



## Easingwold Town Council

2023 - 2024



## Annual Newsletter

### A Message from Council Chairman Peter Nottage

Suddenly another Easingwold year has passed, and the rays of spring are warming the residues of a very wet winter. A winter that has seen changes in both Easingwold and the Town Council.

This year our Council has new partners in Local Government, as Hambleton District Council has been fully replaced by the new North Yorkshire Council and its huge geography. They too are now overlaid by the directly elected Mayor for York and North Yorkshire. We have lost three Councillors in Panda Gledhill, Caroline Metcalfe, and Lottie Cranfield, not as careless as it seems, they are all developing their careers and struggled with balancing workloads. We wish them all well for the future and thank them for their contributions. Since the Council is a volunteer organisation, we needed to refill the gap they left, and we are pleased to have co-opted Iain Buckle and Ben Sparrow as our new Councillors. Currently we are looking to co-opt one more Councillor to complete our team. Our Council has spent some time refreshing its Vision for Easingwold (which you can see on our website), for the very good reason that much of what we had promised to do in our previous vision (starting from 2015) we had achieved. We wanted to renew our challenge of helping Easingwold grow and develop for the future. Thank you to everyone who commented in our public consultation we have included many of your thoughts into our plans.

Within the town, we have welcomed the resurfacing of Church Hill, Uppleby and Stillington Road – but there is so much more road improvement we would like to see done! As some businesses close, others open and offer their services to us and we wish them all well. Our new footpaths in the town centre have been widely welcomed and used. They have weathered in wonderfully well and seem to have always been there! The new children's play area in the Memorial Park was opened just in time for Easter. It's refreshing not to be worried about the condition of the old equipment and whether we are able to keep up with essential repairs! Our markets programme has continued, with the Little Bird monthly artisan market now well established. Our town's café culture is stronger than ever, and we have continued our investment in the Easingwold Summer of Music to keep that feeling of vibrancy and welcome in the town high.

We should like to thank our Clerks, Jane Bentley and Jean Fairbrother, for their continued excellent service to the town. We should also like to thank all our tradesmen and contractors who have completed their tasks so well and helped keep the town in good order and well presented for our visitors and residents alike.

Around the world there is no respite in sight for the multiple conflicts that are raging on, we can only hope that they are soon peacefully resolved. Equally at home, we know that many in our town have had a difficult year as the recent economic headwinds have continued and inflation has taken a heavy toll on many. We are grateful to EDCCA with their meals-on-wheels and Foodbank; and all the other volunteers and organisations around the town who have helped our community get through. On a more rueful note, we have had a spate of anti-social behaviour and vandalism recently, especially around the public toilets. Please report incidents to the Police and be assured that the Town Council will actively pursue prosecutions if we can.



Our local Foodbank is a part of EDCCA.

We know that times maybe difficult for some amongst us; and, if you need their help, please do call them on 01347 822875 and we know that they will provide you with a discrete support.

Please do contact EDCCA if you wish to volunteer to help local people; or, if you are having problems that may be helped by their support. If you are looking for local resources, please go to their website or call them.

EDCCA, Police House, Church Hill, Easingwold YO61 3JX Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm Tel:01347822875 email: [info@edcca.org.uk](mailto:info@edcca.org.uk)

### Inside:

**Page 2 – Memorial Park Improvements; Town Centre Footpaths; Easingwold's Summer of Music**

**Page 3 – 2023-24 Reflections; Millfields Park's Continued Evolution**

**Page 4 – Overview of the Council and its Committees**

#### EASINGWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Contact: Town Clerk

Easingwold Library, Market Place

Easingwold YO61 3AN Tel: 01347 822422

## Memorial Park Improvements



We have continued our programme of investment in the Memorial Park, an important recreational asset so close to the Town Square and the Galtres Centre.

The entrances and gates have been renovated, as soon will be the front and rear walls. The Bandstand has been fully restored. An avenue of trees and seating gardens has been created alongside the public footpath through to Paradise Fields. Finally, the Children's Play area has been fully restored and most of the play equipment replaced with modern, interactive units that really enhance the play experience for its users.

