

# North Yorkshire Council

22 August 2025

## Assessment of Assets of Community Value Nomination *NYCACV0063 Land at North Cowton*

### Report to the Head of Localities

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To determine whether Land at North Cowton (North Cowton playing fields, recreation grounds, open space, play park and tennis court), St Luke's Close, North Cowton, DL7 0HR, should be placed on the Council's List of Assets of Community Value (ACVs) under the Localism Act 2011, following a valid nomination by Protect Our Park North Cowton, a qualifying nominator.

#### 2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 The nomination is for (recreation) Land at North Cowton, St Luke's Close, North Cowton, DL7 0HR. The recommendation is that the Head of Localities

- (i) Determines that the nomination for Land at North Cowton is successful and meets the definition of community value as detailed in the Localism Act 2011
- (ii) It should be placed on the North Yorkshire Council Assets of Community Value List of Successful Nominations

#### 3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to consider all valid nominations for properties and/or land to be placed on the List of Assets of Community Value. This is also known as the 'community right to bid'. Land or property considered of community value can be nominated by a voluntary or community body that complies with Regulation 5.

3.2 When a listed asset comes up for sale, an ACV is subject to a protected period (moratorium) during which a community interest group can bid for the asset. The purpose is to create a "window of opportunity" to secure funding and bid for the property on the open market. The owner is not obliged to accept a bid from a community interest group and can sell to whomever they choose at the end of the moratorium period.

3.3 The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012 provide a mechanism for the owner of land listed as an ACV to request an internal review and also appeal to the first-tier tribunal against the listing. Although first-tier tribunal decisions are not binding precedents any appeal decisions provide judicial guidance to the operation of the

legislation. The guidance provided by these decisions is becoming increasingly useful to local authorities in the assessment of Assets of Community Value nominations.

- 3.4 Private owners may claim compensation from the Council for loss and expenses incurred through their property being listed. More details are provided in the 2012 Regulations.
- 3.5 This report ensures that the Council considers the nomination for Land at North Cowton as required by the Act.
- 3.6 A decision on the matter will be made by the Head of Localities under the approved Assistant Chief Executive Local Engagement's Scheme of Sub-delegation.

## **4.0 NOMINATION CONSIDERATION**

### **a) Description of asset**

- 4.1 Recreation land at St Luke's Close, North Cowton, is community open space, including playing fields, a football pitch with goals, a tennis/basketball court, an enclosed children's play area and an unstructured meadow area with footpaths. The land is in the village of North Cowton which is close to Richmond, Northallerton and Darlington. The population of North Cowton is 507 (based on 2021 Census data published by the UK Office for National Statistics, output area E00141329).
- 4.2 The nominated site is accessed from a cul-de-sac (St Luke's Close) situated off the main road through North Cowton village; there is only one point of entry into the nominated site. It is in a central location within the village close to residential areas and the primary school. There is limited parking close to the entrance into the site, however the level access and central location mean it is in easy walking distance for residents of the village.
- 4.3 The site offers formal and informal recreational areas. The playing fields/football pitch, tennis/basketball court and the meadow that adjoins a beck are leased by North Cowton Parish Council and they maintain these areas. The parish council is also responsible for the enclosed children's play park, however there is an arrangement in place whereby this area is maintained by North Yorkshire Council's Parks and Grounds Team.

### **b) Nomination and Validation**

- 4.4 The nomination to list Land at North Cowton as an Asset of Community Value was received on 25 June 2025 and validated on 30 June 2025. A copy of the nomination form, including additional information and a site plan is attached at **APPENDIX A** and in accordance with the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012, a decision is required by 24 August 2025.
- 4.5 The nomination from Protect Our Park North Cowton was accepted on the basis of the nominating group qualifying as an unincorporated body with local members where any surplus generated by the unincorporated body are wholly or partly applied for the benefit of North Yorkshire Council or a neighbouring authority's area. It was confirmed that membership Protect Our Park North Cowton included at least 21 local people who

appeared on the electoral roll. The nominating group therefore satisfies Section 89(2)(b) of the Localism Act 2011.

4.6 It was established that the nominated site is owned by North Yorkshire Council (NYC), it was part of a larger parcel of land registered under Title Number NYK359985, the nomination included a very small area of unregistered land (this was part of the children's play park). The nomination stated, "It is owned as Freehold land by North Yorkshire Council, but the majority of the site (excluding the play park) has been leased since 1981 by North Cowton Parish Council for the benefit of the community." Consultation with NYC Parks and Grounds confirmed that this team cut the grass and inspected the equipment in the play area on behalf of the Parish Council (and charge them for these services), which indicated that the entire site was leased to North Cowton Parish Council. NYC did not cut the grass or maintain any of the areas outside of the play park.

### **c) Site Visit**

4.7 A site visit was undertaken on Wednesday 9 July at 8 am, with the following observations made:

- The nominated site was in excellent condition, it was tidy, litter-free and well-maintained.
- There was limited visitor parking close to the entrance and it was in a location central to the village with level access for walking, cycles, pushchairs, mobility scooters etc. and wheelchair access to the play park area.
- No one was at the nominated site at the time of the site visit, it was a weekday morning during term-time. The village itself was busy with many school age children travelling to high schools from bus stops or walking to the local primary school.
- There was an enclosed children's play park with a variety of play equipment, a large level playing field with football goals, an enclosed tennis/basketball court with a locker, benches, litter bin, a large mature fruit tree, a line of trees provided a natural border into a wilder, sloped meadow area, the long grass here had clear signs of regular/recent use due to visible footpaths.
- The tennis/basketball court had an unlocked door and could be used by the public free of charge.
- Close to the nominated site was a local primary school, small village green and village hall. In the local area there was also a pub and petrol station with shop that were a greater distance away, there did not appear to be any other parks or sizable open space in the village.
- The site had one point of access through a wide gate that was open and was enclosed on all sides by fencing and hedges and a beck at the bottom.
- There was a flyer produced by the nominating group pinned to a post at the entrance, it said "How do you use our community park? Help us evidence how much we value our park" and provided a QR code to a survey and details of how to return a paper copy.
- There were no buildings, facilities or public conveniences at the nominated site.
- The small section of unregistered land that was included in the nomination but was not part of the Land Registry Title was a grassy area within the enclosed part of the children's play area, there was no electricity substation or any other structure/fencing that defined this unregistered area.

#### **d) Community Value Consideration**

4.8 In terms of making a decision on this matter, the nomination, together with any additional information received within the agreed timescale, has been used to assess if the land nominated meets the definition of community value as detailed in the Localism Act 2011 (Section 88). As the nominated site is still in use, assessment is based on the conditions at Section 88 (1) and shown below:

“A building or other land in a local authority’s area is land of community value if in the opinion of the authority-

- (a) an actual current use of the building or land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and,
- (b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be a non-ancillary use of the building or land which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, although the use does not have to be the same.”

4.9 There are examples of public open spaces and play areas as having community value and assets have been listed on this basis by local authorities. Each nomination is however assessed individually, and it is for local authorities to determine whether each one meets the definition of community value as detailed in the Localism Act 2011.

#### **e) Owner Comments**

4.10 North Yorkshire Council’s Property Service were informed of the nomination in their capacity as owner of the Freehold of the site. In response to this, NYC’s Property Service confirmed they had no objection in principle to the nomination and queried a small area (possibly a former electricity substation) that was included in the nomination but was not part of the Title. This was investigated at the site visit and comments are at paragraph 4.7.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES**

5.1 The following consultees were notified of the nomination:

- NYC Planning
- Local Land Charges
- NYC Parks and Grounds
- NYC Property
- NYC Environmental Protection
- NYC Community Safety and CCTV
- NYC Food, Farming and Health & Safety
- NYC Licensing
- NYC Communities
- Local Councillor

## NYC PLANNING

5.2 The NYC Planning service were consulted and made the following comments:  
The planning use class for this site is F.2(c) Local community an area or place for outdoor sport or recreation, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms.

From a planning perspective, the site appears to have been in its current use since the early 1980s. This is supported by the planning history which is as follows:

- 1/17/72/PA 80/00097/FULL - use of land as playing field and recreation ground including access arrangements and land scaping and erection of pavilion – permitted
- 22/00285/FULL - Full Planning Permission for Change of Use of Part of Existing Recreational Ground to Create 15 Allotments – refused

The use as a recreation ground will have started following the granting of planning permission on 5th September 1980. The 2022 application was refused on 1st February 2023. The reasons for refusal were the loss of amenity space, and the increase in traffic movements associated with 15 allotments.

Copies of planning documents can also be found at the following links:

[80/00097/FULL | use of land as playing field and recreation ground including access arrangements and land scaping and erection of pavilion | Play Area St Lukes Close North Cowton Northallerton North Yorkshire](#)

[22/00285/FULL | Full Planning Permission for Change of Use of Part of Existing Recreational Ground to Create 15 Allotments | Recreational Ground St Lukes Close North Cowton North Yorkshire](#)

From speaking to colleagues, it sounds like the land is used by the school and other groups for events, and there doesn't appear to be many other areas in North Cowton available for comparable community use.

