

**Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council – New Parish Council Created
- The Story Of How A New Parish Council Was Created In The Previously
Un-parished Village of Pannal and Burn Bridge**

Headlines

- The villages of Pannal and Burn Bridge are in the Harrogate district of North Yorkshire.
- This case study tells the story of how the Pannal Village Society triggered a Community Governance Review, successfully establishing a parish council for Pannal and Burn Bridge.
- The case study provides an example of good practice for campaigns aspiring to establish a town and parish council, giving advice on how to build a good relationship with the principal authority and how to overcome challenges throughout the campaign.
- Currently Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council is due to have its first elections in May 2016 and campaign leaders are working towards encouraging residents to stand for election.

What is the theme? - Why A Council Is Wanted

Pannal and Burn Bridge wish to establish a parish council as it would increase their ability to manage their assets and to influence development plans in their area, being a legacy of the Pannal Village Society.

The Pannal Village Society was created in the early 1990s under the initiative of Eric Waight, a District Councillor at the time, who had a firm commitment that Pannal was missing out by not having a parish council. Parish Councils are statutory consultees in planning matters and, as such, have to be consulted on planning issues within their parish and, in Harrogate, have an opportunity to present their views to the relevant meetings. Thus, from the outset, one of the main purposes of the Society was to keep an eye on planning applications and make comments to the District Council when appropriate, concentrating on significant applications.

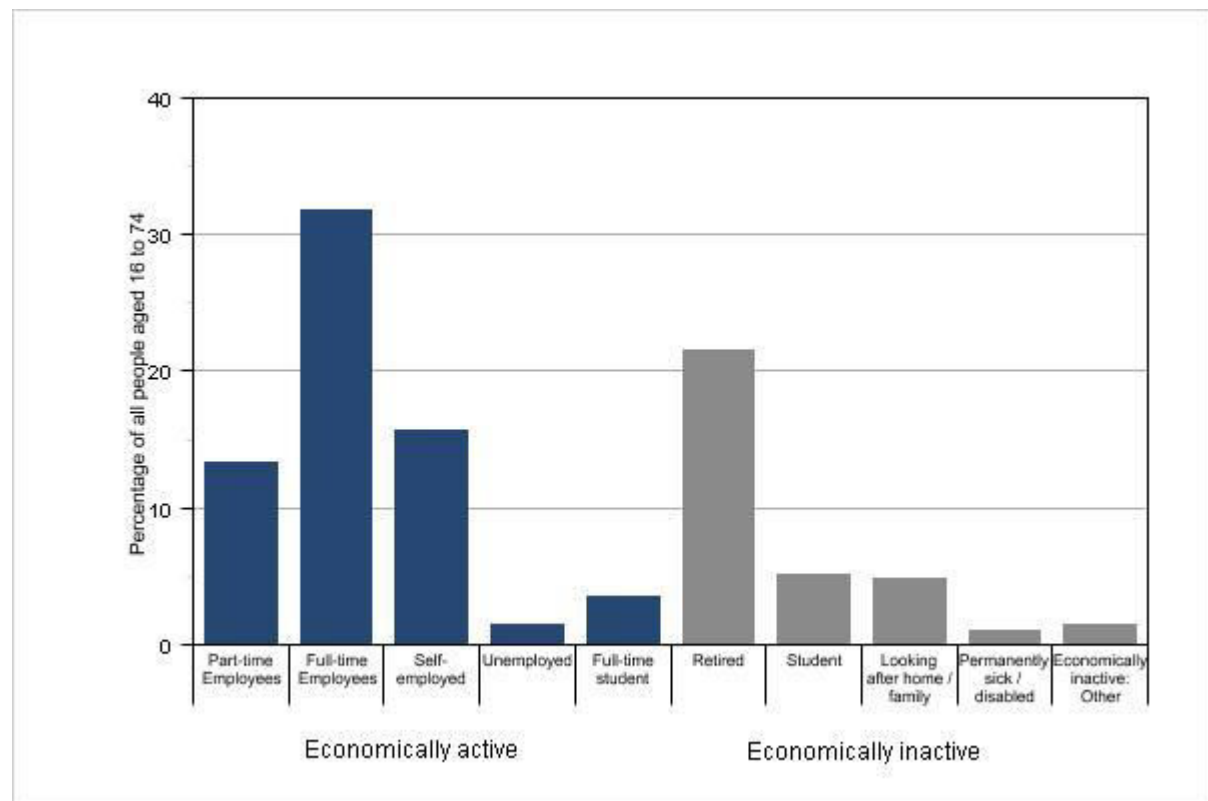
The area faces a continuous growth in population, as the proximity to Harrogate attracts more residents to the two villages, which also pride themselves with excellent leisure facilities such as the golf course and the cricket club. Thus, the Pannal Village Society has been actively contributing to planning consultations, on issues such as Local Development Plans and individual planning applications with a significant impact on the villages.

