

# District Councillor's Report

## Penyghent Ward

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Jan - Feb 2022

Councillor Robert Ogden



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# Correspondence



## Emergency Planning

On behalf of Horton-in-Ribblesdale Parish Council, I made enquiries with Craven District Council about the planning arrangements for emergencies:

*“Following a meeting with Horton-in-Ribblesdale Parish Council and village residents, it was clear that they felt very let down by many different organizations, CDC included. Storm Arwen at the end of 2021 left many properties in the parish had no power, internet, water, or mobile phone signal for several days. Some properties were affected for more than a week. During this time, they felt there was an inadequate response from any authority or organization. In particular, parish councillors believed the effective of communication (including from CDC) was left wanting. It is not clear from the council website what the responsibilities of CDC are in such situations, and what assistance can be offered. Since then, nothing much seems to have changed regarding preparedness for future emergencies, or communication with rural residents.*

*Therefore, on behalf of the people of Horton-in-Ribblesdale, I have six questions to ask:*

1. What are the criteria CDC has for an ‘emergency’ that requires a response?
2. Does CDC have a parish-specific or otherwise localised emergency planning response, particularly for Horton-in-Ribblesdale?
3. How can residents access existing emergency plans specific to Horton-in-Ribblesdale?
4. How up-to-date are these plans and how frequently are they reviewed?
5. How does CDC communicate with residents during emergencies, to direct them to available services on offer (e.g. emergency shelter, utilities repair updates, flooding responses)?
6. Has CDC considered improving the accessibility of its website to make it easier for residents across the district to find information related to the questions above?

*Thank you for considering these questions – there are many in Penyghent Ward who are eager to increase their understanding of their council’s role in emergencies.”*

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## The CDC officer who replied was helpful in answering the questions I asked:

*“Following Storm Arwen I attended a number of multi-agency meetings with the aim of establishing the impact of the storm and which communities/vulnerable persons required assistance. Officers did attend areas throughout the district and we responded to issues that were known to us. Unfortunately information was very limited and difficult to obtain, no doubt due to the nature of the incident. A multi-agency de-brief of the incident was held and I anticipate there being recommendations from that.*

*In relation to your specific questions, there are legal definitions around the term ‘emergency’ and ‘major incident’. However, if residents have concerns about an incident, they should contact the Council so that a decision can be made as to whether a local or multi-agency response is required. Incidents are dealt with on a case by case basis, using national guidelines. We have various plans in place and methods of communication with residents will depend on the situation. I agree the information on the Council website can be improved and I will look at this as soon as possible.*

*A number of our communities have emergency plans, which work very well for localised issues and we work closely with some of the Community Leads during localised incidents, particularly flooding. I understand Lee Brayford from the NYCC Emergencies Team has been in touch with Horton-in-Ribblesdale Parish Council about developing a Community Emergency Plan. Both myself and Lee are happy to attend a Parish Meeting and go through what is required and help develop a plan. For information, I have attached a blank template, which has also been sent to the Clerk, so you can see what is involved.*

*In the meantime, **the out of hours emergency contact number for Craven District is 01653 699392.** During office hours, **the Council can be contacted on the usual number: 01756 700600.** Incidents reported are passed to the relevant officer who can then respond as necessary.*

*Further information on the North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum, who respond to emergency incidents, can be found here: <https://www.emergencynorthyorks.gov.uk/> “*

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## Planning matters in Penyghent Ward



**YORKSHIRE DALES**  
National Park Authority

Planning is a funioscity in Penyghent as it is divided between the two authorities shown above. I bizarrely have no input, despite being the elected representative for Penyghent, on planning matters within my ward that fall in the boundaries of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. But who am I to question this democratic deficit? Conversely, as most of Giggleswick lies outside the YDNP, I can get more involved in the process.

