

Appendix 6 – Draft Recommendations for Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting

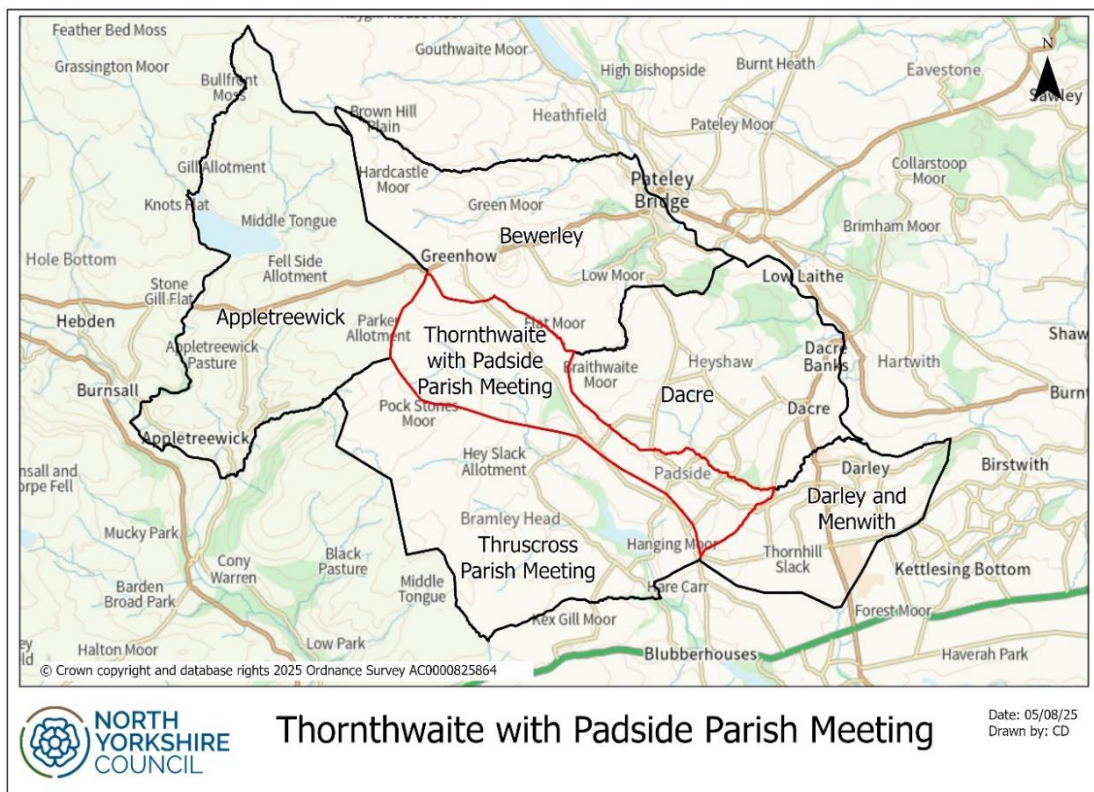
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1.0 Current governance arrangements and history of the area

Current governance arrangements

- 1.1 Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting is situated within the Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale division and is part of the Skipton and Ripon parliamentary constituency. The parish is comprised of the small village of Thornthwaite and the small hamlet of Padside.
- 1.2 Thornthwaite with Padside parish currently has 156 electors and 79 properties.
- 1.3 Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting has five neighbouring parish areas as shown in the map below including Appletreewick Parish Council, Beverley Parish Council, Dacre Parish Council, Darley with Menwith Parish Council and Thruscross Parish Meeting.



- 1.4 Whilst the area of Thornthwaite with Padside is parished it does not have a parish council and is referred to as a parish meeting. This means it does not elect Councillors or hold parish council meetings. Parish meetings must assemble annually between 1 March and 1 June and on at least one other occasion during the year. These meetings are open to the public but only registered electors of the parish can speak and vote.
- 1.5 Parish meetings can raise a precept to raise monies for spending for the benefit of the parish, although as Thornthwaite Parish Meeting is inactive a precept is not currently raised.

