

Appendix 9 – Draft Recommendations for Newall with Clifton Parish Council

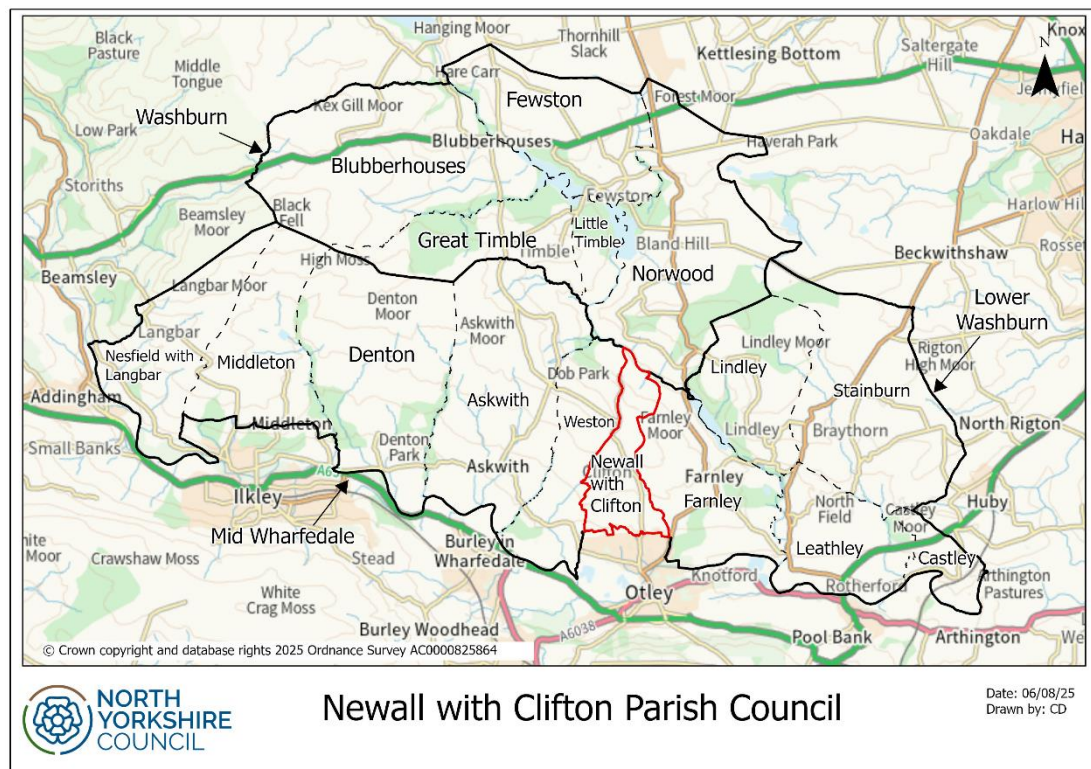
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1.0 Current governance arrangements and history of the area

Current governance arrangements

- 1.1 Newall with Clifton Parish Council is situated within the Washburn and Birstwith division and is part of the Skipton and Ripon parliamentary constituency. The parish is comprised of the small village of Clifton. Despite the parish name, the village of Newall sits across the North Yorkshire Council (NYC) border in the Otley and Yeadon ward of Leeds City Council.
- 1.2 Newall with Clifton parish currently has 120 electors and 69 properties.
- 1.3 Newall with Clifton Parish Council has 3 neighbouring parish areas as shown in the map below including Lower Washburn grouped Parish Council, Mid Wharfedale grouped Parish Council and Washburn grouped Parish Council.



- 1.4 Newall with Clifton Parish Council is comprised of 5 elected parish councillors. In order to meet and take decisions at least 3 councillors must be present. Parish Councils must hold an annual meeting and at least 3 other meetings each year.
- 1.5 Parish councils can raise a precept to raise monies for spending for the benefit of the parish, although as Newall with Clifton Parish Council is inactive a precept is not currently being raised.