With that in mind, as the local district councillor I am acutely aware of the large number of objections lodged against the Lord's Close planning proposal. Many of these objections contain legitimate concerns that must be investigated by the developers, Craven District Council officers, and other relevant parties. I'm disappointed by the lack of communication from Giggleswick School and the developers with myself. Furthermore, it has been noted that the plans have changed significantly from those presented at the summer 2021 open day that I attended. I hope that Craven's planning process will deliver a fair and considered verdict.

I am glad to see that the proposal to build 41 houses includes 12 affordable houses. 12 is better than nothing. I am however disappointed that 12 out of 41 equals 29.2%. This is below Craven District Council's 30% affordable housing policy, and quite frankly appears stingy. As the landowner is a local school, they must do better if they want to properly serve their community.

There are however some hard realities that need to be faced once these finer details have been ironed out. The site has been allocated in Craven's 2012 – 2032 Local Plan, and it

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would be unrealistic to hope that the site will forever remain an open field. Furthermore, I personally recognise the acute housing shortage in north Craven, which is also a pressing national issue.

In my election campaign, I pledged to support opportunities for young people to stay in and come to our area, and promote the sustainable growth of our community. The bedrock for this is affordable housing development. I believe that there is a genuine risk that national and local government inaction, combined with rampant NIMBYism from older property-owning people, has created (and is further entrenching) a terrible generational divide.

Since 2000, UK house price growth has significantly outpaced the rise in average earnings. The average house in March 2021 cost more than 65 times the average UK home in January 1970, but average weekly wages were only 3 times higher, according to data from the Office for National Statistics. Younger generations are devoid of property, and this has many consequences.

Swathes of young people are sinking any earnings that haven't been taken through rising taxation and inflation into the pockets of landlords. Our communities are ageing and dying as young people move away to find better opportunities. Aspiration is collapsing. Who will provide your social services when the Yorkshire Dales become a retirement home? Who will be there to provide hospitality, and fill the jobs that keep our area from falling apart?

When a young person is unable to obtain capital, they are denied an opportunity to invest in their own futures, and become stakeholders in society. This reality riles every conservative instinct in my bones. Inaction over decades by everyone has already led to the closure of several schools in Ribblesdale, most recently in Horton-in-Ribblesdale. Wholly avoidable, self-inflicted, and absolutely infuriating.

**The moral of the story is that we need to build more houses.**

**That is the hill I will die on, like it or not.**

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## **Ward Member Grant Scheme**

The Ward Member Grants is a scheme run by Craven District Council that enables councillors to dish out small grants to local community groups. I think it is an excellent opportunity to help those small groups that make a real difference in Penyghent. The scheme closes for applications at 4pm on Monday 14th February 2022. I strongly encourage you or your local community group to apply now for funding! To find out more, and access the application form, please visit the CDC website using the following link: <https://www.cravencdc.gov.uk/community-living/grants-community-projects/craven-district-council-ward-member-grants/>

## **North Yorkshire Council Elections – May 2022**

Local Government Reorganization is edging closer, with elections to the new authority due to take place in May 2022. Those elected will have the immense responsibility of preparing for the full transfer of powers to the new authority on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. When I stood in the by-election for Penyghent Ward in May 2021, it was to complete the remainder of Councillor Richard Welch’s term until the next scheduled election in May 2022. However, the cancellation of that election and automatic extension my term until the end of Craven District Council in March 2023 means that I am your representative for an additional 11 months.

Outside of my role as a district councillor, I am a full-time secondary school History teacher. I have been able to fit these two roles nicely around each other as my councillor duties revolve mainly around evening meetings. Looking into the future it was clear to me that the role of a councillor on the new North Yorkshire unitary council was more time-consuming, and principally a role carried out during the working day. Unfortunately, this makes it a role incompatible with my teaching commitments.

I would therefore like to report that I will not be standing for election to the new North Yorkshire Council. However, I will continue to fulfil my obligations as the district councillor for Penyghent and represent our area to the best of my ability.

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# Clr Robert Ogden

## Penyghent Ward



If you have any queries, or would like to report an issue, please contact me using my email address:

**[ROgden@cravendc.gov.uk](mailto:ROgden@cravendc.gov.uk)**