



LONG PRESTON CALLING

LoPRA's OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER Issue 2 February 2005

WELCOME TO OUR SECOND NEWSLETTER

This issue has been printed for every household with a member of the Long Preston Residents Association.

A lot has happened since our first newsletter. We have had our first quarterly public meeting, The Government Inspector's Report into the YDNP Local Plan has been published, and we have examined in detail the Report of the Long Preston Housing Needs Survey, which was the trigger for the formation of LoPRA. LoPRA has monitored progress of the three main housing developments in the village, and has worked

with the YDNP Planning Authority and the Parish Council to ensure that pressure has been brought on the developers to comply with the various planning requirements and to re-instate building site storage areas after building work has finished.

LoPRA has had productive meetings with senior members of the YDNP, the Craven branch of the CPRE and with David Curry, our local MP.

First Quarterly Meeting 13th Dec. 2004

LoPRA held its first quarterly meeting in the Village Hall in the week before Christmas. Approximately 60 residents attended.

The timing of the meeting was fortuitous because the Inspector's report into the Yorkshire Dales Local Plan had been published the week before. As a result, there was a good discussion on a range of issues and a number of views were put forward.

Your Chairperson asked if she could present these views to the National Park members at their Special Meeting to be held on 19th January.

Unfortunately, LoPRA has been advised that this was not possible as individuals are not allowed to address the Committee about policy matters.

LoPRA members were asked to agree the priorities for the Association over the next 3-6 months.

It was decided that work should concentrate on establishing an accurate figure for the number of households requiring affordable housing, issues on the A65 and helping the Parish Council to implement the Village Plan.

Meetings with YDNPA & CPRE

The committee of LoPRA had a meeting on the 17th of January with members of the Craven Branch of the Council for Protection of Rural England (CPRE) and with Mr Wilf Fenten, the Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee for Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP).

LoPRA expressed its concerns about the Housing Needs Survey and the pressures on the green fields surrounding Long Preston.

A very useful discussion ensued in

which Mr Fenten explained the definitions of *Local Occupancy*, *Key Workers*, *Affordable Housing*, etc. and outlined the regulations for *Infill Developments*, *Exception Sites* and *Affordable Housing*, in the context of the YDNP Local Plan.

Mr David Butterworth, Chief Executive of YDNPA, is to attend the next LoPRA committee meeting on 9th March; so we will be able to report on this at the next public meeting on the 15th of March.

**THE NEXT
LoPRA
PUBLIC
MEETING
will be held
on
Tuesday
15th March
at 7.30pm
in
Long Preston
Village Hall**

All LoPRA members and Long Preston residents are welcome and we look forward to meeting both current and future LoPRA members.

YDNP Local Plan Inspector's Report - Published December 2004

The Public inquiry held in April & May 2004, upholds the current YDNP Local Plan and its restrictions.

These are:

1. New build or conversions should only be allowed for *Local Needs Housing* or *Affordable Housing*; and be restricted to occupation by local people.
2. There will be no new land allocated for *Open Market* house building.
3. The plan allows only infill or conversion (and many sites in Long Preston are candidates) to meet *Local Needs* and not houses for sale on the *Open Market*.

4. The Inspectors' report strongly supports the Local Plan in that there should be no extension of the village building boundary.