History of the area

- 1.6 In September 2022 Harrogate Borough Council (the principal authority at the time) was notified that Newall with Clifton Parish Council had become inquorate due to several resignations leaving only one remaining parish councillor. The usual vacancy procedures were followed but there was no subsequent interest in the vacancies. As a result, the parish council became inactive.
- 1.7 In June 2025, the Mid Wharfedale Parish Clerk emailed NYC to advise that Mid Wharfedale parish councillors were keen to explore the possibility of merging with Newall with Clifton Parish Council. Mid Wharfedale Parish Council was aware that the parish council had been inactive for several years and noted that the Newall with Clifton parish area fitted in well with Mid Wharfedale from a community identity perspective.
- 1.8 After consultation with Democratic Services, it was suggested that a Community Governance review (CGR) be carried out for Newall with Clifton Parish Council. 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 Newall with Clifton Parish Council on 16 July 2025.
- 1.9 As Newall with Clifton Parish Council 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 council. A merger with Mid Wharfedale Parish Council will ensure that electors are represented by a parish council.
- 1.10 Mid Wharfedale Grouped Parish Council currently has 662 electors and 367 properties.
- 1.11 The NYC Division Member for Washburn and Birstwith, Councillor Nathan Hull, was informed of the CGR request and has confirmed his support for a merger with Mid Wharfedale Parish Council.

Five year electorate forecast

- 1.12 The electorate and 5 year electorate forecast for Newall with Clifton parish and the 5 parishes that form Mid Wharfedale grouped Parish Council is as follows:

Parish	Electorate (2025)	Electorate prediction (2030)*	Predicted electorate increase
Newall with Clifton	120	120	0
Askwith (Mid Wharfedale Group)	197	212	15
Denton (Mid Wharfedale Group)	77	85	8
Middleton (Mid Wharfedale Group)	82	85	3

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Nesfield with Langbar (Mid Wharfedale Group)	157	157	0
Weston (Mid Wharfedale Group)	149	167	18

**Based on 2024 electorate totals*

- 1.13 The 5 year electorate forecast for Mid Wharfedale Grouped Parish Council is 706 electors.

2.0 Assessment of consultation responses for Newall with Clifton Parish Council

- 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	1053
Consultation responses received	12
Response rate	1.1%

- 2.2 Consultation letters were sent to households in the parishes of Castley, Farnley, Leathley, Lindley, and Stainburn, which are grouped together to form Lower Washburn Parish Council, the parishes of Askwith, Denton, Middleton, Nesfield with Langbar and Weston, which are grouped together to form Mid Wharfedale Parish Council, Newall with Clifton parish and the parishes of Blubberhouses, Fewston, Great Timble, Little Timble and Norwood which are grouped together to form Washburn Parish Council. Following the CGR request made by Mid Wharfedale Parish Council to merge with Newall with Clifton, these were the areas under review, as well as the neighbouring parish councils.
- 2.3 A copy of the consultation survey can be found at Annex 9A. A summary of consultation responses received can be found at Annex 9B.
- 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 Newall with Clifton Parish Council was 12.
- 2.6 Of the 12 respondents, 4 reported that they lived in Newall with Clifton. 9 respondents were residents of a neighbouring parish, although one respondent advised that they lived in Newall with Clifton and also ticked the box 'I am a resident of a neighbouring parish', presumably in error. 4 of these respondents were from Lower Washburn Parish Council, 3 were from Mid Wharfedale and one respondent did not advise which neighbouring parish they lived in.
- 2.7 58% (7) of respondents indicated that they were aware that Newall with Clifton Parish Council had experienced difficulty finding residents to stand as parish councillors and was not currently meeting as it is not quorate.
- 2.8 58% (7) of respondents were in favour of combining Newall with Clifton Parish Council with one of the neighbouring parish councils, either by forming a single parish council which could be warded, or by forming a grouped parish council.

2.9 The majority of respondents chose to combine Newall with Clifton Parish Council with one of the neighbouring parish councils by dissolving the parish council and forming a grouped parish council, as detailed in the table below.