This whole programme is giving a much-needed boost to the whole park.



## Town Centre Footpaths



Our town centre footpaths have matured quickly and fully into their space in the town square; much to the delight of pedestrians looking for easier walking and accessibility.

We have added several bollards at pinch points where the paths and parking are close by each other to enhance safety and prevent accidents from arising.



## Easingwold's Summer of Music



Once again, we will welcome back the Easingwold Summer of Music from May 25<sup>th</sup> until Sept 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Our Town Band are always favourites, but there are 21 dates in all to enjoy. Don't miss 'Rockin' all over the Wold', our festival of sound on July 13<sup>th</sup>.

# 2023-24 Reflections



Easingwold's cricket ground basks in the spring sunshine ready for the happy crack of ball on willow.

Last year we were able to reflect on a significant list of improvements and changes that the years of our ETC Vision for Easingwold had brought. In fact, that investment continued in the completion of the town centre footpaths scheme and the Millfields Park and Memorial Park improvements programmes, and the restoration of the Long Street daffodil bank (highlighted above and below.)

Alongside this work we held a public consultation about our role and activities and commenced the renewal of our vision. We would like to thank everyone that participated and commented for us. We combined all the comments and then used them within the creative process of building our renewed vision. As highlighted by our Chairman, you can see the results of our deliberations by downloading the new Vision document on our website. In the end, we decided that the Town Council's philosophy for its vision should remain the same as that set in 2015 when we stated:

*"We want Easingwold to be a prosperous community, with a clear and distinctive character, that delivers a high quality of life for all its people. We want to see the positive development of Easingwold as a thriving modern town, a great place in which to grow up, live, grow old, access services, and visit."*

The statistical basis of our thoughts lies with the 2021 Census, which showed that (in 10 years) Easingwold's growth had been 15% in inhabitants and 18% in households. This is growth that continues today, as can be seen on building sites and in planning permissions all around the town. The Council sees this growth as an opportunity to adapt, conserving the best and improving the rest. So, the Council decided that its policies and programmes should be aimed at having a positive effect on the locality. That they must maintain and improve the quality of the natural and built-up environments; whilst enabling a positive social and commercial community in which our residents can thrive.

This is clearly a difficult balance to achieve, meeting the needs of a growing town and its people, without overwhelming its ambience and character. We also need to bear in mind that Easingwold Town Council has limited direct powers and responsibilities. It maintains and improves the amenities it is responsible for; but must work with multiple partners for the rest. Most local powers and responsibilities lie with North Yorkshire Council. However, even these responsibilities are now overlaid by the directly elected Mayor for York and North Yorkshire. For ETC to be successful, the Council needs to collaborate with these regional authorities; working with them to realise the best possible outcomes for Easingwold.

In the end our vision is based on two aspects:

**Physical Easingwold:** ETC will focus on influencing and managing through its policies and activities the appearance, the structure, and the nature of parish right from its borders until its focal point in the town marketplace. This should reflect our town's status as a respected, Georgian market town and local service centre. This physical infrastructure provides the foundation for the parish to meet its people's employment, lifestyle, and social needs.

**Social Easingwold:** ETC will focus on influencing and partially managing through its policies and activities the social and lifestyle aspects of the town, such that it is considered a great place in which to grow up, live, grow old, access services, and visit.

Within each aspect of the town, we have highlighted a series of special points where our particular attention needs to be drawn to help assure that our vision can become a reality. We do hope that you will take the time to read the vision yourselves. In the meantime, the Town Council is looking at its structure and organisation to make sure it is well adapted to help make its dream a reality.



Millfields Park, Spring 2024

## Millfields Park's Continued Evolution

As our major local park Millfields always gets our focused attention. This year, with expert advice, we have upgraded the management programme for the North and South Meadows to encourage their evolution into hay meadows with vibrant wildflower populations. This will see them move to autumn cutting with the toppings removed. We are working with NYC to solve some drainage issues under Millfields Lane, which led to the wetlands flooding in the winter.