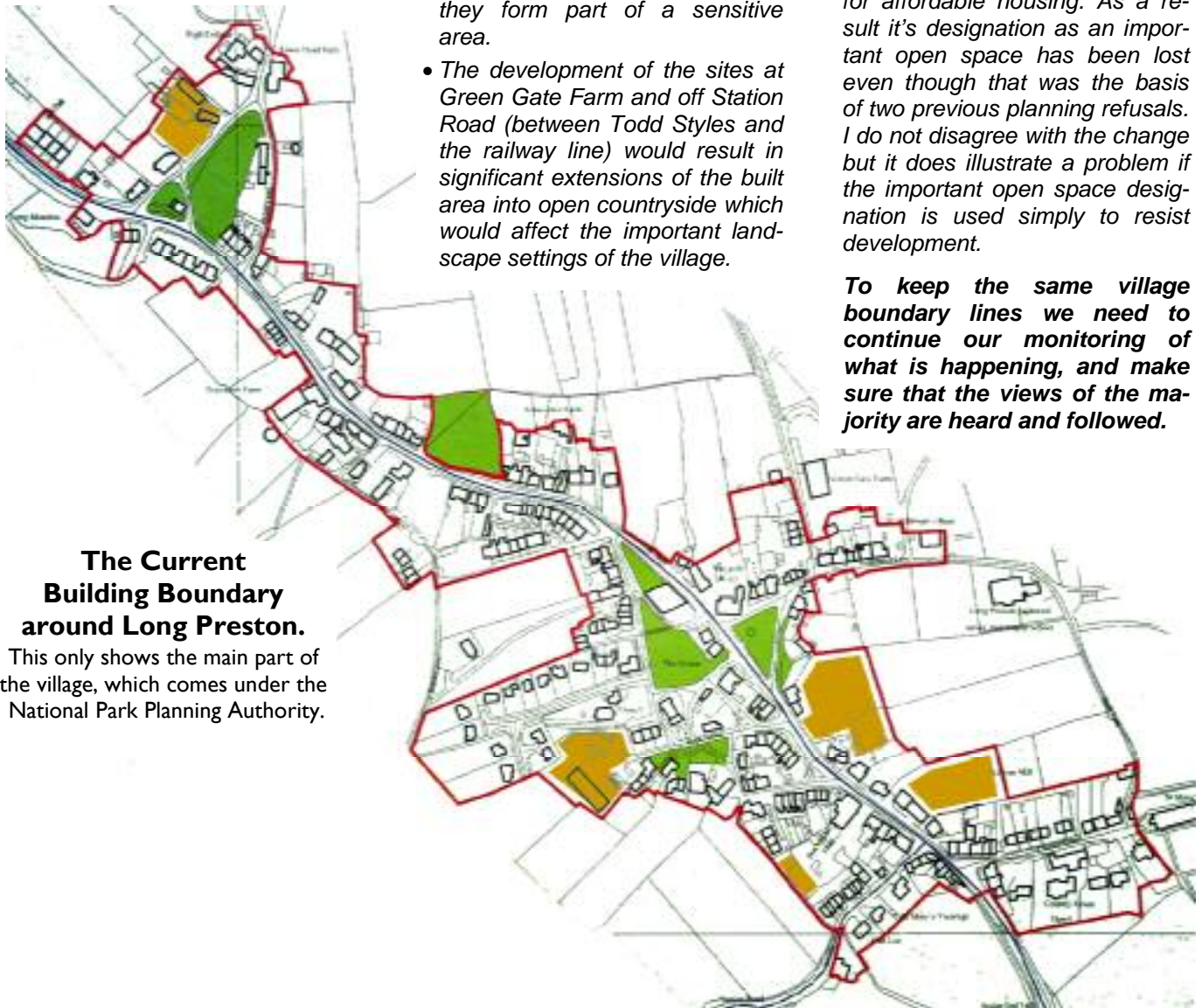
Now for the exciting bit
Because the current plan only runs till 2006, challenges to the next plan will start to be submitted from April 2005.

Here are some of the comments from the Inspector's Report on potential Exception Sites in Long Preston.

- *The land at the rear of the new developments at Craven Mill and at the former Auction Mart are reasonably integrated into the structure of the village although they form part of a sensitive area.*
- *The development of the sites at Green Gate Farm and off Station Road (between Todd Styles and the railway line) would result in significant extensions of the built area into open countryside which would affect the important landscape settings of the village.*

- *The sites at Chapel Walk, although smaller, would have the same impact.*
- *The land at the rear of the Maypole Inn and the small site at the west end of the village are closer to being infill sites, but there is no justification for their inclusion at this stage.*
- *The land at Pendle View is intended for one dwelling, but it is a large site which could not be justified for one dwelling in terms of need or density*
- *The land at OS1738 (Field on the north side the A65, adjacent to Grosvenor Place) has now been excluded from the development boundary so that it could be considered as an exception site for affordable housing. As a result it's designation as an important open space has been lost even though that was the basis of two previous planning refusals. I do not disagree with the change but it does illustrate a problem if the important open space designation is used simply to resist development.*

To keep the same village boundary lines we need to continue our monitoring of what is happening, and make sure that the views of the majority are heard and followed.