In 2014 the Government Planning Inspector declined Harrogate Borough Council proposals for housing and employment up to 2024. The Pannal Village Society was worried that with no plan in place, Harrogate Borough Council will struggle to reject inadequate proposals from developers. Thus, it was decided that it would be in the best interest of residents to have the presence, strength, representation and influence of a parish council. As a result Pannal Village Society launched a petition to trigger a Community Governance Review.

In addition to having the ability to influence planning decisions, it is hoped that a parish council will better administer services that the Pannal and Burn Bridge communities need, yet which borough and county authorities are unable to provide. Therefore, it is hoped that the creation of a parish council in the area would improve the representation of residents' interests.

Contextual issues related to the theme

Pannal is a village in the Harrogate district of North Yorkshire. The village is situated to the immediate south of Harrogate and in many ways is a suburb of the town. Pannal is well known for its golf course, which attracts people from across the town. The adjacent village of Burn Bridge plays host to the Pannal Cricket Club and the Black Swan Pub. As Pannal, Burn Bridge is home to commuters to Harrogate and Leeds, as well as a preferred place by many for retirement.



Burn Bridge is served by the 110 village bus to Harrogate, as well as the 36 bus route between Leeds and Ripon, via Pannal and Harrogate. Pannal railway station is the nearest rail link, providing trains to Leeds, and to York via Harrogate.

The area is ranked 32,773 out of the 32,884 English neighbourhoods in the Indices of Total Deprivation 2015, making it one of the least deprived areas in the country. The unemployment rate is lower than the average unemployment rate in England. According to the Office of National Statistics¹, in March 2013 Harrogate had an unemployment rate of 3.9%. This compares with the average 7.8% in England. The average weekly total household income in Harrogate was estimated at £910 in 2008, in comparison to £570 for the Yorkshire and the Humber region.

Who are the key partners/stakeholders involved?

The campaign for the establishment of a parish council in Pannal and Burn Bridge was sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government, receiving a grant under the New Councils' Programme.

The Pannal Village Society has been working closely with Chris Pilkington from the Yorkshire Local Councils' Associations, and the National Association of Local Councils. Campaign leaders have also been liaising with Harrogate District Council, who have been very helpful throughout the campaign.

Progress With Campaign To Date

The Pannal Village Society opened a petition requesting Harrogate Borough Council to conduct a Community Governance Review of the area in June 2014. The petition gathered 283 signatures very quickly, exceeding the minimum of signatures required, and was formally submitted on the 18th of July 2014 triggering a Community Governance Review in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Harrogate Borough Council launched a consultation with electors and other interested parties between the 12 May and 28 July 2015, which registered 68.7% of responses in favour of the creation of a Pannal and Burn Bridge Parish Council.

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<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/NeighbourhoodProfile.do?a=7&b=6275121&c=HG3+1JZ&g=6454580&i=1001x1012x1013&j=6309537&m=1&p=9&q=1&r=0&s=1456139447656&enc=1&tab=4&inWales=false>



*Campaign leaders celebrating their success in establishing a parish council.
From left, former chairman Peter Stretton, Dorothy Little, secretary, and Howard West.*

On 17 September 2015 the General Purposes Committee considered the Consultation responses alongside a report from the Head of Legal and Governance, and made a recommendation to council that a Parish Council be established for Pannal and Burn Bridge. This decision was endorsed by the full council on the 7th of October 2015.