## Town Council



We remain proud to fly the Ukrainian flag above our town square in support of Ukraine and its struggle against unwarranted aggression and war.



Uppleby was resurfaced in 2023.



Millfield's Exercise Shelter installed by the Easingwold Youth Council

- Our meetings are held in the Council Chamber of the Galtres Centre and are paperless,
- The agendas for all our meetings are published in advance on our website and local Facebook groups. You are welcome to attend if it interests you. If something you'd like to comment about is being discussed, then you can tell us about it during the public agenda section,
- Our policies, minutes, reports etc. are also stored on our website – so you can consult them to identify what actions we may have taken, what responsibilities we have, and what work we undertake,
- The Council has routine maintenance programmes in and around the town; please help our contractors by allowing them to complete their tasks without hindrance,
- The Town Clerks are the executive support for the Council. The Clerk also provides administrative and management support to the full council and its committees, and acts as its Responsible Financial Officer,
- Easingwold Town Council has limited responsibilities and so it is always pleased to try and help; however, it is often better to contact the other authorities direct if they operate in the arena of your question. To help in this the ETC website has a guide and link to different local service providers.

## Recreation & Open Spaces Committee

- This committee oversees a strong programme of maintenance and support for our wonderful open and recreational spaces and our children's play areas,
- In particular, the play areas have a working group who interact with quarterly professional inspections to assure that all the equipment is in good order and safe to use. Please contact the Clerks if you identify issues that may need attention,
- We have completely renovated the Memorial Park children's play area during the winter. We trust that the new and updated equipment will serve the town well for many years to come.
- As expressed elsewhere, our programme of work in Millfields Park has continued along the lines of our vision. We are working on finding funding for the developments that have not yet been delivered,
- We have continued our programme of tree works in the areas we own throughout the year. We have completed a professional tree report for the Claypenny area and felled some dangerous trees in several areas and pruned others,
- We have continued our programme of grass cutting and management for the main town greens and parks,
- We provide Council Allotments in Dawnay, and should anyone wish to have an allotment, then they should contact the Town Clerks to join the waiting list.

## Operations Committee

- Our offices are situated in the Town Library and open on each Tuesday from 2 - 5pm and Friday from 9:30 - 11:30am. You are welcome to visit then. Otherwise, you can call the Clerks anytime on 01347 822422 and leave a message; or email them on [clerk@easingwold.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@easingwold.gov.uk),
- The Operations Committee oversees the management of our Council, its offices, services, equipment, finances, markets, archives etc. Comments regarding the support we provide, or opportunities we have for improvement should be forwarded to the Town Clerks,
- Our Markets are thriving. We try to keep a high level of diversity in the traders present; and keep a list of potential new traders. We also have a series of part-time traders, who fill gaps for illness or holidays,
- We provide street trading licences on our land to cafés and hostelrys to add to the town's vibrancy,
- We are working with the NYC Vibrant Market Towns Initiative and the Wold-class Business Forum to keep Easingwold an exciting destination to visit and stay in,
- We do hope that you will all visit our town centre and its traders and businesses for all your day-to-day needs.

## Social & Events Committee

- The Council website, email, and IT systems are constantly updated and improved during the year. Please go on-line to [www.easingwold.gov.uk](http://www.easingwold.gov.uk) and look for yourselves.
- The Town Centre WiFi is provided by NYC,
- The *Easingwold Summer of Music* starts in late May for 2024
- Inclusion and accessibility are important aspects of the ETC programme. We support a broad range of local groups and organisations, as well as our Friendliness Initiative,
- Our programme of grants and donations is extensive; but is exclusively in support of local organisations. Should an organisation with which you are involved be looking for support; either financial or in any other way, please contact the Clerks for the necessary forms,
- Sadly, our Youth Council ceased its activities during the year, and we should like to thank the Youth Members for all they achieved – as seen in the Memorial Park table tennis table and Millfields Park shelter they installed with their funds.
- We invest in Christmas Lights and twice-yearly planting to keep us looking great,
- We offer opportunities to sponsor benches, seats and trees, details can be obtained from the Clerks.