History of the area

- 1.6 In January 2020, Harrogate Borough Council (the principal authority at the time), received correspondence from the former Clerk of Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting advising that the Chair was due to resign, and that a replacement would likely be difficult to find. The Clerk therefore requested further information regarding the procedure for abolishing the parish.
- 1.7 Following consultation with Harrogate Borough Council’s Democratic Services and Elections teams, a Community Governance Review (CGR) was suggested to merge Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Council with a neighbour, rather than abolish the parish. At the time, Thruscross Parish Meeting was considered the best option for a merger as both parishes resided in the same Harrogate Borough Council ward, and North Yorkshire County Council division. Due to COVID-19, this CGR did not take place.
- 1.8 The former Clerk of Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting resigned at a later date and as no replacement was found, the Parish Meeting became inactive.
- 1.9 In June 2025, the Dacre Parish Clerk emailed North Yorkshire Council (NYC) to advise that Dacre parish councillors were keen to explore the possibility of merging with Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting. Dacre Parish Council was aware that the parish meeting had been inactive for several years and noted that the parish sits geographically alongside Dacre parish and shares a number of roads and facilities.
- 1.10 After consultation with Democratic Services, it was suggested that a CGR be carried out for Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting. Following the Standards and Governance Committee on 20 June 2025, Full Council approved the terms of reference of the 2025/26 Community Governance Review, which included a defined list of parishes that would be reviewed on 16 July 2025.
- 1.11 As the request for a CGR of Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting was made after the Standards and Governance Committee report was finalised in June, Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting was not included in the terms of reference approved at Full Council. As one of the recommendations agreed was that authority be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services to consider any further requests for a CGR and the terms of reference amended accordingly, the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services approved the addition on 6 August 2025.
- 1.12 As Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting has remained inactive for several years, it is not within the interest of the public to keep the current governance arrangements as local electors are not currently represented by an active parish meeting. A merger with Dacre Parish Council will ensure that electors are represented by a parish council.
- 1.13 Dacre parish currently has 650 electors and 381 properties.
- 1.14 The NYC Division Member for Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale, Councillor Andrew Murday, was informed of the CGR request and has confirmed his support for a merger with Dacre Parish Council.

Five year electorate forecast

1.15 The electorate and 5 year electorate forecast for Thornthwaite with Padside parish and Dacre parish is as follows:

Parish	Electorate (2025)	Electorate prediction (2030)*	Predicted electorate increase
Dacre	650	657	7
Thornthwaite with Padside	156	156	0

** based on 2024 electorate totals*

2.0 Assessment of consultation responses for Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting

2.1 The following table shows the number of households written to, with the number of consultation responses received, and response rate.

Households sent CGR consultation letter	460
Consultation responses received	14
Response rate	3.04%

2.2 Consultation letters were sent to households in Thornthwaite with Padside parish and Dacre parish as following the CGR request made by Dacre Parish Council to merge with Thornthwaite with Padside Parish meeting, these were the two areas under review.

2.3 A copy of the consultation survey can be found at Annex 6A. A summary of consultation responses received can be found at Annex 6B.

2.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the free text comments received through the consultation process reflect the views of the individual respondents alone. These comments do not represent the views of North Yorkshire Council and should not be construed as being endorsed by the Council.

2.5 The response rate in the table above was calculated by comparing the number of consultation responses with the number of households directly consulted by means of a letter sent to all properties in the areas under review. The total number of responses for Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting was 14.

2.6 Of the 14 respondents, 10 reported that they lived in Dacre and two lived in Thornthwaite with Padside. One respondent was the Division Member for Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale, and another consultation response was made on behalf of Dacre Parish Council.

2.7 The majority of respondents chose to merge Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting with a neighbouring parish, as detailed in the table below.

Option	Number	Percentage
Merge with a neighbour	9	64%
No, I do not support this idea	0	0%
I am unsure	5	36%
Total	14	100%

- 2.8 The 9 respondents in favour of the option to merge Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting with a neighbour were all in favour of a merger with Dacre Parish Council, rather than another neighbouring parish. The other possible options for a merger were with Appletreewick Parish Council, Bewerley Parish Council, Darley with Menwith Parish Council or Thruscross Parish Meeting.
- 2.9 Annex 6A summarises at page 2 the reasons people gave for their choice to merge Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting with Dacre Parish Meeting. The most popular reason was that both areas have strong geographical links and therefore make the most sense to amalgamate.
- 2.10 Respondents also commented that both parishes have similar objectives and concerns and therefore surmised that there are likely to be shared solutions to these problems.
- 2.11 Some respondents commented that they did not have sufficient information about the rationale for the suggested merger to make an informed comment. These comments have been noted and it is acknowledged that further detail regarding the existing governance arrangements of Thornthwaite Parish Council, as outlined under section 1 above, would have been beneficial to respondents.
- 2.12 5 respondents were unsure about the proposal to merge Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting with a neighbour. The main reason for these responses was respondents being unclear on the rationale for the merger, as well as the implications of a merger on existing governance arrangements. Further detail on the proposed recommendations will be provided during the Stage 2 public consultation, which will commence on 19 March 2026.
- 2.13 Dacre Parish Council submitted a consultation response outlining their support of a merger with Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting. The reasons for this included significant geographical links between the parishes and the need to ensure that Thornthwaite with Padside electors have effective local representation.
- 2.14 Councillor Andrew Murday, Division Member for Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale submitted a consultation response and advised that he was in favour of the option to merge Thornthwaite with Padside with a neighbour. His reasons for his response included that the residents of Thornthwaite with Padside have had no parish meeting for several years and that geographically, the most logical amalgamation would be with Dacre Parish Council. Councillor Murday also agreed that a merger between the two parishes would meet the needs of the Thornthwaite with Padside community.
- 2.15 When asked whether the proposed model would meet the needs of its community, the majority of respondents were in agreement, as detailed in the table below.

