

ARKENGARTHDALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

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DRAFT MINUTES
of
ARKENGARTHDALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held in St Mary's Church, Arkengarthdale on Monday 12th May 2025 at 7.15 pm

Present: Councillor S Stubbs (Chair); Councillor P Harker (Vice-Chair); Councillor R Stones; Councillor S Atkinson; Councillor N Barningham.

In attendance: S Dray (Clerk); D Southwell (Chair, ACEG); and 1 member of the parish

1. Welcome and apologies

Chairman Stephen Stubbs welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies.

2. Approval of the minutes of the previous Annual Parish meeting

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13 May 2024 were read out by the Chair, confirmed as a true and correct record, and approved.

3. Annual report from the Parish Council, including Arkengarthdale Community Emergency Group (ACEG)

Cllr Stubbs summarised some significant activities in the Dale over the previous year, including progress on the rebuilding of Foregill Bridge and the retaining wall, after its complete demolition and the discovery of 5 arches which had been walled up over the decades and filled with concrete in parts to stabilise the road as the number of vehicles and heavy loads increased. It was noted that the dry weather from the start of this year had helped the work on the road and bridge to progress quickly and it was hoped to be completed by the end of the year, or early in 2026 at the latest. As part of the work, the leaking drain at the top of Raw Bank below the cattle grid had been repaired and it was hoped that this would successfully end the run of winters with water or ice on the road.

Cllr Stubbs commented on the high standard of restoration of the ore cart on High Green and thanked everyone involved, with a special mention to Cllr Stones for transporting the cart to the restorers to and from Hawes, and to Mr Jeremy Moon for painting the cart free of charge for the community.

The Arkengarthdale Community Emergency Group had been formally established in March 2025, with a Charter and Service Level Agreement between the ACEG and the Parish Council that had been agreed by both. The Community Emergency Plan, developed by the ACEG and endorsed by the Parish Council had subsequently been lodged with the Resilience Team at

North Yorkshire Council. Mr Mark Wickham was thanked for all his help, advice and time with both the Agreement and the Plan.

Mrs Deb Southwell, Chair of the ACEG reported on the activities of the Group, which was currently in the process of:

- a) purchasing start-up equipment to enable the setting up of a hub during an emergency;
- b) testing radio functionality around the dale to identify blackspots with a view to purchasing additional radios (two radios had already been donated by NYC);
- c) taking out liability insurance, having completed a risk assessment.

Cllr Stubbs reported on the current bank balances held by the Parish Council and thanked the councillors and the clerk for all their work this year.

4. Topics raised by parishioners

There had been no topics raised by parishioners prior to the meeting.

5. Questions and comments from parishioners

Arkle Beck water quality reports

Mr Simon Croft asked if there was a mechanism by which Yorkshire Water was obliged to report to the Parish Council on effluent discharge, and specifically on leakage or spillage from the water treatment works at Langthwaite into Arkle Beck during excessive rain.

It was agreed that the clerk would contact Yorkshire Water for regular water quality reports to be made publicly available on the Parish Council website.

Air quality during heather burning

Mr Simon Croft commented on the heather burning on Reeth moor this year, and the effect of this on visibility and air quality. He reported that air quality was being monitored in Swaledale and he was hoping to be able to get a baseline for the air quality locally. Mr Croft remarked that the burning had been later this year and that there seemed to be a lot more of it on Reeth Moor than usual.

Footpath closures for the filming of Wuthering Heights

It was noted that the filming of Wuthering Height had been completed and that it was unlikely that the footpaths would be intermittently closed again over the summer for filming. Cllr Barningham suggested gauging if there was enough interest from the community to merit organising a bus to Richmond for parishioners wishing to see the film when it was scheduled for release in February 2026. It was agreed that this could be done once the release date was known.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm