please contact the Parish Council Office on strensaltowthorpepc@outlook.com I have attached a redacted report of emails received from a resident about”.

Approved

Chairman

Date.....

One person emailed, (Appendix One). The Parish Clerk had asked City of York Council if a Public Space Protection Order was required and they advised:

“A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) is not required for the space, and PSPO’s can only be introduced in places where there is evidence of a behavior that needs to be prohibited. York has 3 PSPO’s (<https://www.york.gov.uk/community-safety/public-space-protection-orders>) and they are not easily obtained. I have copied Dave Meigh in as he may know if there is anything you do need – but it is certainly not a PSPO (you will be pleased to hear)”.

c) Play Areas – Handyman inspections

Jon Brock reported as follows - *Northfields playground inspection. 01/04/25. Repairs to wooden wood chip boundary carried out. Wood chips raked under swings. Seems to be a part broken from one of the play items as per photos. Doesn't seem to pose a risk or effect the use of the item. Damage to matting under revolving play item getting more pronounced and may now be a trip hazard as per photo. Quite a lot of litter around goal area. No other new issues observed.*

Kirklands playground inspection. 02/04/25. No new problems observed.

No other issues with graffiti or deliberate damage observed.

d) Fence Repairs – Allotments, Langton

Allotments:

Oakwood Landscaping Quoted “£1968.00 inc materials, labour & VAT Replace posts and re-instate fallen fence”.

Fox Handyman Services Visited site and exchanged several emails, but failed to quote. The resident is now very anxious to regain his security/privacy, so would like his boundary fence fixing ASAP. He asked if it can be done by Oakwood, who have done all other work repair the site.

Resolved / The Parish Council would give Oakwood Landscaping immediate go ahead (Unanimous)

Langton Court

Oakwood Landscaping Quoted” £2181.60 including VAT. Labour & materials included for Remove old, dilapidated fence and ivy. Replace with new featheredge fence”.

Lewis Tree Services Quoted £2170.00 see attached

Fox Handyman Services Visited site and exchanged several emails, but failed to quote.

Resolved / The Parish Council would give Oakwood Landscaping the go ahead for the work to be done after the bird nesting season. (Unanimous)

25/335 To discuss and, if necessary, agree action, on matters raised since last meetings:

Strensall Community Events Team – Grant Request (Carnival)

Resolved / The Parish Council would pay the costs for traffic management/closure and first aid cover for 2026, 2027 and 2028, then it would be subject to review via a re-submission of a grant application (Unanimous)

Strensall Bowls Club – Grant Request (Accessibility works)

Resolved / The Parish Council would pay £2000.00 (Unanimous)

Approved

Chairman

Date.....

River Foss Society – plans to improve parts of waterway through Strensall
 Cllrs Hide/Shirbon had attended the meeting and gave a brief summary. They would
 suggest a walk to help understand the area. Cllr Fisher would raise this issue at the next
 F.I.D.B. meeting (08Jun26)

25/336 To discuss matters raised by/with Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO):

a) Financial Management - Bank reconciliation, Receipts and Payments, along with budget
 comparison to date:

Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council				
Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2026				
Balance b/f 01 April 2025				208519.49
Add receipts				73622.92
				<u>282142.41</u>
Less payments				88508.31
Balance c/f 31 March 2026				<u>193634.10</u>
Balance at bank and in hand:			A/c No	
Treasurers	66290.50		11104098	
Contingency	67976.40		93981827	
Premium	20997.43		22422018	
Cemetery	13369.77		03839958	
Premium Bonds	10000.00		30712310	
Contingency Bonds	15000.00		90712515	
	<u>193634.10</u>			
Unpresented items:				
Ref	Amount			
	0.00	0.00		<u>193634.10</u>
				0.00

Made Up of:			
Ring-fenced Funds:	Computer/Projection	1000.00	
Unspent 2024/25 budget	Play Areas	13500.00	
	War Memorial	220.00	
	Cemetery	4000.00	<u>18720.00</u>
Ear-Marked Funds:	Tree Works	11624.00	
See Minutes 14Nov23	Grants	7858.04	
	Play Area Maintenance	44855.04	<u>64337.08</u>
General Reserve:			<u>110577.02</u>
Good Practice = Precept x up to 2 =	108000		<u>2577</u>

Approved Chairman

Date.....

Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council				
Income and Expenditure Account Year Ending 31 March 2026				
Actual 2024-2025			Actual To Date 2025-2026	Budget 2025-2026
	Income			
54000.00	Precept		54000.00	54000
	Asset Sale		150.00	
16494.92	Double Taxation			
	Ward Funding			
2577.29	Interest		2049.13	
337.50	Allotment Rents		337.50	
4927.50	Cemetery		5235.00	
10118.70	VAT Refunds		11821.29	
1052.34	Miscellaneous		30.00	
89508.25	Total Income		73622.92	54000
	Expenditure			
14195.22	Clerks Salary	Code 100	14420.31	14500
872.45	Telephone/Broadband	Code 101	883.29	650
762.08	Office expenses	Code 102	622.00	500
	Handyman Services	Code 103	548.24	
	Councillors expenses	Code 104		50
565.00	Audit	Code 105	565.00	1000
2969.04	Insurance	Code 106	3039.48	3000
124.00	Bank fees	Code 107	60.00	150
2230.00	Village Hall hire	Code 108	1425.00	2500
	Royal British Legion	Code 109	50.00	50
35.10	Training fees	Code 110	100.30	100
90.00	Leases	Code 111	70.00	100
648.00	Computer/Projection	Code 113		
	NP	Code 114		
981.00	YLCA	Code 201	1026.00	1000
60.00	CPRE	Code 202	60.00	40
	Outreach	Code 203		
33.00	River Foss	Code 204	33.00	30
35.00	ICO	Code 205	47.00	35
401.98	Defibrillator	Code 301	135.00	250
13206.60	Grass Cutting	Code 302	9284.94	15000
	Christmas Trees	Code 303		
433.30	Floral Displays	Code 304	348.90	1000
	Carnival	Code 305		
7825.00	Open Spaces	Code 306	9870.00	5000
18951.75	Play Equipment	Code 307	19810.96	20000
275.00	War Memorial/Remembrance	Code 308	300.00	
9179.76	Tree Work	Code 309	11360.00	15000
	Litter Bins	Code 401		
	Dog Bins	Code 402		
850.92	Notice Boards	Code 403		1000
	Seats/benches	Code 404		
	Salt bins/salt	Code 405		
	Bus shelter	Code 406		
	Community Speedwatch	Code 408		
4116.80	Grants	Code 409	1716.80	5000
395.74	Cemetery	Code 410	2233.81	5000
	S106			
	S137			
10353.09	VAT To Reclaim		10498.28	
89589.83	Total Expenditure		88508.31	90955
-81.58	Surplus/(Deficit)		-14885.39	-36955
			-14885.39	
			0.00	

Approved

Chairman

Date.....

b) Financial Management - Payment Approval:

The bookkeeping will now be subjected to internal audit on Monday 20th April 2026, before submitting to the external auditor.

The account will be presented to the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May 2026 for approval.

Here are some notes:

- There are no payments for approval this evening
- The only large overspend on budget was Open Space, which was the drainage works on Northfields Play Park
- The Parish Council should consider moving funds from General Reserve to Ear-Marked funds as follows:

- Election costs	£20,000	(New cost centre)
- Cemetery Maintenance	£10,000	(New cost centre)
- Path Maintenance	£10,000	(New cost centre)
- Community Memorial Garden	£5,000	(New cost centre)
- War Memorial existing Ring-Fenced £220)	£5,000	(New cost centre, alongside existing Ring-Fenced £220)
- IT Equipment/Transparency existing Ring-Fenced £1000)	£5,000	(New cost centre, alongside existing Ring-Fenced £1000)
- Tree Works Marked £11624)	£20,000	(To add to existing Ear-Marked £11624)

This will reduce the current General Reserve of £110577.02, by £75,000

c) Monthly Report from Parish Office:

- Double Taxation

Task	Payment £'s
Triple mower e.g., smaller spaces, play areas, highway verges	1,935.88
Maintenance of trees,	6,724.00
Maintenance of play area	3,918.00
Bridge replacement	3,196.00
Insurance 50%	1,519.74
Total payment	£17,293.62

Approved

Chairman

Date.....

- Skipton Building Society

Application has been submitted, but there are some queries regarding the mandate completion, which the Parish Clerk is working to resolve.