## LOCAL LAND CHARGES

5.2 A search for Local Land Charges was undertaken. There was one local land charge relating to the nominated site:

- A planning consent from 1980 for use of land as playing field and recreation ground including access arrangement and landscaping and erection of a pavilion

## NYC PARKS AND GROUNDS

5.3 The Parks and Grounds Service were consulted and provided confirmation that NYC cut the grass and inspect the equipment in the play area on behalf of the Parish Council (and charge them for these services). NYC Parks and Grounds did not cut the grass or undertake other maintenance outside of the play area.

## **NYC PROPERTY/ESTATES**

5.4 See owner comments at paragraph 4.10

## **NYC ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

5.5 The Environmental Protection service were consulted, and no comments were received.

## **NYC COMMUNITY SAFTY AND CCTV**

5.6 The Community Safety and CCTV service were consulted, and confirmed there were no concerns.

## **NYC FOOD, FARMING AND HEATH & SAFETY**

5.7 The Food, Farming and Health & Safety service were consulted, and no comments were received.

## **NYC LICENSING**

5.8 The Licensing service were consulted, and no comments were received.

## **NYC COMMUNITIES TEAM**

5.9 The relevant Communities Team for the area within the Localities service was consulted and provided the following feedback about the nomination:

- “I can confirm that we don’t have any additional knowledge/insight in this asset but would support the listing as from the application form it does appear to be a site that has extensive community use.”

## **LOCAL COUNCILLOR**

5.10 The Local Councillor was consulted, and no comments were received.

## **6.0 ASSESSMENT INFORMATION**

6.0 In assessing the community value of Land at North Cowton all information received has been considered.

### **Condition One**

**(a) an actual current use of the building or land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community**

#### **I. Actual current use that is not an ancillary use**

6.1 The actual uses were specified in the nomination and were typical of a public open space (playing fields, sports pitch/court, children’s play park and meadow). The term “ancillary use” is not defined in the Act, and it is left to each local authority to

determine. In the context of assessment, the frequency, regularity and whether uses are still in place have been identified as factors for consideration. It was thought that this condition meant that the community use had to be the primary use of the asset, but this was dispelled by Judge Warren in **Firoka (Oxford United Stadium) Limited v Oxford City Council** (9 May 2014), and the test is whether the use is significant, which does not require it to be the predominant use.

6.2 The nominated site is managed by North Cowton Parish Council, with North Yorkshire Council commissioned to undertake maintenance of the children's play area. The nomination indicates that the land nominated is used as a community playing field, community playpark, a public tennis/basketball court and community open green space. The nomination states "It is the sole recreational space for the village...and has been utilised by the residents of the village and local area for a range of recreational activities since 1981. It is used by hundreds of villagers every week."

6.3 The nomination provides evidence that the site supports a variety of regular and frequent uses, including:

- Community events – BBQs, fundraising 5-a-side football tournaments, fun runs, village sports day (a village tradition for around 100 years, taking place at the nominated site for 44 years), village rounders games, part of a community treasure hunt
- Home to Cowtons Football Club since 1981 – with goals and marked pitch during football season for matches, the site allows village spectators to watch and socialise
- Provides green space for the local primary school – two sports days are held here, provides a place for children and parents to socialise, used weekly as a learning and play area, tree-planting
- Facilities open to the public - children's play area, tennis/basketball court and meadow, space for picnics and children's birthday parties, tranquil and peaceful place to be in nature, dog-walking and dog-training, sledging and playing in the snow, walking and jogging, cycling (including learning to cycle), playing frisbee, practicing golf swings, Pokémon Go (augmented reality gaming), den-building, hide and seek, accessible green space for older people, a place for young people to socialise with friends

6.4 The nominating group provided the survey results which evidence the frequency and regularity of use of the site. There were 100 respondents to a question about how frequently the site was used, a breakdown of the responses is below:

- 45% weekly
- 19% daily
- 18% monthly
- 10% once a fortnight
- 6% yearly
- 2% less than once a year

6.5 The consultation response from Planning confirmed that the nominated site is designated a local community area or place for outdoor sport or recreation. This use class categorisation was current and had been in place since 1980. The consultation

response from NYC Communities noted that, “it does appear to be a site that has extensive community use”.

- 6.6 Some of the uses noted at 6.4 are longstanding annual events (village sports day), and some may have been historic events that are not currently taking place (treasure hunt and five-a-side football tournaments).
- 6.7 Some of the activities cited in the nomination are ancillary to the site’s main use as a recreation ground, such as the use of play equipment and sports facilities. However, there is also strong evidence of non-ancillary uses, including organised community events, some of which are longstanding traditions, and use by the local primary school for lessons. The site's versatility, accessibility, and uniqueness in the local area also demonstrate that it supports a wide range of non-ancillary activities. This is evidenced in the nomination, with substantial evidence (e.g., statements and photographs) showing that individuals and groups use the space freely for diverse purposes that promote enjoyment and enhance wellbeing.
- 6.8 Considering the information provided by the nominating group at 6.4, there are a significant number of regular uses of Land at North Cowton by residents, and the local football club and primary school. The nominating group provided evidence through a survey responses that represented around 20% of the local population of North Cowton, this demonstrated varied, frequent and regular usage of the site that covered both current and historic uses, and ancillary and non-ancillary uses. The information available demonstrates that the site is well-used on a weekly and daily basis. ***There is significant information provided to demonstrate its actual current uses as a recreation ground and public open space and there is sufficient information regarding non-ancillary use of the space, therefore this criteria is met.***

## **II. Furthering social wellbeing or social interests**

- 6.9 There are no clear definitions provided in the legislation as to what constitutes ‘social wellbeing/interests’ except that social interests can include ‘cultural, recreational and sporting interests’. The nomination lists a number of community activities and a variety of sporting and recreational uses (para. 6.4).
- 6.10 The nomination and supporting information, including survey results, provide significant evidence of a wide variety of social interests supported by the site. The survey asked people how they used the site, and the results are below:
- 68 respondents watched or participated in a community activity at the site
  - 58 respondents reported they used the space for socialising with friends or family
  - 48 played basketball or tennis
  - 47 played football
  - 22 cycled
- 6.11 The survey results included with the nomination also provided 67 statements about peoples’ memorable moments spent at the nominated site. These provide significant evidence, mainly from residents, about how the nominated land furthered the social wellbeing of the local community. Some specific examples are detailed below:
- “Wildlife near the beck, always unexpected encounters with nature”

- “Watching our kids on sports day. Watching them grow up playing in the same place myself and my friends did.”
- “I enjoyed just being in the lovely warm glow of the community atmosphere during the sports day.”
- “I mostly used the football pitch as part of the football team until I retired from football in my 40s and decided to take up golf instead. It was a great way of getting to know the village community and we all used to go to the pub afterwards for pie and peas.”
- “The area played an important part in my rehabilitation following an injury to my leg. The proximity of the park to my home was a great help in my recovery.”
- “Every moment is equally memorable! Good for my mental health.”

6.12 The nomination noted a range of social and community activities that were held at Land at North Cowton that further social wellbeing and interests. The various activities identified that further the social interests of the local community are listed at paragraph 6.4. In terms of social wellbeing is noted that the activities cited can:

- Enhance education
- Bring people together
- Reduce social isolation
- Develop respect for nature
- Instil environmental values in young people
- Have a positive impact on physical and mental health
- Offer a free way to partake in physical activities and sport, including after injury or for less-mobile people

6.13 It is noted from the nomination that residents really value the site, and the nominating group provided a wealth of evidence about the different interests and activities it supports. Several statements highlighted the benefit of having a traffic-free space, that is safe for children and dogs, with no fear of vehicles, and that there were no other similar places nearby. The site was also used by the local school for lessons and sports and hosted a local football team.

6.14 It is recognised in the ACV regime that “social interests” includes in particular cultural, recreational and sporting interests. The nomination identifies a large number and variety, of social interest uses. The evidence suggests Land at North Cowton site plays a significant role in furthering the social interests and wellbeing of the local community through a variety of activities that foster community cohesion, environmental appreciation, recreation and sports. There is evidence of benefit for the whole community and a contribution to improve their social wellbeing and social interests. ***The uses evidenced are therefore considered to further social wellbeing or social interests and this criteria is therefore met.***

### III. Local Community

6.15 The nominating group, Protect Our Park North Cowton (an unincorporated body), is open to anyone who lives in North Cowton or the surrounding area, it states its aims are:

- To protect, celebrate and seek to enhance the public spaces of North Cowton for the benefit of the whole community;
- To promote recreational activities on community land associated with North Cowton.

6.16 The North Cowton Playing Fields Association charity existed from 1981 to 2017, this demonstrates the community has a historic, long-term and consistent use and interest in the area (Registered Charity number: 511698).