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes, definitely	6	43%
Yes, somewhat	3	21%
No	0	0%
I am unsure	5	36%

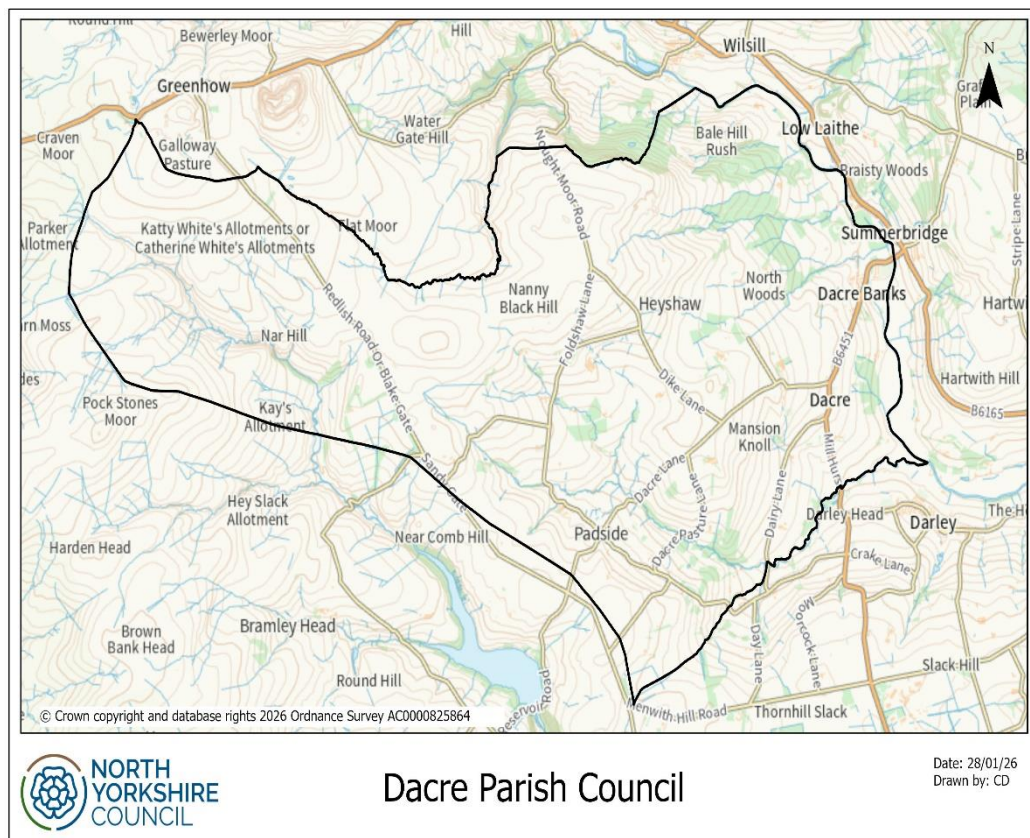
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Total	14	100%

- 2.16 9 respondents were either definitely or somewhat in agreement that the proposed model would meet the needs of its community, whilst 5 respondents were unsure.
- 2.17 The main reason for the unsure responses was respondents being unclear on what was being proposed. One individual commented that they felt NYC did not take into account the representations made by the community. All consultation responses received have been analysed and taken into account when forming Stage 2 recommendations and can be found at Annex 6B.

3.0 Final assessment and draft recommendations

- 3.1 The majority of responses (64%) indicated support for Thornthwaite with Padside Parish Meeting to merge with a neighbour, with 100% of these responses in favour of a merger specifically with Dacre Parish Council. It is therefore proposed to merge the parish of Thornthwaite with Padside with the parish of Dacre to create a single parish council.
- 3.2 The parish would be known as the parish of Dacre.
- 3.3 A map of the recommended new parish of Dacre is shown below:



- 3.4 A list of recommendations can be viewed below:

Recommendation 1 – the existing parish of Thornthwaite with Padside shall be amalgamated with the parish of Dacre

Recommendation 2 – that the new parish boundary is as detailed in the attached map

Recommendation 3 – the new parish shall be known as Dacre

Recommendation 4 – there shall be a parish council for the parish of Dacre

Recommendation 5 – the parish council shall be named Dacre Parish Council

Recommendation 6 – that 7 Councillors are elected to Dacre Parish Council.

Recommendation 7 – that the above take effect for administration purposed on 1 April 2027 with elections to the new Parish Council to held on 6 May 2027 for a term of 4 years. Changes to the electoral register required for the above take effect on the revised publication ahead of that election (planned for December 2026).

3.5 The recommendations detailed above will form the basis of the Stage 2 consultation which will commence on 19 March 2026.

Annex 6A – Consultation survey

Annex 6B – Summary of consultation responses