The Current Building Boundary around Long Preston.

This only shows the main part of the village, which comes under the National Park Planning Authority.

Some facts about the National Park from the 2001 Census

- On average 15% of dwellings in the National Park were in use as second and holiday homes; in one village it was 65%.
- The loss of 241 council houses since 1991 has reduced the availability of affordable rented accommodation.
- 21% of the population of the National Park was over 65 compared to a national average of 16%.

Housing Needs Survey

This was conducted in February 2004 by the Craven Rural Housing Enabler on behalf of the Parish Council. It caused a great deal of debate, so we asked two experts in market research to pass an opinion on this survey. One, now retired, lives in the village, the other, grew up in Long Preston and has worked in London for a professional market research company. Both came to the same conclusion. Either it's ridiculously amateur or blatantly biased. They said it is a fundamentally unsound methodological premise to start a survey by presuming to know the result! Doing this means that the survey is more accurately described as something like a "survey of attitudes towards the proposed development of affordable housing in LP"

The Parish Council have tried to meet with the author of the survey to discuss it's findings, but she has left her post, for family reasons. They have been promised a meeting with her successor early in 2005.

Meanwhile the critique done by one of our local experts has been sent to all the members of the National Park, Craven District Council and to David Curry. The author has received a telephone call from an official from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, saying that many of the points raised in his document accorded with ODPM thinking on affordable housing surveys, about which the department will be issuing updated guidelines this summer. He has also received a call from the leader of Craven District Council, Cllr Carl Lis, who conceded that the critique raised a number of important points which would be discussed by the appropriate council officers and committees. Cllr Lis also asked if the author would be willing to discuss the issue with the council if invited. The author said he would be happy to do so.

One criticism of the survey was that many questions were ambiguous, and did not give sufficient explanations of the terms used. Many completing the survey would not appreciate the difference between a general desire for **lower cost houses** on the open market and the planning term **affordable housing** - see box opposite. The survey made potential confusion even worse by asking whether respondents might require "**alternative accommodation in the next 10 years**" - how many of us can say a definite NO to that question - from the answers to this, the conclusion was made that there were 50 households in **housing need**.

Does the Survey meet Government Guidelines?

We've done our homework and know where both the survey and the analysis of the data, do not meet the Government Guidelines as published by the Office of the Deputy prime Minister.

ODPM 117 - Local Housing Needs Assessment - Guide to Good Practice

Some examples are:

- No controlled sampling technique - self selected.
- No analysis of use of the 21 social/subsidised properties already in LP - for which tenants have not always been easy to find.
- No demographic analysis of population changes.
- No validation or weighting of survey data, nor cross-reference to the Craven Housing Register.

Is Long Preston safe from further major expansion?

There has recently been a rapid growth of Long Preston; 41 new houses in the last 2 years, bringing the total to 305 households.

These developments have used up all the available brown field sites. There was hope that the British Fuels site was going to be used for low cost housing, but instead five luxury houses are being built, reputedly at a market price of around £500,000.

You might think that because the Local Plan and Building Line have been confirmed, the village is safe from further major development.

. . . . BUT you would be wrong.

The current main developer, in its various guises as Northern Heritage, Heritage Developments, and Exchange Developments (Long Preston), owns several green field sites around the village. Having made the investment they are not going to walk away, but will try again for planning permission every year or so. No doubt other developers are also waiting in the wings.

There is a real danger of a large scale development riding *piggy-back* on the requirement for a limited number of *Local Needs* housing.

Long Preston is vulnerable

- We are a desirable village.
- We are within commuting distance, and have a rail-link, to two large cities.
- And crucially, we now have an unlimited water supply.

We need your eyes and ears

The earlier that unwelcome plans are uncovered, the easier it will be for the Parish Council, - helped by LoPRA, - to protect our village from excessive development.

Some Definitions: relating to the National Park

Local Occupancy:

Housing designated for Local Occupancy requires the occupier to have previously lived in the area for at least three years.

Local Needs Housing:

Existing residents establishing a separate household.

Existing householders currently in overcrowded or unsatisfactory accommodation.

Elderly or disabled persons requiring sheltered accommodation.

Persons having to leave tied accommodation within the NP

Affordable Housing:

Provided at an affordable rent, or with shared equity, typically by a Housing Association, or Registered Social Landlord.

Exception Sites:

These are sites on the edges of villages, which can only be used to build Affordable Housing where survey evidence reveals a need. These are estimated to generally result in a reduction of 30%, compared to the price on the *Open Market*.

Key Workers:

In the NP these are defined as a full-time worker in agriculture, forestry, game-keeping or 'agri-environment',

In Perpetuity:

There is no legal definition, but is generally accepted as being no less than 5 years. (***A lot less than forever!***)

Meeting between David Curry MP and John Rodgers & John Mathew, representing LoPRA

Allowing that we were only allocated 10 minutes, for the meeting on Friday 28th January 2005, the following questions were asked:

Q. We understand that the Environmental Services Department at N.Y.C.C. are to submit a detailed programme of work for highways construction and maintenance for the next five years. The proposals and bids are to be submitted to Government in June or July this year.

It would be appreciated if you could press the Director of Environmental Services, Mike Moore, to include adequate sums for both the immediate improvement of the road surface and the drainage in Long Preston and the immediate vicinity.

In the long term, are there any preparations leading to the design and land acquisition necessary for the re-instatement of the previous proposed by-pass in case there is a change of policy leading to a by-pass being reconsidered?

A. Mr. Curry agreed with what was stated and that the road surface in our village was breaking up and generally the A65 was in a shocking state apart from the improvements made in Hellifield and Gargrave. He knows the road extremely well as he travels it all the time and is also aware of the volume and type of road traffic that we have to contend with in Long Preston.

He listened intently to what we had to say about suggested improvements i.e. types of road surfaces, improved and more frequent drainage programme, etc. He was also given a copy of the A65 Working Group letter to Mr Peter Holsworth of the Highways Agency. He agreed that we should continue to lobby on this matter and he fully supported us in our efforts and stated that he would certainly take up the issues we had covered with Mike Moore the Director of Environmental Services at N.Y.C.C.

With regards to the by-pass, he reiterated that had the Conservatives been returned to power we would have had our by-pass by now. However, it is understood that there is very little hope that a by-pass will be re-considered and it is extremely unlikely that there will be a change of government policy on this matter.

Q. Bearing in mind the Labour and the Conservative parties recent announcements that they are considering re-instating the "right to buy" for those in social housing, surely developers will be rubbing their hands in glee in anticipation for all those tasty morsels of green fields that still remain. How can we protect the Dales landscape from further spread of development on greenfield sites, which may be sought to provide further social housing with approval from the Y.D.N.P.A. and funding from the likes of the Skipton Building Society?

A. Mr. Curry felt that the need to create social housing did not apply in Long Preston. The "right to buy" or the "stake/shareholding" will be in those areas where there are large amounts of council land available. The council will make this land available for housing development. People would then buy a small stake or part ownership in the property, the house but not the land. As he understood it, there is no such land available in Long Preston. He further indicated that he thought local trusts and landowners should concern themselves with the duties they were set up to perform and not to become involved in things like selling off land to developers.

