

Welcome to the Freelanding!

Over the past few months the Parish Council has been working to improve the area of land next to Aldwark Bridge, planting trees and hedges, re-seeding with wildflower meadow mix, improving the parking area and putting in picnic benches. The work is nearly done and although it will take some time for everything to settle in, it is already looking wonderful. There is also a new footpath which you can use, running along the riverbank and crossing over on the golf club footbridge – our thanks go to Aldwark Manor Golf Club and Leeds & District Fishing Club. Thanks also to the Big Lottery Fund and NYCC for funding the project.

There has been a river crossing here for hundreds of years - the area was once called Rudford Wath, with meaning a fordable stream - and a ferry once ran between the banks. However, it was dangerous and unreliable in winter weather, and in 1772 an Act of Parliament was granted to John Thompson of nearby Kirby Hall to build a bridge. Thompson agreed on condition that the bridge remained in private hands - and today Aldwark Bridge remains one of only eight privately-owned toll crossings in the country. The sturdy iron crossing you see today was opened on 6 April 1877 two years after the first bridge, designed by Harewood House architect John Carr, fell into the water. Serene as the scene is today, this was the site of a tragedy when, in 1810, young men stood on the bridge to watch ice floes speeding beneath on flood water. In their excitement, they raced from one side of the bridge to the other - tragically the railing gave way and 12 fell into the water. Only one body was ever found.

Today, this is the perfect spot to enjoy a picnic, or just rest and watch the river traffic flow by. Nowadays, the commercial traffic has been replaced by pleasure craft such as powerful cruisers and jolly narrowboats. Keep an eye open for damselflies, such as the banded demoiselle. You might be lucky enough to spot a brilliantly-coloured kingfisher and you will almost certainly see noisy groups of mallard. The wild flowers here can be a picture in spring and summer. This has long been a popular site for fishermen who seek out roach, perch, barbel and pike.



The picture shows barges from Blundy Clark of York passing beneath the Toll Bridge heading for York on 6 October 1953. The leading barge is called Catherine Clark - apparently they were all named after members of the family. The barges transported coal up-river and sand and gravel down-river.

Your Parish Councillors are:

Keith Scott (Chairman), Brian Robinson (Vice Chairman), Judith Burton, Lawrence Paterson, Graham Potter, Mike Rampling and Richard White.

The Clerk to the Parish Council is Zillah Hopps, Tel: 331723, e-mail ClerkGO@AOL.com

Find out more on: www.great-ouseburn.co.uk

Allerton Waste Recovery Park plans are unveiled

Public consultations are now underway on the plans for the new waste facility at Allerton Park. This will involve sorting and recycling of materials, anaerobic digestion of food and organic waste, and, most controversially, incineration of the remaining waste to generate electricity.

There will be a **public meeting** in Great Ouseburn Village Hall on **Tuesday 20th July**, at 7.30 p.m., where you can meet representatives from the developer and take the opportunity to ask questions about the scheme.

And on **Wednesday 21st July** the Parish Council will be discussing the first set of consultation papers, which are to do with the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment that will be carried out.

Cricket Club

A special event this year is the biennial Golden Oldies competition, which is sponsored by Air New Zealand. This cricket festival involves teams from all over the world, made up of players who are over 40 years old. The Nidderdale League will host this year's event, and Ouseburn CC is the proud host of three of the games. These games will be held during the day on August 9th, 11th and 13th. Please come along and support the club – and if you would like to consider sponsoring the club in any way please contact Simon Trevithick on 07525 850402.

First Aid Training

The Parish Council has some free places on First Aid training courses available for anyone who is interested – courses have to be booked at least a month in advance, so if you are interested, please let us know as soon as possible.

The Parish Council has also agreed to support a Community First Responder Scheme in the village. This involves local volunteers undergoing training to use a defibrillator, and attending to local emergencies within a 10 minute timeframe. This scheme is run by the Ambulance Service and has proved very successful in other areas. If you want to be involved, please contact the Clerk (details below).

We are grateful for grant funding received from NYCC and from Little Ouseburn Parish Council.

New Equipment

Local residents, young and old, have been enjoying using three new pieces of exercise equipment which the Parish Council has installed at the children's Play Area next to the Village Hall. There is a "ski-stepper", "mini ski" and a "health walker". Try them out for yourselves and have some fun keeping fit!



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