

## **Thornley with Wheatley Parish Council**

### **DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 12 May 2025 commencing at 7 pm in Thornley School**

#### **Present:**

Cllr M Hayhurst (Chairman)

Cllr C Ansbro (Clerk)

Cllr G Airey (Responsible Financial Officer)

Cllr P Hallett (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr H Roper

*Borough Councillor R Ray*

*Borough Councillor K Spencer*

Members of the Public (MOPs) 15

The Chairman introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the Thornley with Wheatley Annual Parish Meeting 2025. He explained that there would be an update from Thornley Community Space regarding the School project and organised activities and an update from Councillor Kieren Spencer regarding what he had been involved with and his ideas going forward. Members of the Parish would then be invited to ask questions and have a general discussion.

#### **Parish 25.1 Apologies for Absence from Councillors**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **Parish 25.2 Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 13 May 2024**

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **Parish 25.3 Chairman's Annual Report**

The Chairman read out his Annual Report which explained some of the work the Parish Council had undertaken in the preceding year including the planting of a Giant Redwood Tree, provided by Ribble Valley Borough Council to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary since it came into being; the purchase and siting of 3 dog waste bins on popular dog walking routes (footpath on Jeffrey Hill, at the bottom of Lords Lane and at Tile Kiln Corner); the planting of a Rowan Tree which was funded by a grant offered by the Forest of Bowland National Landscape to mark its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; the refurbishment of the commemorative bench situated on Jeffrey Hill (the Chairman had carried out the work which entailed tidying the area, cleaning stonework and flags, new seating boards and a new plaque put in place) and providing £500 to Thornley Community Space towards ongoing refurbishment of Thornley School.

The Chairman also referred to the refurbishment of Ferraris Restaurant which it was anticipated would be reopening fairly soon and would be known as Longridge House; the success of So Plants in achieving the Small Ribble Valley Business Awards Independent Retailer of the Year; the carriageway surface dressing and patching works carried out on Chipping Road, which had made a huge improvement to the road and the good news that Thornley School had become the Thornley Polling Station and had been used for the Lancashire County Council Elections held on 1 May 2025.

This concluded the Chairman's report and he invited Thornley Community Space to address the Parish meeting.

#### **Parish 25.4                      Update from Thornley Community Space (TCS)    regarding the School Project and organised activities**

Helen, one of the Thornley Community Space Trustees, thanked the PC for the opportunity to highlight the Thornley Community Space (TCS) achievements in the last year and plans going forward with the renovations of the School.

She was pleased to announce that funding from grants, Thornley Parish Council, parishioner donations and profits from last year's events would now allow them to proceed with reinstalling the heritage windows that were vandalized. A sleeping policeman has been situated in the carpark with advisory go slow signs and a disability ramp has been sought to help with the stepped entrance. Free B4RN internet (due to their Charity CIO status) had been offered and the offer would be considered by the PC at its later meeting as it required a Wayleave Agreement to be approved.

TCS was happy to become the Polling Station recently, feedback from the Polling Station Officers stated it was a very pleasant environment for both staff and people attending.

The School has been open 4-5 years to private hire as well as running TCS social activities which are proving popular. Events are run with the help of volunteers. Over 60 people attending the history talks and for the VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations 80 people joined the activities on the day. Rambling walks, book club, arts/crafts/theatre interest have developed alongside the diversity of people living in Thornley.

Recent Husting nights filled the room showing people care about the place they have chosen to live and these events have given people a voice.

Future aims include a small working party which has begun work to help seek grants and get quotes to start renovation on the back classroom to install a community kitchen and explore a more sustainable heating system.

The Chairman thanked Helen for her very informative and interesting update and Councillor Kieren was asked to address the Parish meeting.

#### **Parish 25.5                      Update from Councillor Kieren Spencer**

Kieren opened by saying it was a pleasure coming to the School and he had had the opportunity to attend a number of events here in recent weeks. He thought it

was great hearing from Helen about what TCS is doing going forward and he also thanked the PC for what they are doing and in particular for the renovation of the bench on Jeffrey Hill which looked really good now.

He informed Parishioners that Lancashire had a two-tier local government system ie at County and Borough level and he would be continuing in his role as Borough Councillor representing Derby and Thornley, alongside Councillor Rachael Ray. He explained that Ribble Valley Borough Council's responsibilities included planning issues/licenses; street cleaning and litter collection (he encouraged Parishioners to use the Love Clean Streets app to report any issues); health and housing; car parks, rubbish collection and recycling and parish liaison.

Kieren continued by informing the meeting that the Pump Track was now open in Longridge and that there was another initiative in Longridge to regenerate Townley Gardens which people would have an opportunity to comment on in due course. He went on to explain that as a local resident he really cares about the way things look. To help with this he was suggesting guidance be developed to improve the way shop fronts look on Berry Lane which he felt would help to encourage visitors to come to Longridge.