The Borough Council found that a Parish Council will add value to the community of Pannal and Burn Bridge, delivering services which the Borough Council and the County Council are not able to provide, enabling other sources of funding to be accessed and facilitating the delivery of actions on the community-led action plan. It was agreed that the area of Pannal and Burn Bridge is a clearly defined community, separate from Harrogate town, with its own identity and the creation of a Parish Council will enhance community cohesion.

With the first elections due to take place in May 2016, campaign leaders are now working towards keeping the momentum and encouraging residents to stand for elections.

How have issues/challenges been overcome?

The Pannal and Burn Bridge campaign did not encounter any major problems. As Peter Stretton, campaign champion, confirmed: *“There were no serious problems to overcome. Whether this was through luck or good planning it is difficult to say although I like to think that we got things right from the outset. It helped that the vast majority of the community supported us”*.

With certainty, having an active village society that has been mobilising residents for more than a decade around issues that affected their community, also eased the process. The dedicated members of the Pannal Village Society, good planning, along with a good communication strategy have been key to a successful campaign.

Outcomes - Learning From The Campaign

The campaign to set up a parish council for Pannal and Burn Bridge has run very smoothly. Under the umbrella of the Pannal Village Society, the campaign received substantial attention from the residents in the area, with petitions being lodged at the Village Shop, the Village Hall and the local pub, the Black Swan. The unity of the two village communities also contributed to the petition being submitted in a relatively short period of time.

The Pannal Village Society also made sure that all residents in the area were aware of the proposal to create a parish council by organising a public meeting and distributing leaflets to all households in the villages. A representative from the Yorkshire Local Councils Associations attended the public meeting to help answer questions about what a local council could do for the community.

What have been the key elements of success?

When asked what the key elements of success were, Peter Stretton, campaign champion, did not hesitate: *“Having a committed group in the Village Society who were enthusiastic in pursuing the objective.”* Indeed, what all successful campaigns have in common is an active team of volunteers, willing to dedicate their time to do whatever needs to be done to keep the campaign running.

“The other key was to take adequate time to plan the details of the campaign so that nothing hindered progress.” – Peter Stretton.

Good planning is another essential element to ensure you lead a successful campaign. Planning every step ahead means that there will be very little that can take you by surprise. Although campaigns don’t always go as planned, by knowing what your next step is, you will also know what your options are when things don’t go according to plan. In addition,

planning also ensures that you make the most out of the resources available. By coordinating activities you ensure that the time that campaign members have the possibility to offer towards this cause is well spent.

Chris Pilkington, Deputy Chief Officer at Yorkshire Local Councils' Associations: *"The Pannal and Burn Bridge campaign was a good example of a model campaign to create a new parish council and was remarkably 'challenge' free. This was partly because the Village Society had a clear vision for the community and could bring residents along with them in regard to the proposal and partly because Harrogate Borough Council were open minded about creating a parish if public support could be demonstrated."*

What has been learnt? Campaign Lessons To Share With Others

The support of the Pannal Village Society has helped the campaign, by attracting more immediate attention than the campaign would have otherwise received. This, as well as the small size of the electorate, allowed the petition to be formally submitted in a relative short period of time. Campaigns to set up a new parish council can benefit from the support of civil society organisations, as often these organisations have already well established means of dispersing information and the necessary expertise of promoting the campaign. Although cooperation can suit both parties' interests, one shouldn't allow the campaign for a local council to be overshadowed by the interests of other organisations involved.

Who Can I Contact?

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Other information

NALC Create a Council: <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/create-a-council>

NALC Power to the People Resource: <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/publications>

Harrogate Borough Council Consultation response:

<https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/mslg/Documents/CommGovReview-ConsultationAnalysis.pdf>

Harrogate Borough Council Community Governance Review:

<https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/mslg/Pages/Community-Governance-Review.aspx>

Pannal Village Society: <http://www.pannalvillagesociety.org.uk/>.