6.17 The nominating group undertook a survey which received responses from 95 people in 11 days, representing around 20% of the population. A breakdown of who the responses were from is below:

- 77% were current residents
- 8% were past residents
- 6% had family or friends living in North Cowton
- 9% 'other' (including staff from the school and owners of second homes)

6.18 From the contents of survey response statements, it seems clear that residents highly value the site for its safe, traffic-free environment, which supports a range of community activities including school lessons, sports, and many other uses. It is seen as a unique and important space with no similar alternatives nearby. The nominating group included many photographs of people enjoying the site, these had been provided by the local community, and the willingness of local people to submit these contributes to evidencing how important it is to people locally.

6.19 From the nomination there are some groups within the local community to whom the nominated site seems particularly valuable, these include:

- North and South Cowton Community Primary School
- Home to Cowtons Football Club since 1981
- Local children of different ages and parents – safe, car-free area, particularly valuable to have this space to provide alternative to screentime for young people
- Wheelchair users – access is excellent (difficult to access the village hall) enabling grandparents to spend time with grand children
- Older people – gentle exercise and make use of benches

6.20 The nominating group provided numerous statements referring to the history and provenance of the site, such as: “When I was a child [born in 1950s] village sports day was held in what we referred to as ‘the cricket field’ at the bottom end of the village. This was a farm field then but was built on in the 1970s and thus the playing field was born. A huge fund-raising push (along with grants I believe) paid for the addition of the levelling and laying of the proper football pitch and the tennis court in the early 1980s.”

6.21 There is no definition or guidance as to what constitutes the ‘local community’. The judgement in **Pullan v Leeds City Council** (25 April 2016) was that, in relation to the Old Cock public house, the entire town of Otley was considered to be the local community.

6.22 There were several submissions from staff at the local primary school amongst the consultation responses, including the following statement from the Headteacher:

“The playing field and surrounding areas at North and South Cowton are invaluable to the school. As a small village school we have very limited playground space therefore we rely on this space. We use this weekly for P.E teaching and annually to hold our sports day. Without this space, we wouldn't be able to provide our P.E curriculum or hold events such as sports days and school and community fundraising events.

The children from our school use this space to socialise after school and during the school holidays which is always such a joy to see, given the increasing number of time children are spending indoors, using technology.

The playing field and surrounding courts are integral to the village of North and South Cowton.”

6.23 No other evidence was submitted from any other local community groups, businesses or organisations in relation to the nomination.

6.24 ***Based on the significant level of evidence provided by the nominating group it is reasonable to determine that the identification of the local community required by the legislation is the local community of North Cowton and surrounding areas, including the community of North & South Cowton Community Primary School and this criteria is therefore met.***

#### **IV. Condition One - Conclusion**

6.25 The Land at North Cowton is currently used for organised activities that go beyond ancillary functions, such as use of the play and sports equipment, informal play or dog walking. Notably, the site is used as venue for community events and is regularly used by the primary school for outdoor lessons and sports. These structured, purposeful uses demonstrate that the site serves as a key venue for non-ancillary community activities.

6.26 The site plays a vital role in supporting the social interests and wellbeing of the local community. It provides a space for recreational and sporting activities that bring people together, promote physical health, and foster a sense of belonging. The variety and frequency of these activities contribute significantly to community cohesion and individual wellbeing.

6.27 Survey responses and photographic evidence submitted by the nominating group show that the site is highly valued by the local community, including residents of North Cowton and surrounding areas, as well as North & South Cowton Community Primary School. The absence of similar spaces nearby enhances its importance, making it a unique and irreplaceable asset that adds value to local residents' daily life and shared identity.

6.28 For the reasons above the nomination demonstrates an actual current use of the building or land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community. **This criteria is therefore met.**

## Condition Two

- (b) It is realistic to think that there can continue to be a non-ancillary use of the building or land which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, although the use does not have to be the same.

### V. Condition Two – Assessment

- 6.29 This criteria requires the realistic assessment that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community. It is therefore the assessment of whether the current uses identified through the assessment of Condition One can realistically continue that is required.
- 6.30 The test does not require the likely future use to be determined but rather to determine whether future community use is one of a number of realistic options (**Worthy Developments v Forest of Dean DC** paragraphs 18 and 19, 29 September 2014).
- 6.31 The test does not require the likely future use of the relevant building to be determined but rather to determine whether future community use is one of a number of realistic options for the building (**Patel v London Borough of Hackney and Worthy Developments v Forest of Dean DC**).
- 6.32 In terms of realistic continued use the following information has been considered:
- The nominated site has been used by the residents of North Cowton and neighbouring areas for many years.
  - The site visit confirmed that the nominated site is kept in excellent condition and appeared well-managed and well-maintained.
  - Many local residents responded to a survey undertaken by the nominating group, the responses evidenced how the local community value and use the site regularly, and there is no reason to believe that this would not continue.
  - In the past there was a local charity to manage the recreation ground for the benefit of the inhabitants of North and South Cowton and neighbouring areas, 'North Cowton Playing Fields Association' this was established in 1981 and ceased in 2017.
  - The nominated site is owned by North Yorkshire Council who had no objections to the nomination. North Yorkshire Council had recently advertised the potential disposal of a section of the site, however it had been confirmed that, after the statutory consultation with the local community, that this would not go ahead.
  - A 2022 planning application to change the use of part of the site to allotments had been refused. The reasons for refusal were the loss of amenity space, and the increase in traffic movements associated with 15 allotments.
- 6.33 There has been long-term commitment and consistent use and interest in the area , as evidenced in the information provided by the nominating group and by the existence of the North Cowton Playing Fields Association charity, which was in place for 36 years. Consultation with the Communities team within Localities noted that “it does appear to be a site that has extensive community use”

- 6.34 The nomination focuses on the uses continuing to be same as they currently are. Although the nominating group did include some limited information about future plans, such as developing a community orchard, wildflower meadow, and improving accessibility for residents with limited mobility.
- 6.35 The owner (NYC) did not object to the nomination. The site is currently maintained by the parish council, with the local authority employed to look after the play area. From a planning perspective, the site appears to have been in its current use since the early 1980s and there are no current planning application for change of use, and a change of use application for part of the site was rejected in 2022.

## **VI. Condition Two - Conclusion**

- 6.36 Overall, the nomination evidenced many current uses that further social wellbeing and social interests in the community, and these are considered under the assessment of Condition One. The nomination and information available provided no evidence that suggested current uses cannot realistically continue. This is reaffirmed by the refusal of a planning change of use application for part of the site in 2022 (paragraph 6.32) and the decision by the owner, following consultation with the local community, to not proceed with a potential sale of part of the site (paragraph 6.32).
- 6.37 ***Based on the information available it is reasonable to determine that there can continue to be a non-ancillary use of the building or land which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, although the use does not have to be the same.***

## **VII. Overall Conclusion**

- 6.38 The aim of Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act and the Assets of Community Value Regulations is to encourage community-focused, local-led action to save and take over assets which are significant to them. The scheme is intended to give communities the opportunity to identify assets of community value and have them listed and, when they are put up for sale, have more time to raise finance and prepare a bid for them. These assets could include the village shop, community centre or pub but assessment is based on the evidence submitted and it is for the local authority to determine each nomination.
- 6.39 A valid nomination to register Land at North Cowton as an Asset of Community Value was received for assessment. The assessment is whether the details within the nomination, together with any additional information received, satisfy the two criteria as detailed in the Localism Act 2011(Section 88 (1)) see below:

***Condition one - There is an actual current use of the building or land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community***

**(See paragraphs 6.2 - 6.29)**

- 6.40 The information provided demonstrates significant actual uses of Land at North Cowton, that are non-ancillary, and further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community. ***This Condition is therefore met***

**Condition Two** - *It is realistic to think that there can continue to be a non-ancillary use of the building or land which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, although the use does not have to be the same*

**(See paragraphs 6.30 - 6.37)**

- 6.41 Land at North Cowton has been used by the local community for many years, and the site is currently maintained by the parish council, with the local authority employed to look after the play area. The nomination provided strong evidence of a variety of current community uses that further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and there is no reason to believe that these uses could not continue, noting that the use does not have to be the same as existing uses. ***This Condition is therefore met.***
- 6.42 The evidence demonstrates that the nomination meets the definition of community value as detailed in the Localism Act 2011. It is therefore recommended that Land at North Cowton is listed as an Asset of Community Value and placed on the North Yorkshire Council List of Successful Nominations.
- 6.43 The Council must keep the list under review and remove assets as soon as practicable considering any circumstances that may change the opinion that land/property listed is of community value.

## **7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 7.1 None. In considering the nomination for the Land at North Cowton the Council's responsibilities required by the Localism Act 2011 and The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012, are discharged.

## **8.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS**

- 8.1 If successful, the fact that land/property is listed as an Asset of Community Value may be taken into account as a material consideration for any future planning application.

## **9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 If the decision is to list the property, the owner can make a claim for compensation for which the Council is liable

## **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 If the property is placed on the List of Successful Nominations all parties will be advised of the outcome of the decision, and the council's reasoning for it.
- 10.2 The owner will be advised of the implications of the listing, and the right to seek a review of the council's decision. This is required to be within 8 weeks of the decision
- 10.3 The listing will be registered as a Local Land Charge against the property/land and an application made to the Land Registry to enter details on the title to the property/land

- 10.4 If the property/land is listed the council is required to apply to the Land Registry for entry of a restriction on the Land Register. This restriction will be in a form of wording in Schedule 4 to the Rules, as Form QQ. This is “No transfer or lease is to be registered without a certificate signed by a conveyancer that the transfer or lease did not contravene section 95(1) of the Localism Act 2011”. An owner of previously unregistered listed land, who applies to the Land Registry for first registration (or a mortgagee who applies for first registration on behalf of the owner), is required at the same time to apply for a restriction against their own title. The local authority is also required to apply to the Land Registry for cancellation of the restriction when it removes an asset from its list.
- 10.5 If the property/land is listed and the owner/leaseholder wishes to dispose of it, they must notify the council. Once this has taken place an interim moratorium period (6 weeks) will apply where disposal of the property may not take place (except if sold to a community interest group which can take place at any time). If, before the end of the interim moratorium period the council receives a written request from a community interest group to be treated as a potential bidder then a full moratorium period applies. Disposal may then not take place within 6 months from the date the Council receives notification from the owner (except if sold to a community interest group).
- 10.6 The owner/leaseholder of the land is North Yorkshire Council.
- 10.7 When a listed asset is disposed of, and a new owner applies to the Land Registry to register change of ownership of a listed asset, they will therefore need to provide the Land Registry with a certificate from a conveyancer that the disposal (and any previous disposals if this is the first registration) did not contravene section 95(1) of the Localism Act (the moratorium requirements).

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no equalities implications.

## **12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no climate change implications.

## **13.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 13.1 The owner and other parties will be informed of the decision.

## **14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 14.1 The evidence demonstrates that the nomination for Land at North Cowton, St Luke's Close, North Cowton, DL7 0HR meets the definition of community value as detailed in the Localism Act 2011.

## **15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Head of Localities:

- (iii) Determines that the nomination for Land at North Cowton (NYCACV0063) is successful and meets the definition of community value as detailed in the Localism Act 2011
- (iv) It should be placed on the North Yorkshire Council Assets of Community Value List of Successful Nominations

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Nomination form, additional Information provided by nominating group and site plan

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Localism Act 2011

The Assets of Community Value Regulations (England) 2012

Community Right to Bid: Non-statutory advice note for local authorities

Report to

Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Localities

County Hall

Northallerton

*22 August 2025*

Report Author – Claire Wilson & Charlotte Large (Devolution & Community Rights Officers)

Presenter of Report – Claire Wilson & Charlotte Large (Devolution & Community Rights Officers)

Website/references:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2421/regulation/5/made>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/>

<https://www.northcowtonpc.org.uk/>



# Community Right to Bid: Assets of Community Value

## Nomination Form

(Office use only) ACV Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1: About your organisation

#### 1A. Contact Details

Please provide basic contact details for your organisation

<b>Name of the organisation</b>	Protect Our Park North Cowton
<b>Organisation postal address</b>	North Cowton Village Hall, Holywell Ln, North Cowton, Northallerton DL7 0HE
<b>Organisation website</b>	n/a
<b>Named contact for the organisation</b>	██████████
<b>Position of named contact within the organisation</b>	Coordinator
<b>Telephone number for named contact</b>	██████████
<b>Email address for named contact</b>	████████████████████

## 1B. Organisation type

Please place an 'X' in the middle column against the appropriate organisation type

Organisation Type	X	Registration number of charity/company (if applicable)
<p><b>Parish Councils</b></p> <p>This may be for an asset in its own area, or in the neighbouring Parish Council area</p>		
<p><b>Neighbouring Parish Councils</b></p> <p>If the Parish Council borders an un-parished area, then they may nominate an asset within the neighbouring District Council or Unitary Council.</p>		
<p><b>Un-incorporated groups</b></p> <p>Nominations can be accepted from any un-incorporated group with membership of at least 21 local people who appear on the electoral roll within the local authority, or a neighbouring local authority. This will for instance enable nomination by a local group formed to try to save an asset, but which has not yet reached the stage of acquiring a formal charitable or corporate structure.</p> <p><b>Please complete additional form in Appendix 1 if this applies to you.</b></p>	X	
<p><b>Neighbourhood Forums</b></p> <p>There can only be one neighbourhood forum for an area and the way they are set up is clearly defined by the Council as a planning authority. The procedure for becoming a neighbourhood forum is set out in Section 61F of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.</p> <p><b>Please complete additional form in Appendix 1 if this applies to you.</b></p>		
<p><b>Community interest groups with a local connection</b></p> <p>These must have one or more of the following structures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A charity</li> <li>• A community interest company</li> <li>• A company limited by guarantee that is non-profit distributing</li> <li>• An Industrial and Provident Society that is non-profit distributing/Community Benefit Society</li> </ul> <p><b>Please complete additional form in Appendix 1 if this applies to you.</b></p>		

**1C. Local connection**

Additionally, your organisation is required to have a local connection. This means that its activities are wholly or partly concerned with the administrative area of North Yorkshire or a neighbouring local authority. Please provide details about your organisation’s local connection.

Details regarding local connection
<p>All members of our organisation live in the village of North Cowton in North Yorkshire. The activities of our organization relate to the community spaces in North Cowton.</p>

Finally, please provide, if available, a copy of your organisation’s rules/constitution. Please indicate which documents you intend to provide below by placing an ‘X’ against the relevant document type.

Type of document	X
Memorandum and Articles of Association (for a company)	
Trust Deed (for a trust)	
Constitution and/or rules (for other organisations)	X
Other	

## Section 2: About the asset

### Section 2A: Basic details


Please provide basic details about the asset

<b>Type of land/building (for example, pub, shop)</b>	Community open space / playing field / recreation grounds
<b>Name of the premises</b>	North Cowton playing fields, recreations grounds, open space, playpark and tennis court
<b>Address of the premises</b>	Recreational Ground, St Luke's Close, North Cowton, North Yorkshire DL7 0HR

In addition to the above information, please attach a clear plan which identifies the land/buildings you wish to nominate with a line drawn around the boundary of the area you wish to nominate. This could be a Title Plan from Land Registry, or any other map which gives us enough detail to identify the site.

### Section 2B: Ownership

Please provide details about the asset's ownership, if it is known to you

<b>Name of the owner</b>	North Yorkshire Council
<b>Address of the owner</b>	County Hall, Racecourse Ln, Northallerton DL7 8AD
<b>Contact details for the owner</b>	0300 131 2131
<b>Name of any other occupier</b>	North Cowton Parish Council
<b>Name of any other person with an interest in the premises</b>	
<b>Address of any other person with an interest in the premises</b>	
<b>Contact details for any other person with an interest in the premises</b>	<a href="mailto:clerkncpc@gmail.com">clerkncpc@gmail.com</a> ; 

## Section 2C: The premises as an Asset of Community Value

Please explain why you feel the land/premises meets the definition of an Asset of Community Value. Provide as much information as possible. Please note, it is likely that these comments will be shared with the asset owner.

### ACV Definition

A building or other land in a local authority's area is considered land of community value if, in the opinion of the authority:

- (a) an actual current use of the building or other land – that is not an ancillary use – furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community; and
- (b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be a non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.

If there is no current use:

- (c) The definition is extended to land which has furthered the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community in the recent past, and which it is realistic to consider will do so again during the next five years.

How does the current main use of the building/land – or a use in the recent past – further the social interests or social well-being of the local community?
<p>This land includes a community playing field, a community playpark, a public tennis/basketball court and community open green space. It is the sole recreational site in the village, was bought by the Council by Compulsory Purchase Order in order to create a recreational space for the village and has been utilized by residents of the village and local area for a range of recreational activities since 1981. It is used by hundreds of villagers every week.</p> <p>The land has several current main uses to enhance the social interests and wellbeing of the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All areas provide space which allow children and young people to explore and play freely and safely on open green spaces.</li><li>- All areas are spaces which allow children, young people and adults to socialize with friends, through organized games, dog walking, picnics and meeting up in a community area. Benches are located across the area to increase these opportunities.</li><li>- The playpark is an intergenerational area which supports play between grandparents, parents, carers and children.</li><li>- The area is utilized by North Cowton Primary School as their main playing field, also as a learning space for cross-curricular learning.</li><li>- All open green spaces are utilized for numerous village occasions, including Fun Runs, sports days and Cowton FC home football games.</li><li>- The multiple sports areas promote physical fitness and team games, open green spaces provide locations for villagers to walk, enhancing physical fitness.</li><li>- The space includes multiple mature hedgerows and trees, providing a calming natural environment which supports positive mental wellbeing.</li></ul>

**Please explain how there can continue to be a main use of the building/land which will further the social interests or social wellbeing of the local community, whether or not this is in the same way as before.**

The use of the land will remain unchanged once registered as an Asset of Community Value.

