Excellent news!!!  Last week we had confirmation from City of York Council that our application to have the Parish nominated as a designated area for the purpose of Neighbourhood Planning has been approved. This means that our plan is officially up and running and that the Local authority have to provide us with all necessary support. In all fairness they have been very helpful up to now.

To remind you, ‘A Neighbourhood Plan is a community led framework for guiding the future development and growth of an area and relates to the use and development of land and associated social, economic and environmental issues. It will be subject to examination and a referendum in the Parish. A Neighbourhood plan, once made will form part of the statutory development plan for the area and its policies will be used to determine development proposals in the neighbourhood. Planning applications will be determined in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan's policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise’

So we are on the cusp of a great opportunity for us as a community to really influence the future of our two villages but, of course, there is a lot to do. Our task is to get our Plan in place before City of York Council produce a revised local Plan. If we achieve this then our Plan will have to be taken full account of in the CYC plan.

We have received a fantastic response to our questionnaires with 72% being returned. Our sincere thanks to you all for your support and enthusiasm and for the many additional comments. This gives us a very strong evidence base from which to construct our plan plus the proof of the community’s views when we present our findings both for and against specific proposals

Interestingly some 94% were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their village as a place to live with community spirit, rural character and access to York and transport links being important factors. Unsurprisingly the Green Belt was universally regarded as very important scoring an average score of 9.6 out of a possible 10

We are currently embarked on the massive task of analysing all your responses and once this has been completed a full report will be produced and circulated to you all. At the same time we are writing to businesses and landowners in the Parish to obtain their views. We will then commence work on formulating our policies and writing the draft plan. The Draft Plan will be circulated throughout the Parish for consultation and then amended in response to the views of the community before the Final Plan is submitted to City of York Council.  CYC will examine the Plan to ensure it conforms to National planning regulations after which a referendum will take place in the Parish. If more than 50% of those voting support the Plan it then becomes a statutory document

Finally those of us on the Neighbourhood Planning Group would like to thank you once again for your tremendous support and with that continued support we as a community can take this opportunity to shape our own destiny