As he knew we were concerned about unrestricted development in long Preston, Mr. Curry stated that David Butterworth, the Chief Executive of the Y.D.N.P.A. was NOT in favour of further housing development in the Long Preston area, and suggested that we (LoPRA) ask David Butterworth to come and address a meeting of LoPRA on this subject. He seemed very keen for LoPRA to have contact with and ensure good relations with David Butterworth.

The discussion on housing led him to say that he had just come from a meeting with Craven District and that they thought that the Long Preston housing survey was loosely conducted and that its methods were not sound. He suggested that this was more of a survey of attitudes rather than needs and he was not happy with their findings.

At this point our time was up and the meeting was terminated, but again he reminded us to get in touch with David Butterworth to come and talk to Lopra.

Footnote: A letter has subsequently been received from David Curry dated 31 January 2005, in which he said that he had taken up the issues we had discussed with Mike Moore, Director of Environmental Services at

N.Y.C.C. who are submitting a programme of highway construction and maintenance to the Government for the next five years. Mr Curry said he would be in touch with us again as soon as he had a reply.

Vacancy on Parish Council

There is currently a vacancy for a co-opted member on the Long Preston Parish Council. If any member of LoPRA would like to offer their services, then contact Alison Fawcett, Clerk to the PC, on 01729 825 147. But don't delay; nominations close on the 5th March.

Building Development at West End Under Scrutiny

The developments at Town Head Farm at the West End of the village were generally accepted by the neighbouring properties as a means of ensuring that the farm and neighbouring barn area did not fall into unsightly disrepair.

The planning application, which included a new executive house (at £545,000 hardly in the affordable housing category!) on the same site, went through after the Yorkshire Dales National Park Planning Authority had made some stipulations regarding entry road size, placement of some roof windows, and in particular the retention of some site trees. These changes followed balanced representations made by local residents.



Sadly the developers, Pentmoor Developments Limited, paid little heed to these adjustments and immediately removed the identified trees and used the neighbouring green field (well outside the development line) as a builder's yard and tip (mirroring experiences with the Northern Heritage developments in the centre of the village). Following representations by

LoPRA and residents, YDNP have seen that some tidying of the green field has been undertaken and committed the developers to reinstate the lost trees as the building work comes to a close.

Although the YDNP have closed their *policing* file on the situation they have promised to monitor the site.

LoPRA too will maintain a close eye in view of the fears of residents that the wide entry 'throat' to the site, the laying of services, and the apparently deliberate misuse of the green field area, heralds some intent of the developer to push into that green field area – something repeatedly denied by the YDNP as likely to gain planning acceptance.

The A65 Working Group

A semi-formal meeting of the A65 Working Group took place on January 13th 2005 in the resident's lounge of the Maypole Inn, Long Preston.

Present were; Messrs John Rodgers, Ian Evans, Robert Cater, John Goodall and Roy Newhouse. Mr Steven Loughlin did not wish to become a committee member of the A65 Working Group but indicated his willingness to help out with any other practical matters.

It was agreed that John Rodgers chair the meeting, Ian Evans would record the minutes and that the group would meet every three months and submit regular progress reports to the LoPRA committee.

The aims and objectives of the group would be to identify and to lobby the current authority responsible for the upkeep of the A65 Trunk Road (and when de-trunked).

- To get urgent repairs done to the road surface throughout Long Preston, in particular on Kayley Hill where the road is subsiding, and to have the grates and kerbs through the village repaired, especially at the junctions of Station Road and Hartley Green.

- To achieve long term repairs and resurfacing with "quiet tarmac" to reduce traffic noise throughout the length of the village.
- To implement practical methods of reducing traffic noise and vibrations from passing HGV's to adjoining houses along the A65.
- To ask Mr Holsworth to come to Long Preston, meet the Working Group and discuss the problems further.

As a result of this interesting and very positive meeting, a letter was sent to Peter Holsworth of the Highways Agency, expressing our concern about the various problems, the repeated floods in our area and the deteriorating condition of the A65.