The land has several current main uses to enhance the social interests and wellbeing of the community:

- All areas provide space which allow children and young people to explore and play freely and safely on open green spaces.
- All areas are spaces which allow children, young people and adults to socialize with friends, through organized games, dog walking, picnics and meeting up in a community area. Benches are located across the area to increase these opportunities.
- The playpark is an intergenerational area which supports play between grandparents, parents, carers and children.
- The area is utilized by North Cowton Primary School as their main playing field, also as a learning space for cross-curricular learning.
- All open green spaces are utilized for numerous village occasions, including Fun Runs, sports days and Cowton FC home football games.
- The multiple sports areas promote physical fitness and team games, open green spaces provide locations for villagers to walk, enhancing physical fitness.
- The space includes multiple mature hedgerows and trees, providing a calming natural environment which supports positive mental wellbeing.

**If not currently used for the purposes listed above, is it realistic to think that within five years the building/land can be brought back into a use that furthers the social interests or wellbeing of the local community, whether or not in the same way as before?**

The land is currently used in the way listed above.

### Section 3: Checklist and Declaration

In addition to the form, please confirm any attachments if provided.

Document	X
Copy of organisation's constitution/rules/other	X
A clear plan defining the land/premises being nominated	X

Finally, in order to confirm that the information contained within this nomination form is correct and complete and that the required documents are attached, an appropriate authorised officer must sign the below declaration.

We can accept electronic signatures.

Full name	[REDACTED]
Signature	[REDACTED]

Please return this form and any accompanying materials to the appropriate e-mail address below:

[AssetsofCommunityValue.NYC@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:AssetsofCommunityValue.NYC@northyorks.gov.uk)

Before completing this form, please check the guidance notes at the end of the document. If you require any assistance, please contact [AssetsofCommunityValue.NYC@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:AssetsofCommunityValue.NYC@northyorks.gov.uk)

#### Privacy notice

Please retain a copy of this form for your records and should your circumstances or contact details change then please let the appropriate contact officer know.

This information will be held in accordance with NYC Privacy Notices.

NYCACV0063 – Land at North Cowton – Site Plan (yellow edge)



The nominated site is the area edged in yellow

## **Evidence supporting Protect Our Park's Asset of Community Value application, for recreational playing field area at North Cowton**

### **Context**

North Cowton is a small, rural village in the north of North Yorkshire. It is roughly equidistant from Northallerton, Richmond and Darlington. At the time of the 2011 census, the village had 503 residents living in 223 dwellings within the parish.

The village has a ranking of 2 - the second worst - in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings under the decile '*Barriers to Housing and Services*' because it is serviced by so few amenities and has poor transport connections to other locations. There are only 7 buses in and out of the village every day, no shop and the main indoor community venue is the volunteer-run village hall which opens for classes and events. As such, the village is closely knit and the recreational space provided by the section marked in yellow forms a key area for promoting the social wellbeing and interests of our village residents.

The area marked has been in use as a community recreation ground officially since 1981, but was used by locals long before this as an area for playing and socialising in. It is owned as Freehold land by North Yorkshire Council but the majority of the site (excluding the play park) has been leased since 1981 by North Cowton Parish Council for the benefit of the community.

As well as use by residents, the area forms one of the largest green open spaces in the vicinity and therefore attracts users from a wider geographical area.



The area also hosts a variety of regular community events, is home to Cowtons FC and provides green space for the village primary school for a range of subjects, from sports to science and for play times, as they have no green space adjoining the school.

The area is utilised for various purposes and consists of:

- A tennis and basketball court
- A children's play area
- A playing field, including marked out pitch during football season, with football goals

- A meadow



On the opening of the area, a charity was established to recognise the importance of it to the community and to raise funds to support its development. Although this ceased to operate in 2017, this demonstrates the community has a long-term and consistent use and interest in the area. Below is the information obtainable from the Charity Commission website:

## NORTH COWTON PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

Charity number: 511698 Removed charity

[Charity overview](#)

**Registration history:**

21 August 1981: Standard registration  
 30 June 2017: Removed (Ceased to exist)

**Charitable objects**

A RECREATION GROUND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE PARISHES OF NORTH COWTON AND SOUTH COWTON AND NEIGHBOURING AREAS IN THE COUNTY OF NORTH YORKSHIRE

This organisation was led by local resident [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has provided the following supporting statement:

*“Our use of the Playing Field is very much now restricted to attending of events involving grandchildren. However, I would like to comment on previous involvement and also on*

wheelchair access which is now very relevant though I realise now how little attention I paid to this previously.

When I was a child (born 195█) village sports day was held in what we referred to as 'the cricket field' at the bottom end of the village. This was a farm field then but was built on in the 1970s and thus the playing field was born. A huge fund raising push (along with grants I believe) paid for the addition of the levelling and laying of the proper football pitch and the tennis court in the early 1980s.

In the early days of the tennis court there were annual knockout tournaments for children and adults (not high standard at all – just for fun). The men's football team had been formed mid 70s and the first few years their home matches were played on farm land near East Cowton but after the playing field improvements that became their home.

█ previously managed the village men's football team where they played their home games on the playing field main area (with up to 80 spectators). Training would take place on the main pitch but Fitness training was often on the bank (to the right of the playground area looking from the pitch) as the sloped area was good for this.

In the very late 80s and 90s the school had a football team. The then lady headmistress wasn't really interested in football and Tuesday nights developed into 'Football Training' night which my husband, █, led. From April to September primary school children from the village would meet there and after some of them went on to secondary school they begged to continue so it became juniors first followed by seniors with dozens of parents watching – things are harder to do informally now with the advent of safeguarding checks (not wrong) insurance etc.

I was previously (c. early 1990s to mid 2000s I think) unofficial 'Chair' of the Playing Field. This entailed the following;

Organising the annual sports day at the Playing Field followed by tea, fancy dress, tug of war and fair in other parts of the village.

We obtained the Basketball Net in a promotion by Sport England and my brother, a village contractor, erected it voluntarily for us.

We would erect the tennis net in early Summer and remove it in late Summer (it was stored in our garage so could be obtained on request at other times).

We would purchase and replace both tennis and basketball nets as required.

In the early 90s there was a French Exchange at the village primary school and a school from the French Alps came for a week. The children all stayed in family homes (the return visit never actually happened as there were too many concerns about the

distance and the lack of safeguarding checks.) The Playing Field was very much the 'Hub' of this visit with organised rounders and football games in the evenings.

Rounders games became a regular event following an organised event that was part of VE commemorations in 1995 and proved very popular and the school secretary would arrange for the District Council to do the markings for this on the main pitch and loan bats

Bonfire Nights with bonfire and fireworks used to take place at the bottom of the Playing Field with a horse box trailer used as a refreshment stall. Children from the village would use a cart to collect anything for the bonfire and would build a 'guy' for the top. This stopped in the 90s with the advent of Health and Safety concerns and costly insurance which wasn't a previous consideration.

Fund raisers and other events took place then and still do now at the Playing Field – Everything from BBQs, Mixed Football matches, Fun Runs etc.

One of the excellent aspects of the Playing Field has always been it been a traffic free space where there is no fear of vehicles. Children especially can get car free safe exercise and play away from screens.

The Council have always been good at the provision of up to date play equipment and safety features alongside them.

Another aspect I would particularly like to mention is wheelchair access. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The access to the Playing Field is excellent (unlike a lot of village community areas eg steps to the village hall, heavily sloping central village green). To actually access the main area you need to go through the small play area then the reduction in the slope allows this. Viewing of sports days, matches etc can be done from the top of the bank but a child in a wheelchair could access the playing field preventing some exclusion. The access to the actual play equipment area is also good [REDACTED].

More recently, [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] 60 plus years living in North Cowton and the previous 20 plus in South Cowton) from retirement at age 80 used walk around the block regularly but when this became too far in his 90s he would walk around the playing field instead and make use of the bench.

I feel and have always felt that the Playing Field is a real asset to the village and the local community.

[REDACTED]

## **Community Survey**

Protect Our Park North Cowton ran a community survey to ask residents about their use of our community park. In just 11 days, 95 people responded to the survey, equating to 19% of the population of North Cowton.

The survey asked locals how they used the area, how frequently they used it and what their memorable moments of using the area were.

Locals broadly refer to these areas during their comments about memorable moments of using the space below and as such, we have colour coordinated their responses to show which area their memories relate to. This demonstrates the importance of the whole site for the community.

77% of respondents were current residents, 8% past residents, 6% had family or friends who live in the village currently and 9% were in the 'other' category, including respondents who work at North and South Cowton Community Primary School or who had second homes in the village.

This document is interspersed with photographs provided by community members to demonstrate their varied and continued use of the space for their social wellbeing and interests.