Option	Number	Percentage
Combine Newall with Clifton Parish Council with one of the neighbouring parish councils by dissolving the parish council and forming a grouped parish council	4	33%
Combine Newall with Clifton Parish Council with one of the neighbouring parish councils by dissolving the parish council and merging with a neighbouring parish council to form a single parish council, which could be warded	3	25%
I am unsure	5	42%
Other suggestion, please describe below	0	0%
Total	12	100%

2.10 Of the 12 respondents, 4 were in favour of Newall with Clifton being combined with Mid Wharfedale Parish Council, two were in favour of Newall with Clifton being combined with Lower Washburn Parish Council, and one suggested Washburn Parish Council.

2.11 Annex 9B summarises at page 3 the reasons people gave for their preferred option. The most popular reason for the choice to merge Newall with Clifton Parish Council with Mid Wharfedale Parish Council was due to their geographical affinity. It was noted that Mid Wharfedale parish meetings took place in the parish of Askwith, which is relatively near to Newall with Clifton parish. The fact that Mid Wharfedale Parish Council had advised that they would be willing to take on Newall with Clifton parish was also commented on. 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.

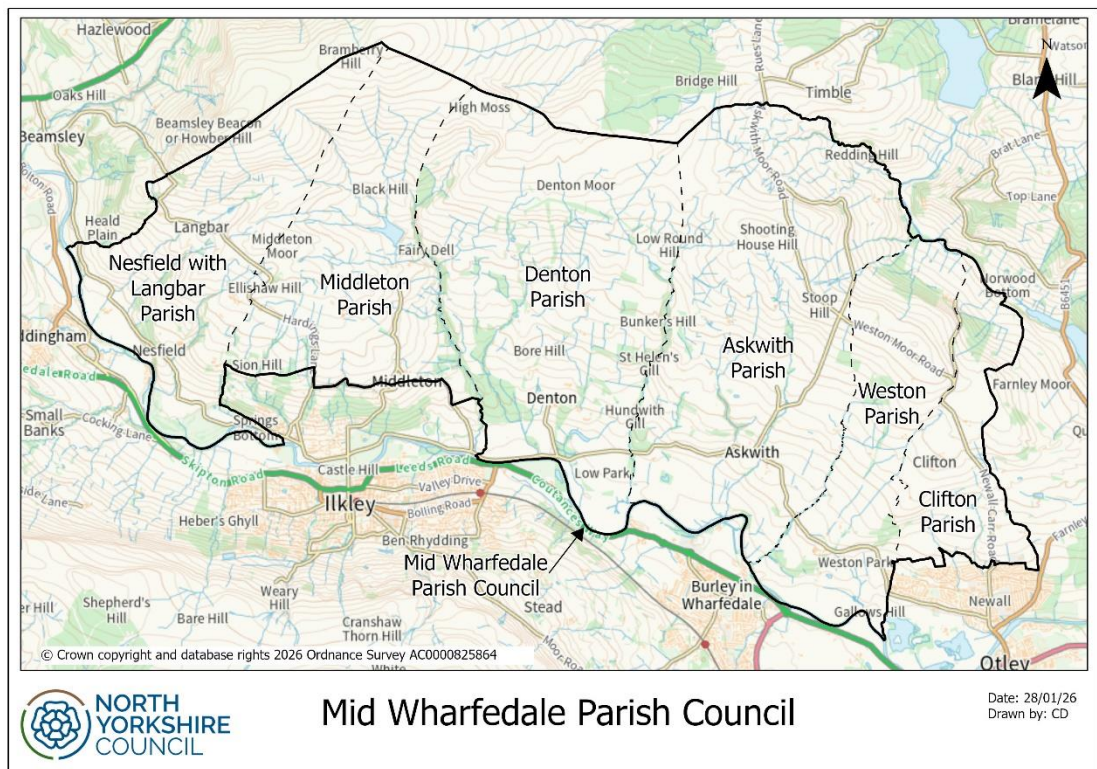
2.12 5 respondents indicated that they were unsure of their preferred option. One respondent advised that they would prefer Newall with Clifton to retain their own parish council. Another respondent expressed concern about the effectiveness of parish council governance in the past, commenting that residents felt excluded from decision making processes.