- Website

The current website cannot be brought up to current legislative standards regarding a Gov.uk domain. The cost quoted for rewriting it (£2000-£3000) is far more than purchasing a new website, that will conform. Therefore, the Parish Clerk recommended obtaining quotes for a new website, which would be presented to the next meeting.

- Tree Risk Assessment

Barnes Tree have now completed their inspections and are writing the report, which should be with the Parish Council within the next two weeks.

- TCV - The Conservation Volunteers

The Parish Clerk had contacted them to ask if they would be interested in working in the wooded areas and they responded – “.....what would be great to know would be a rough idea of what kind of things the Parish Council would like to achieve, and also a rough idea of how much budget they would be prepared to put into works”. The Parish Clerk suggested that maybe, the current contractors should continue.

- Bowls Club signage

The club emailed – “The bowls club is keen to promote itself within the community both as a club but also as a venue for others to use. Please can we put a low level direction sign on the fence surrounding the field adjacent to the Village Hall, on the junction of Northfields and The Village?

The Parish Clerk had responded – “Thank you for your email. The Parish Council will need to discuss this, as it would set a precedent. I will raise it at the meeting next week, but as it is not on the agenda, a formal response may have to wait until after the following meeting. I’ll be in touch again as soon as possible”.

Resolved / The Parish Council would not grant permission for signs to be fixed to the fencing (Unanimous)

Approved

Chairman

Date.....

- Memorials

The Parish Council has received a request for a memorial for someone who lived in the parish for many years, has died, but is not in the cemetery. The advice the Parish Clerk has given is that only memorials for those interred (including cremated remains) in the cemetery are allowed a memorial, which is placed on the relevant plot. The Parish Clerk has suggested that they may consider the Community Memorial Garden, but this would be subject to policies/procedures, which are currently being developed alongside the garden itself.

Resolved / The Parish Council agreed with the advice given, which would be the adopted policy going forward. (Unanimous)

25/337 To confirm the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 7.00 p.m.

Resolved / Approved (Unanimous)

Approved

Chairman

Date.....

Appendix One

From:
Sent: 27 March 2026 20:43
To: Cllr. T. Fisher <cldr.tfisher@york.gov.uk>
Subject:

Hi Tony

I am concerned that the correct procedure may not have been followed, if the green space just beyond Melcombe Avenue is to be fenced and gated and dogs prohibited from entering with their owners, on leads of course. They have, of course, established this as an action of some many years standing.

I believe a PSPO is needed and time allowed for a public consultation. Without this there is danger of an arbitrary decision being made, an undesirable action.

This space is a vital public amenity and, as such, should not be excluded from use by dog owners who behave correctly (the majority). There are laws in place already covering dog fouling in Strensall.

A fence and gate is a physical barrier, which is offputting and would detract from the appearance of the area. Who would have the power to padlock this gate, restricting access? And why? There is no real protection for any volunteers with this action.

Wheelchair users also may find the extra barrier caused by a gate and fence an unwanted obstacle to their enjoyment of this much needed green space.

As for recommending that dog owners use a nearby green space, (Redacted) has already voiced his concerns for the residents of that area, or any others. Perhaps it is the intention to fence them all? Do they all have poo bins in the immediate vicinity? Are residents in these other areas happy to have an influx of dog walkers pointed in their direction?

Finally, as a female senior citizen may I highlight an issue which may not have occurred to you. The green space, just off the main road which you propose to restrict access to, benefits from the lighting on the main road and the public visible nature of this location. This is not the case with other areas that could be used by dog walkers in Strensall. When it is dark, from 3.30 -4.00pm in winter, I have no desire to walk in poorly lit areas, surrounded by vegetation. I would not be the only resident to potentially feel unsafe in such circumstances. Of course dog owners do give their dogs a late, pre bed walk in the dark.

In summary I believe that installing and maintaining a fence and gate, enclosing a public green space, is undesirable as well as being an expensive undertaking. I certainly think the money would be better spent elsewhere.

Kind regards

From: Parish Clerk
Sent: 30 March 2026 12:30
To:
Cc: Cllr. T. Fisher <cldr.tfisher@york.gov.uk>
Subject: Community Memorial Garden

Dear

Thank you for your email and I will share the content with the Parish Council so they are aware.

When the Parish Council was in discussions with City of York Council about leasing this land, the question was asked about fencing off the area. The advice at the time was that City of York Council does fence off and lock some of their open space, so this would be lawful. However, I have forwarded a redacted version of your email to City of York Council, so I can obtain further advise on whether a PSPO is required.

The reason the Parish Council decided to fence of this area was that they wanted to create a Community Memorial Garden, which would be a quiet reflective area. Volunteers who are working so hard to transform this area had expressed dismay at having to work where dogs had *left their mark*.

Restrictions in other areas owned/managed by the Parish Council are not unique – Northfields Park and the play areas at Northfields/Kirklands have fencing/signage accordingly.

Strensall with Towthorpe parish has numerous other areas of open space where dog owners are welcome.

The Parish Council always takes public opinion on board when making decisions, so the points you raise are most helpful.

Kind Regards

Fiona Hill
Parish Clerk
Strensall with Towthorpe PC

Approved Chairman Date.....

From:
Sent: 30 March 2026 19:57
To: Parish Clerk <strensalltowthorpePC@outlook.com>
Subject: Re: Community Memorial Garden

Hi
I understand that why a children's play area is fenced off. I feel that to fence off a public space, just off the main road, takes away from the idea of a community space and the 'look' of our village.
There is the grass verge just opposite, with a waste bin for poo bags. A simple notice, if dogs have to be kept off this space is, I feel, more than adequate, to keep dogs off this little green space. Also, in all the years I have lived in Strensall, I have never seen dog poo in this area.
A fence and a gate, some times locked, is a physical barrier that our village does not need. It does not add to any feeling of calm and peacefulness. It suggests 'keep out, only some people can enter', whatever the intention.
It will cost money to install and maintain. If vandalised there would be repairs. I think this scheme has not had proper consideration. This is not how I want my council tax spent when there are so many calls on the budget. I repeat, it is an unnecessary and unwelcome expense.
Regards

From:
Sent: 30 March 2026 20:16
To: Parish Clerk <strensalltowthorpePC@outlook.com>
Subject: Re: Community Memorial Garden

Having reread your email, I would like to add that the war memorial in the village is not fenced off and indeed, why should it be?
Secondly Strensall is lacking in public footpaths for dog walking. Much of the riverside, beyond Chaldon Close, was sold. The area remaining is subject to being waterlogged and in recent times also becoming overgrown with nettles, as 'no mow May' stretched into June, July and August.
The Common hosts a population of poisonous adders for much of the year, gets very boggy in winter and in Spring, Summer and Autumn is populated with sheep and lambs, with an abundance of sheep poo to navigate! In addition some of the ewes express their dislike of people and dogs (on leads) in their vicinity.
Other little green areas are badly lit and are surrounded by vegetation. Personally I think this is not ideal for a lone female pensioner to use for walking a dog, at dusk.
I take it these areas would not be fenced off but why not really? They still have to be maintained. In addition I am sure the residents there would wonder why dog walkers are being directed to spaces in their vicinity.
As cats cannot be kept out by a fence I wonder what will be done about them?
Really I think this is a non problem. Dog poo is not a problem there and, as a keen gardener, I wear gloves.
I am sure you would find plenty of volunteers to help look after this little area, if you asked for them.
I would like all of my points to be shared, however, I have to say I am very concerned that this proposed gate and fence was going to be installed in a very arbitrary fashion, before residents had any idea of what was being proposed.
Regards

From:
Sent: 30 March 2026 20:27
To: Parish Clerk <strensalltowthorpePC@outlook.com>
Subject: Re: Community Memorial Garden

Hi again,
Sorry about sending another email but I have just had a great idea, I think. Instead of a fence, plant a hedge!
Great for wildlife and the environment, nicer to look at, more privacy for those sitting in the 'garden' and screening off the traffic.
A creative solution don't you think?
Regards

From: Parish Clerk
Sent: 01 April 2026 10:02
To:
Cc: 'Cllr. T. Fisher' <cllr.tfisher@york.gov.uk>
Subject: Community Memorial Garden

Dear
Thank you for your further emails, which I will share with the Parish Council

Kind Regards

Fiona Hill
Parish Clerk
Strensall with Towthorpe PC

Approved Chairman Date.....