## **Social Wellbeing**

During a survey of users of the space marked in yellow, most of which were residents, the following ways in which the site is used for social wellbeing were highlighted:

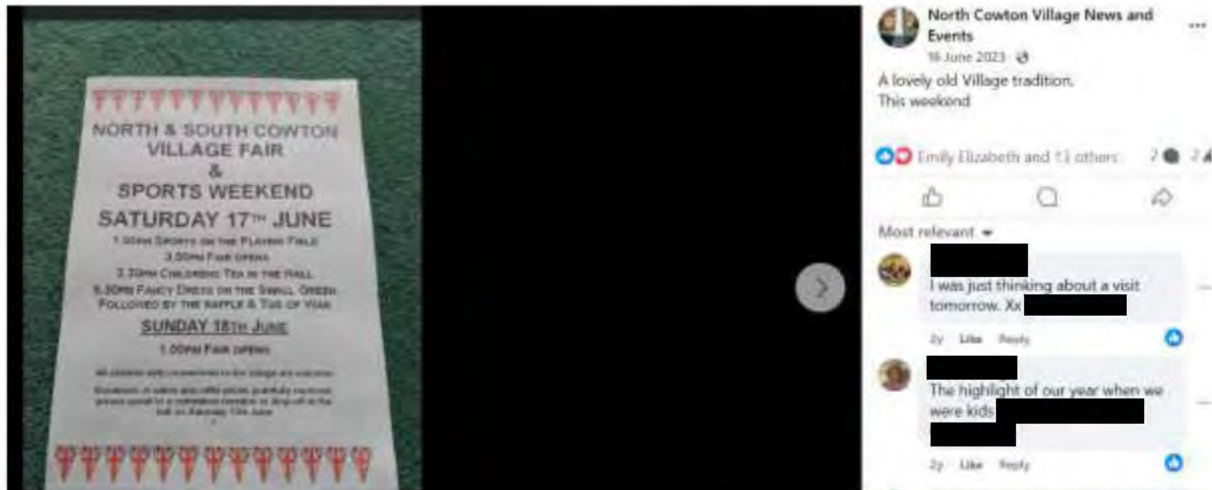


**72% of users stated they had watched or participated in a community activity.**

Community activities that have taken place on the site include:

### Village Sports Day

The community village sports day has been running in the village for over 100 years and



moved to the area marked in yellow once it opened in 1981. The village sports day was mentioned by **26% of respondents** in our survey of villagers as their **memorable moment** using the area. The day consists of races for adults and children which brings the whole village together on the site for fun sports and social time.





The above trophy has been awarded on Sports Day in the village since the 1960's, although we know that it dates back to several decades before this.

### School Sports Days

North and South Cowton Community Primary School hold two sports days on this site - one for the village primary school and one for the village primary school and partner federation primary school Melsonby - the two schools have a small number of pupils and work closely together to enhance children's wellbeing and social opportunities. The field gives children and parents of both schools the space to socialise with each other).



## Village Rounders

This took place to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and involved residents from across the village. However, other rounders events have taken place on a regular basis on the field for many years.



Monday 8th May  
Family rounders match - 2pm at the playing field.  
Followed by...  
Coronation themed quiz at The Herdsman Pub from 5pm.  
Teams of 6 maximum. Burgers and hotdogs on sale. £2 entry per person. Please book a table with The Herdsman for this.



## Cowtons FC

The village football team have played on the pitch on this site since 1981, using it as their home ground and many villagers have played on the team. These football games also bring village spectators to watch and socialise with each other. Cowtons FC are one of the oldest teams in the Hambleton Football Combination League, having been in existence since 1977.



During games, many families use the pitch run-off area as spectating space to allow children to stand back safely from the edge of the pitch.



## Treasure Hunt

A community treasure hunt organised by a village resident took place for a number of years. Several of the clues were sited across the park area.

## Use by North and South Cowton Community Primary School

The site is used by **North and South Cowton Community Primary School** as both a learning and play area. The school have utilised it for formal learning occasions including PE lessons and cross-curricular subjects, including science and geography.

**Statement from [REDACTED], Headteacher, North and South Cowton Community Primary School:**



*“The playing field and surrounding areas at North and South Cowton are invaluable to the school. As a small village school we have very limited playground space therefore we rely on this space. We use this weekly for P.E teaching and annually to hold our sports day. Without this space, we wouldn't be able to provide our P.E curriculum or hold events such as sports days and school and community fundraising events.*

*The children from our school use this space to socialise after school and during the school holidays which is always such a joy to see, given the increasing number of time children are spending indoors, using technology.*

*The playing field and surrounding courts are integral to the village of North and South Cowton.”*



[REDACTED], member of staff at North and South Community Primary School responded to the community survey to state that the school utilise the area on a weekly basis. Her memorable moment of using the site is: *'We hold our PE lessons there due to no outdoor area at school.'*

**This image demonstrates how key an area the park is to local children, who are here using it as a reference point in a geography lesson.**



## Fun Run

An annual Fun Run takes place here, organised by the Friends of North and South Cowton Primary School. This raises key funds to support the children of the village.



## Fundraising 5 a side Tournament

A five a side tournament to raise funds for the school took place annually here between 1998 and 2013. It welcomed up to ten teams aged 15+ to take part and teams came from Middlesbrough FC, BBC radio, local villages and North Cowton. On the day, up to 200 people would be watching and participating. Cowtons FC was the last team to win the trophy in 2013.

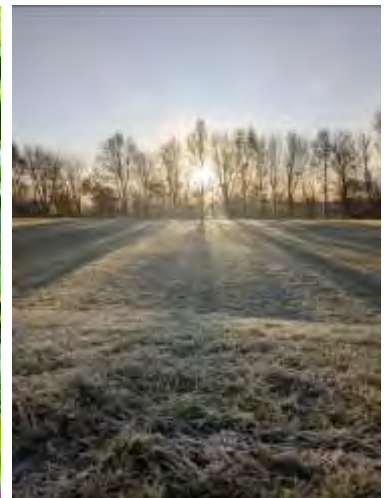


Photos provided by [REDACTED], Manager of Cowtons FC.

## Social Wellbeing

**61%** of respondents to our community survey say they have **socialised with friends or family** in this space

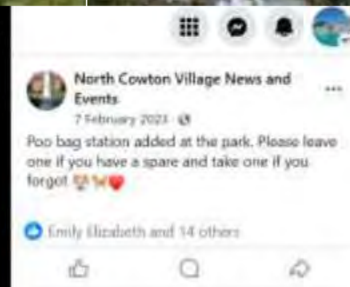
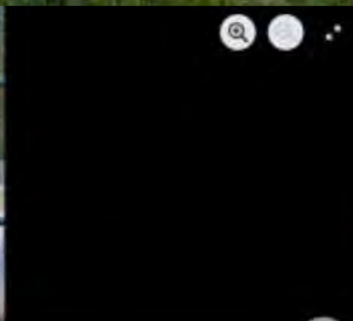
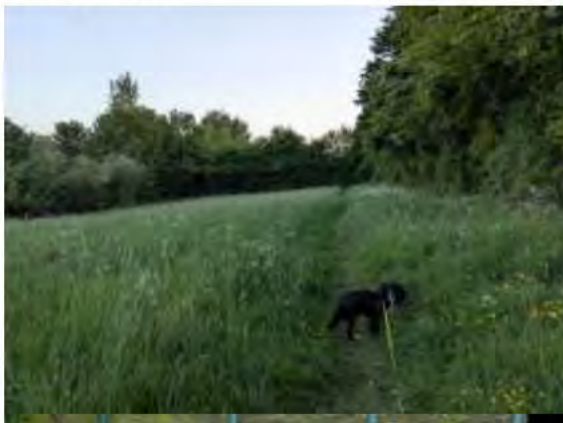
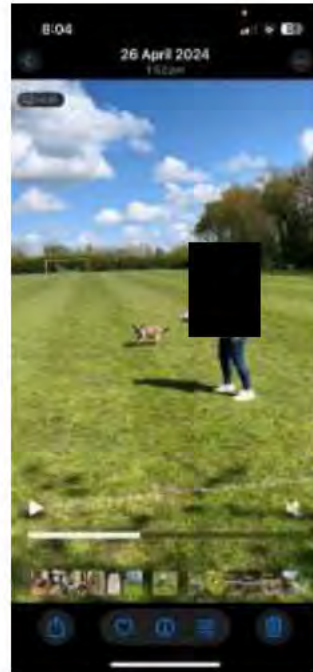
- Users have stated that when visitors come to see them in the village, they often take them to this area as it is a good social space to meet up, whilst children can play safely. One user also remarked that it was the main meeting point for mums who picked their children up from primary school and took them to play in the park whilst they could have a catch up.
- Many users said they came to use the site for peace and tranquillity. The area is the largest open area in the village. There is no natural circular public footpath in the village, so the site lends itself to walking. 46% of respondents have used the site for the natural peace and tranquillity, supporting our community's wellbeing.
- Multiple residents stated that they enjoy observing nature, especially in the meadow space. To the side are a variety of wildlife/nature photographs submitted by residents. 56% of users stated they enjoyed watching wildlife and nature here.
- Many respondents told us they had picnics in the area (30%).



- One elderly resident told us that, although they could not join in, they enjoyed watching others enjoy the area.
- Several residents have mentioned using the area for a child's birthday gathering or party.

## Dog Walking

The area is very popular with dog walkers. **57% of respondents to our survey have stated that they walk their dog and 38% have trained their dog across the area.** Our local residents sent us a variety of lovely photographs of their dog walks across the entire site from the pitch through the meadow and back up and around the sledging hill. The path is such a regular walkway that, without the use of a grass cutter in the meadow, the regular use has formed a worn track which allows passageway through the field. Residents have set up a popular poo bag station at the entrance to the site for those who may be caught short.