2.13 Two respondents were in support of Newall with Clifton Parish Council being combined with Lower Washburn Parish Council. The reasons for this choice included both parish councils being situated on the border of Otley, and therefore having similar characteristics through links to the town, as well as links to the Nidderdale National Landscape.

- 2.14 One respondent supported combining Newall with Clifton Parish Council with Washburn Parish Council. When asked why they selected this option, the individual advised that they had no preference regarding which neighbouring parish council Newall with Clifton should join but wished to express a need for greater support. They commented that the parish is geographically dispersed and that in the past they felt unsupported by the former principal authority, Harrogate Borough Council. While these issues fall outside the scope of this governance review, combining Newall with Clifton Parish Council with Mid Wharfedale Parish Council is considered the option most likely to ensure that residents feel represented.
- 2.15 In August 2025, Mid Wharfedale Parish Council advised via email that they were happy to be considered for a merger with Newall with Clifton Parish Council. The reasons for this included significant geographical links between the parish councils making Mid Wharfedale a good fit. Mid Wharfedale councillors advised that they wanted to keep the grouped parish council arrangement, and if a merger took place, Newall with Clifton parish would be added to the existing Mid Wharfedale grouped Parish Council, creating a sixth parish which would be represented by one councillor.
- 2.16 The Division Member for Washburn and Birstwith, Councillor Nathan Hull supports the proposal to combine Newall with Clifton Parish Council with Mid Wharfedale grouped Parish Council on the basis that Newall with Clifton Parish Council has been inactive for some time, and therefore the residents are not properly represented, as well as the fact that Mid Wharfedale Parish Council is willing to take on Newall with Clifton.
- 2.17 Lower Washburn Parish Council and Washburn Parish Council did not provide a formal consultation response however the Lower Washburn Clerk has previously advised that Mid Wharfedale seemed a better option for combining with Newall with Clifton Parish Council.
- 2.18 Additional comments about the CGR included further reasons in support of Newall with Clifton Parish Council being combined with either Mid Wharfedale Parish Council or Lower Washburn Parish Council, as well a plea from one Newall with Clifton resident for further general support.

3.0 Final assessment and draft recommendations

- 3.1 The majority of responses (58%) indicated support for combining Newall with Clifton Parish Council with a neighbouring parish council, with the majority of these responses in favour of creating a grouped parish council. 57% of respondents were in favour of a merger specifically with Mid Wharfedale Parish Council. It is therefore proposed to combine the parish of Newall with Clifton with Mid Wharfedale grouped Parish Council.
- 3.2 Despite the parish name of Newall with Clifton, the village of Newall sits across the NYC border in the Otley and Yeadon ward of Leeds City Council. The village of Newall has not been part of Newall with Clifton parish since 1903. For this reason, it is suggested that the parish be renamed Clifton, to reflect that Newall has not been a part of the parish for over a century.
- 3.3 A map of the recommended new Mid Wharfedale Parish Council is shown below:



- 3.4 A list of recommendations can be viewed below:

Recommendation 1 – Newall with Clifton Parish Council shall be dissolved

Recommendation 2 – the parish of Newall with Clifton be renamed Clifton

Recommendation 3 – the parish of Clifton shall be added to the Mid Wharfedale group of parishes of Askwith, Denton, Middleton, Nesfield with Langbar and Weston

Recommendation 4 – the name of the group shall be Mid Wharfedale Parish Council

Recommendation 5 – The parish council of Mid Wharfedale be comprised of the parishes detailed below:

**Aswith
Clifton
Denton
Middleton
Nesfield with Langbar
Weston**

Recommendation 6 – there should be 12 councillors elected to the parish council

Recommendation 7 – the number of parish councillors to be elected for each parish shall be

Askwith	3
Clifton	1
Denton	2
Middleton	1
Nesfield with Langbar	3
Weston	2
Total	12

Recommendation 8 – implementation is recommended to take effect administratively on 1 April 2027 with elections to the new arrangements at the next scheduled elections in May 2027, and that 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 9A – Consultation survey

Annex 9B – Summary of consultation responses