We also enquired as to what steps were being taken to remedy these



problems. The above concerns were again expressed at a meeting on January 28th with David Curry MP. (See report opposite)

Notices have been posted in the village, asking for residents views on the A65 and the bi-pass. Please contact John Rodgers (840886) or Ian Evans (840505) with your opinions.

If you have internet access you could also start a discussion in the LoPRA Forum at www.lopra.org.uk

Fly-tipping

Last year asbestos waste was fly-tipped on the moor. There is a hotline for people to contact if they suspect that illegal dumping of hazardous materials, including asbestos, is happening.

This is the Flycapture Hotline
Telephone Number: 0800 807060.

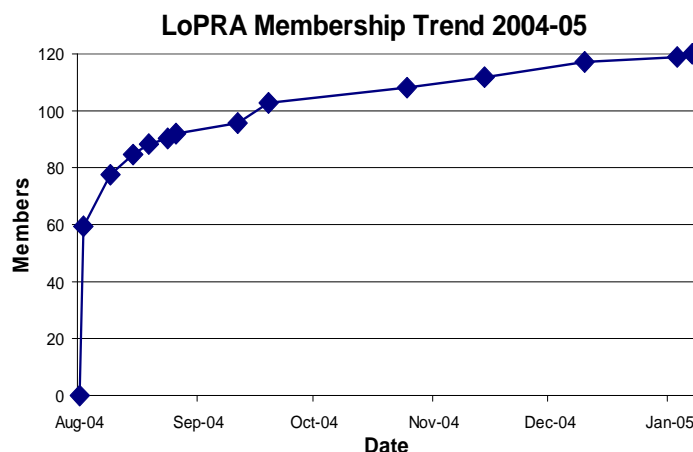
This is a good number to use because it is a Department of the Environment number and they will coordinate a response from both the local authority and the Health and Safety Executive. They will require investigation and prosecution if there is evidence, not just clearing away.

LoPRA Membership Matters

On 31 August 2004, the residents association in Long Preston came into being because some people felt there was no guarantee that things they held dear, the character, spirit, and beauty of Long Preston, would necessarily continue to flourish under the pressures exerted by bodies who did not necessarily hold these same things dear. Resistance to change is a natural reaction, but change is not always a bad thing, so when considering change, it is important to be as measured, reasonable, and most importantly, as inclusive as possible.

Since the phenomenal response at that first meeting LoPRA's membership has doubled. This is testament to the fantastic community spirit that exists in Long Preston, and deserves recognition not least because every member has contributed financially towards the Association. This financial support enables us to publish regular newsletters, to hire the village hall for our public meetings (supporting a vital local resource) and to promote openness and disclosure via our website (www.lopra.org.uk). The spirit and generosity of residents is also measurable in the fact that over a third of LoPRA's revenue has come as donations to the fighting fund.

The most important thing to remember in all of this is that we keep on communicating. Long Preston has something exceptional in its community spirit. These days, it's almost taken for granted that if there's a problem, 'someone else will probably deal with it'. When that view prevails, the battle is already lost. Long Preston needs its residents to stay interested. LoPRA needs its members to supply opinions, views, and concerns. Membership shows that you value our village and its future, and with your membership LoPRA can help to make that future a future worth fighting for.



- 33.6% of LoPRA revenue for 2004-05 has been made as donations
- Average number of LoPRA members per LoPRA household is 1.8
- Average membership fee paid by a LoPRA member is £3.66
- Average donation (where given) is £4.70

www.lopra.org.uk

LoPRA now has its own website. This has been designed and maintained by two of our members, both small local businessmen, who have sponsored the cost of setting up the site and hosting it.

The site contains general information about LoPRA, news items concerning LoPRA interests, and a **Discussion Forum**. We hope this will be a useful facility for airing opinions on matters of concern to Long Preston.

There is also a **Members Area**, where the minutes of the LoPRA committee meetings and official letters are archived. To access this area you will first need to contact the register@lopra.org.uk by email.

We appreciate that all members do not have internet access, but anyone who belongs to the public library in Settle can use the computers there free of charge.

The Officers and Committee of Long Preston Residents Association

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