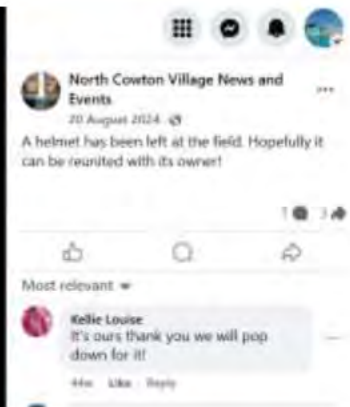
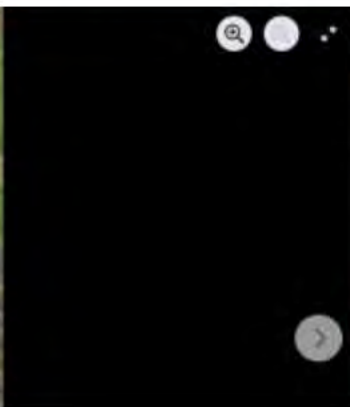
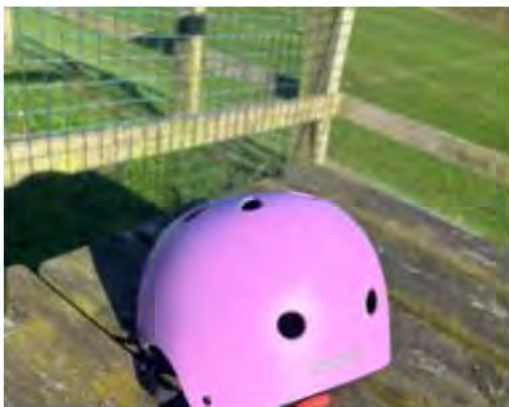


### **Social Interests**

The site is the only recreational site in the village and as such is extremely popular for a number of different activities, many of which can be viewed in resident's feedback (below). These include:

- Sledding
- Snow and ice play
- A huge variety of sporting activities, from team sports to individual fitness. Some which have been mentioned in our community survey include:
  - Football
  - Tennis
  - Basketball
  - Jogging
  - Walking
  - Cycling
  - Rounders / baseball
  - Playing frisbee
  - Practising golf swings
  - Snowboarding!





## Children's Play Park

72% of users told us they had accompanied children whilst playing in the area. There is a playpark on the site which is very popular with both young and older children. Young people regularly use the swings at the park and the area to socialise with their friends later in the evening, whilst the area both inside and outside of the playpark fence is popular with smaller children through the day and after school.



Nearby trees and bushes bordering the playpark create natural dens for safely exploring the natural world through free play whilst still being visible. The slide in the park was mentioned by two users as being the first slide their child ever used and another parent told us that the swings here was their child's first playground experience, making it a place where children are learning to develop both physically and socially and where families are creating memories.



The site has also been used by fitness groups for exercising and by the village WI group, who used the site after Covid lockdown restrictions were lifted as a safe outdoor ventilated space for gathering together to enable social distancing. Another user mentioned that the area was vital for her when recovering from a leg injury.

### **Computer Gaming**

The site is also a Pokemon Go! PokéStop. Pokémon Go is a location-based augmented reality game that uses a device's GPS to track movement and overlay virtual Pokémon and gameplay elements onto the real world. Players can find, capture, train, and battle Pokémon at real-world locations like PokéStops. During Covid, the game was very popular and several of the residents mentioned this in the survey.

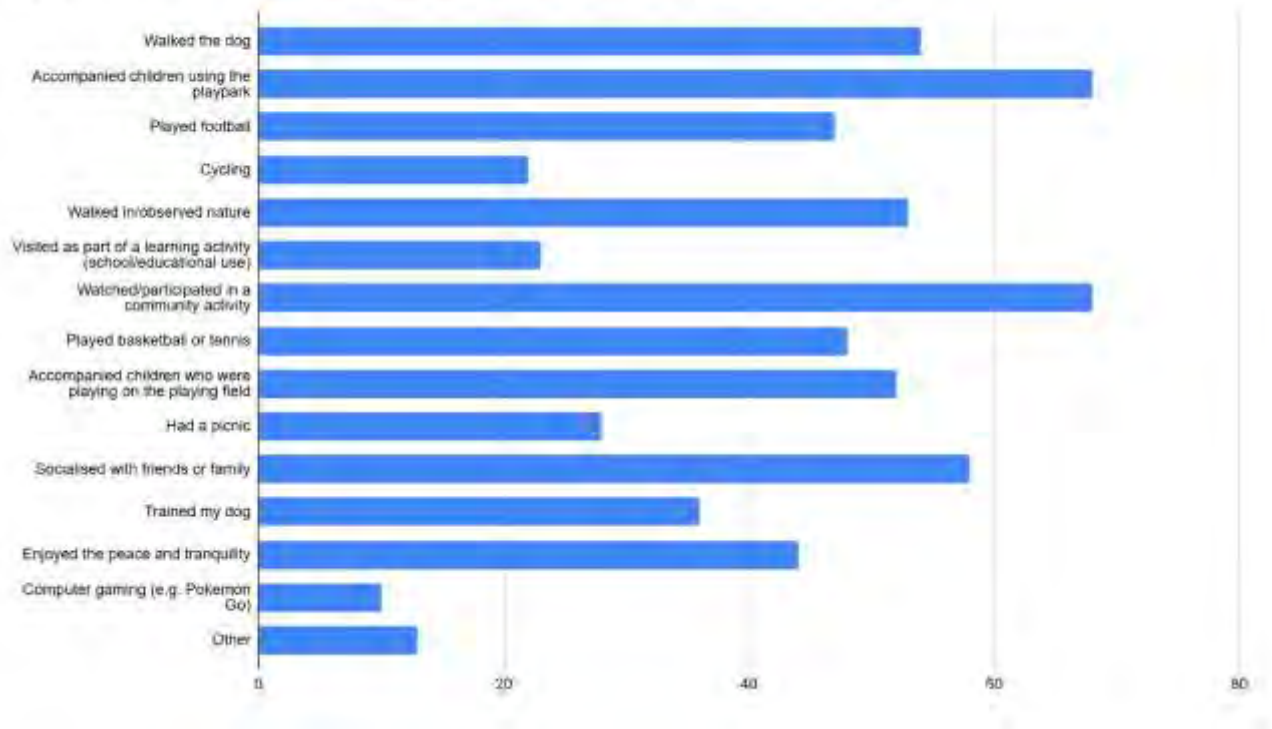
## How does our community say they use this space?

The below information has been collated from respondents to the community survey mentioned above. Residents had the opportunity to respond to a survey of how they utilise the area both online and on paper.

The table and graph below demonstrate the vast array of ways in which our community have stated they utilise the area:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Walked the dog	54	56.8
Accompanied children using the playpark	68	71.6
Played football	47	49.5
Cycling	22	23.2
Walked in/observed nature	53	55.8
Visited as part of a learning activity (school/educational use)	23	24.2
Watched/participated in a community activity	68	71.6
Played basketball or tennis	48	50.5
Accompanied children who were playing on the playing field	52	54.7
Had a picnic	28	29.5
Socialised with friends or family	58	61.1
Trained my dog	36	37.9
Enjoyed the peace and tranquility	44	46.3
Computer gaming (e.g. Pokemon Go)	10	10.5
Other	13	13.7

A graph to show how survey respondents use the community park in North Cowton



‘Other uses’ mentioned included den building, running and organised fitness activities and birthday parties.

**How often does our community use this area?**

How frequently do you use the area?	No. of respondents	%
Daily	18	19
Weekly	43	45
Once a fortnight	9	10
Monthly	17	18
Yearly	6	6
Less frequently than once a year	2	2

This survey demonstrates that this community area is used regularly by the majority of the community.

### **What are residents' memorable moments of using our community park?**

During our community survey, we asked residents what their most memorable moments were of using the community park. The varied answers reflect the various important ways that the space supports our community's wellbeing and social interests, from quiet reflection, to snowboarding practice. Some of these responses are colour coordinated to show the area on the map that is referred to in the memory, if a specific area is mentioned. This illustrates the great variety of uses and the importance to the community of the whole site.