The Chairman thanked Kieren for his update and invited questions from the Thornley residents present

## **Parish 25.6                      Questions brought to the meeting by Residents of the Parish and general discussion**

A resident commented that she was unaware of any planning notices regarding the waste recycling business recently set up in the Parish and asked if the Parish Council would undertake a consultation with people in the Parish before responding to Ribble Valley Borough Council should a planning application be submitted?

The Chairman and Clerk clarified that all planning applications are put on the Parish Council meetings Agendas and the Agendas are posted on the PC's noticeboard and website. The next meeting of the PC would be held in August. However, if a request for comment on a planning application regarding the waste recycling business was received by the PC, and a response was required before the August meeting date, an extraordinary meeting would be called to discuss it which Residents would be able to attend to put forward their comments. The Chairman said that people will be aware that the business referred to was being set up by Cllr. Harry Roper and Cllr. Roper had offered to discuss what it entailed with anyone who wished to contact him if they had concerns. Cllr. Roper further clarified that the business related to soil and stone re-cycling and it was currently being run from a site away from the family farm yard until it was clear whether any permissions were required.

There seemed to be some confusion regarding noise caused by work being undertaken, Cllr. Roper clarified that the work was within the Quarry and not related to the waste re-cycling business and again if Residents wished to contact him, he would be happy for them to come and see what was happening.

Reference was made to the felling of trees in the Quarry areas. Last year claims had been made that the felling was illegal. Cllr. Roper reassured residents that these claims had been rigorously investigated and in November 2024 the Forestry Commission had

concluded that the claims were unfounded and the felling license he held was appropriate.

A resident referred to wagons going backwards and forwards creating inconvenience to local residents. Cllr. Roper explained that the work being undertaken would end in November 2025 when replanting was completed.

A resident raised a question asking what the Parish Council was doing to address the problem of dangerously fast driving between Longridge and the Derby Arms. The stretch of road was used by many pedestrians and the pavement was very narrow?

The Clerk explained that she had contacted the Highways Authority with Residents' concerns about speeding traffic which were raised at the Parish meeting in May 2024. She read out the response received as follows "We have analysed the speed data for Chipping Road (Hesketh Lane to Four Acre Lane). Along with other highway authorities when assessing adherence to speed limits we look at the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile of traffic. This is the speed at which 85 percent of traffic travels at or below. In enforcement of speeding the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) recommends enforcement begin at 10 percent plus two over the speed limit. For example enforcement in a 50 mph area would begin at 57 mph. If 85 percent of traffic is travelling below this enforcement threshold adherence to the limit is considered good. Chipping Road has a limit of 60 mph with an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 49.1 mph. If residents witness regular incidents of nuisance or dangerous driving they can contact the Police directly either by the non-emergency telephone number 101 or on the Lancashire Constabulary "Do It Online" webpage with a record of the registration numbers of the vehicles. They can also submit footage directly to the Police through Op SNAP". At their following PC meeting Councillors would consider what further action they may be able to take.

Cllr. Hallett encouraged anyone with concerns regarding speeding traffic to report it via 101 or the Do It Online webpage as the more reports generated would highlight the number of issues witnessed. Cllr. Rachael also invited Residents to email her individually ([cllr.rachael.ray@ribblevalley.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.rachael.ray@ribblevalley.gov.uk)) as she sits on the Community Safety Partnership and she can raise issues on their behalf.

A further question was raised by the same resident asking what steps the Parish Council is taking to tackle the rapid loss of biodiversity within its boundaries?

The Chairman responded by referring to the initiatives the PC had taken up to plant a Redwood Tree and a native Rowan tree. He said he personally had planted trees in his own garden and suggested everyone could do something to improve biodiversity in their own area. Cllr. Roper also reported that Farmers contribute by seasonally grazing higher ground, being mindful of the bird breeding season when hedge cutting and laying hedges to promote new growth and create denser hedgerows.

Parish Residents were also reminded that they could join the Thornley Conservation Group if they wanted to be proactive.

Another Parish Resident offered his congratulations to Helen and TCS for the work they are carrying out with the School and wondered how it would be possible to help preserve the School. He was aware that the land surrounding the School was currently leased on an annual rental basis and he wondered if consideration could be given to selling the land to provide additional funding to continue with the School refurbishment.

It was noted that there had been a long-standing arrangement with the same farming family for the use of this land for silo and grazing. This arrangement had subsequently been formalised with a signed agreement, which the resident expressed an interest in seeing. This would be dealt with separately. It was further explained that the rental for the land is paid annually and is reviewed on a 3-year rolling programme. The PC agreed to explore the feasibility of the suggestion put forward and discuss it in more detail at its meeting in August.

At this point the Chairman thanked Residents and the two speakers for attending the Parish Meeting and the meeting closed at 8.15 pm

**Parish 25.6 Date and Time of Next Meeting** - The next Parish Meeting will be scheduled for May 2026. The date will be arranged nearer the time.

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Signed

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Date