Respondents have had their full names and addresses removed but these can be shared if required:



*'One example of how I use the area is at community sports day which takes place here every year and is organised by the local community.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton



*'I use it regularly as I catch up with mums after school whilst the children play'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Watching children's school and village sports days'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton




*'My son learnt to ride a bike in the tennis court. We held my youngest child's birthday at the park where we had games and celebrated with friends and family. We attend the village sports day each summer which is a lot of fun and helped us as a family integrate in to the village. When friends and family from outside the village visit us we always take them to the park to entertain the children, get outdoors and enjoy the open space.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'Annual village sports day'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton




*'Seeing my granddaughter climb the big slide and whoosh down on her own for the first time. The joy on her face was wonderful'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Used to watch my grandchildren play there. Running about totally safe.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton


 *'I held my son's birthday party on the football field. We had a picnic and as part of the party we used the basketball court, they played hide and seek in the bottom field, they used the play park equipment, played football and cycled around the pitch and played at rolling down the sloping grassed area to the side of the play park. It provided a safe space for 12 kids to party and let off some steam.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'My most memorable moments are family picnics with grandchildren and the children's sports day'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Enjoying sports days whilst my children attended the primary school, walking our friends dog, playing with my children at weekends, taking my nieces and nephews to play on the field and open space. I have many memorable occasions using the public space which is hugely important to the enjoyment of our community areas.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton


 *'Taking my daughter with her grandparents to the park for the first time'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'My family (myself included, from being a child, along with my brother, nephew and nieces and now my daughter) have played in the park and surrounding areas and on the sports facilities since the mid 1970's!'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

 *'We have lived in the village for 18 years. Our children have grown up here and we have used the area on many many occasions. Most memorable would be teaching both our girls to ride their bikes by using the court, hilly area and football pitch.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Getting a well-deserved second place in the 3-legged race. Watching school sports day.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton


*'Lots of days spent with school as part of my job. This area is invaluable to the children at the local primary school'* – [REDACTED] Deputy Head, North and South Cowton Community Primary School

 *'School sports day when I was little & my little boys first time on a swing'* – [REDACTED]  
former resident


*'Taking children and dogs on many visits. WI used it for a meeting after Covid.'* – [REDACTED]  
North Cowton

*'Playing with my dog and grandchildren when they were younger'* – [REDACTED] North  
Cowton

*'Village events sports days/ football'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

 *'Watching my son playing football, both children doing sports day, taking grand children down and playing on the swings etc.'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Annual Village Sports Day'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

 *'I enjoy looking at the flora and fauna and seeing others enjoying the space'* – [REDACTED]  
North Cowton

*'Last year practising snowboarding at 7.30am before going to work! Several other 'snow days' when school was shut multiple village families met at the park to sledge, build snowmen etc.'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'School sports day, community fun day and sledging with the village during Christmas holiday.'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Many memorable occasions! Village sports day, sledging in the winter.'* – [REDACTED] North  
Cowton

*'I really enjoyed watching my granddaughter in the community sports day recently. I enjoyed just being in the lovely warm glow of the community atmosphere during the sports day.'* - [REDACTED] Chesterfield

*'Sports day is a community event one weekend in June every year which is for all, children and adults and inclusive of everyone in the village. You basically cheer anyone on who is taking part. Bonfire night which used to be every year until the early 2000's with funds raised by the village for fireworks, food cooked by the villagers and a large bonfire made by the village was a great occasion which finally had to stop when the insurance was practically more than the cost of the fireworks!'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton


*'Sitting on the bench watching birds with my dog during lockdown'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton


*'Children growing up and playing and during covid the area was vital for our families mental health as open space'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton


*'Using the space with our puppy to train recall'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'All occasions are memorable as it is a serene and peaceful spot.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Children's games, sports and activities sessions.'* - [REDACTED] Teacher, North and South Cowton Community Primary School

 *'I teach PE here and we have our sports day here also'* - [REDACTED] Teacher, North and South Cowton Community Primary School

 *'Football in the snow on the field above the pitch and to the side of the park'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

 *'Every moment is equally memorable! Good for my mental health.'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'One of the most memorable occasions was the soccer 7's football events we organised to raise funds for the local primary school' – [REDACTED] North Cowton*

*'Annual sports day, all the children and families together. Making memories, community, friendships and more'. – [REDACTED]*

*'I have taken many a lunch break at the park, enjoying the sounds of nature and the peaceful surroundings.' – [REDACTED] North Cowton*

*'Playing football with my dad and my mates, villages sports days' – [REDACTED] North Cowton*

*'Watching my two young sons run in the fun run.' – [REDACTED] North Cowton*

*'I like to play rounders/baseball with my friends when they visit' – [REDACTED] (under 16), North Cowton*

*'Bonfire night used to be great round there when the village put on a display' – [REDACTED], North Cowton*

*'Playing in the North Cowton team in soccer sevens competitions over many years and always coming last!' – [REDACTED] North Cowton*

*'Played here myself as a child and then brought our two children here throughout their childhood encouraging my sons football and training my dogs' [REDACTED] North Cowton*

*'Fun run, village and school sports day, playing in the path through the trees in the bottom area of the field, sledging in the snow, playing on the play park equipment and Building an igloo with snow.' – [REDACTED] (under 16), North Cowton*


*'Having lived here all my life having used the playing field as a child and watched my children grow up and use the field for activities with their friends and exercising and training our dogs it is a valuable asset to the village' – [REDACTED], North Cowton*


*'To watch Cowton's football team.' – [REDACTED], North Cowton*

*'The first place I felt confident to let my puppy off his lead to train him in recall' – [REDACTED] North Cowton*

*'The area played an important part in my rehabilitation following an injury to my leg. The proximity of the park to my home was a great help in my recovery.'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton


 *'Taking my little boy on the swings for the first time'* - [REDACTED] used to live in the village

 *'Helped the children of North Cowton school plant the trees near the playing field and bottom area near the beck. This was done with help from rural payments scheme when I was on the parish council.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton


 *'I mostly used the football pitch as part of the football team until I retired from football in my 40s and decided to take up golf instead. It was a great way of getting to know the village community and we all used to go to the pub afterwards for pie and peas.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'When the bench was installed in memory of my mother'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'Watching our kids on sports day. Watching them grow up playing in the same place myself and my friends did.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

 *'When my mam and dad and nanna and grandad take me to the swings'* – [REDACTED] (under 16), grandparents live in the village

*'My whole childhood was spent on these playing fields, also now my children frequently use it with my supervision.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

 *'Despite being a rural village this is the only area where it is possible to have the dog off the lead, away from traffic.'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

 *'Village sports day with my children.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'Sport's Day as a kid, watching mum doing the egg and spoon race and then the adults charging off round the field to see who could do a circuit fastest. Winning a few pence to take to the fair. Used to play tennis when the tennis net was up all summer.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'The lower meadow was the place to go. A group of us aged around 11 to 13 used to go to the lower meadow because it had trees to climb, dens to make, and a stream (probably not on park land but the lower fence was always broken down) to go in. It added a bit of danger which was great. I wouldn't change the area for anything.'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'wildlife near the beck, always unexpected encounters with nature'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Sit on the bench and think of my parents'* – [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'Rounders and playing in the grass'* - [REDACTED], North Cowton

*'Playing rounders with the family. Building a huge snowman'* - [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'Sledging and making snowmen. We don't have many hills locally so the banks at the park are our best option and was great fun.'* – [REDACTED] North Cowton

*'I have used this area for a range of reasons across the past 37 years. I have fond memories of village sports days (which continue today and which my own children attend, and my husband organises), bonfire/fireworks events on the bottom meadow area which were run by my mum throughout my childhood, attending football training as a child and a teenager (run by my dad), through to building dens and playing tennis with friends. On the area which some residents recently attempted to purchase, my friends and I would go sledging in the winter and ride our bikes down the bank, and we'd see how far down the hill we could roll along the grass without getting dizzy! We'd buy fish and chips from the van on a Tuesday evening and sit at the top of the bank eating and admiring the view. Since having my own children we've enjoyed school and community events there, taken part in a fundraising Winter treasure trail (we really need to organise this again!), been fascinated by rabbit holes in the small bank next to the pitch (my daughter used to run up and down calling for Peter Rabbit to come out), played endlessly on the park (including sliding down the snow-covered slide - a favourite of*

ours!), explored and had adventures in the meadow area, walked the dog in the shade of the trees on hot days (there are so few other shaded places to do this within the boundaries of the village), met up with friends, attended children's birthday parties, taught my kids to ride their bikes and taken my son's portable tennis net to the tennis courts (when there was no tennis net up!) – [REDACTED] North Cowton

'Playing on the bottom field' – [REDACTED] (under 16), North Cowton

### Future use of the site

The full site will continue to be used by the community in the ways demonstrated above.

Two years ago, the Parish Council applied for change of use for a part of the area marked (known as the sledging hill/pitch run off) to allow for allotments.

Planning Application 22/00285/FULL - Valid From 1

Recreational Ground, St Lukes Close, North Cowton, North Yorkshire  
Full planning permission for change of use of part of existing recreation

Although this planning proposal was refused, the community are still keen to look at ways to develop this area to allow it to become more accessible and of greater amenity to the most residents. A recent community meeting was held when part of the site was threatened to be 'disposed' of – at this meeting, a variety of proposals were put forward to look for funding to create additionality in the area, including a community orchard and wildflower meadow and greater accessibility for nearby residents of sheltered accommodation and others in the village with limited mobility.



A minimum of 35 residents wrote extensive objections to the proposed disposal of a part of the area, leading to the proposal being dropped by North Yorkshire Council. This huge engagement with the political process demonstrates the strength of feeling that residents have that the area should be maintained for the benefit of the community.