

**HAREWOOD AND WETHERBY TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL FORUM**  
**Scarcroft Village Hall, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

**Agenda Items:**

- Transition Towns
- Grass Cutting

**Transition Towns**

This item was proposed after two members of the forum had attended a talk on Transition Towns at a conference organised by the Yorkshire Rural Community Council.

Transition Towns was an initiative started 2 years ago in Devon aimed at showing how small rural communities can become carbon neutral in order to become more resilient to problems arising through climate change. Help is available from a handbook and website at [www.transitiontowns.org](http://www.transitiontowns.org).

A 12 step approach sets out how a place can become a transition town:

1. Setting up a steering group
2. Awareness raising
3. Lay the foundations
4. Launch
5. Form sub groups
6. Use open spaces
7. Develop visible manifestations of the project
8. Develop new skills
9. Build a bridge to local government
10. Learn from the past
11. Let it go where it wants to go
12. Create an Energy Descent plan

The climate change issues highlighted as specific to this area were listed as:

- Flooding
- The impact of the motorway
- Renewable energy, in particular windfarms
- Traffic congestion

Following a discussion it was agreed that this item should be included on the agenda of the next meeting to enable the views of the parish councils to be feedback.

**Grass Cutting**

Roger Foyle and Stephen Smith attended the meeting for this item.

The grass cutting contract with Glendales is for 3 years and is extendable by 3 single years. We are currently at the mid point of year 4 and they have been awarded the contract for year 5.

A number of issues were raised by the various representatives at the meeting concerning the quality of the grass cutting service, uncertainty over what Glendales are responsible for, and monitoring of the contract. Comments included:

- Glendales do not know what areas should be cut;
- The contract needs to be monitored properly if it is to be managed effectively;

- Glendales continue to get paid even though work is not completed;
- The grass is left uncut for long periods and when it is cut is not removed which creates a mess;
- The quality of the work is poor;

Some of the Parish Councils said they could take on some of the grass cutting, and one suggestion was to pilot a scheme where parish councils took over responsibility for grass cutting from Glendales.

Weed spraying was discussed, this is a reactive service sub contracted through Parks and Countryside.

Overhanging trees – responsibility depends on ownership.

### **Other Business**

Christmas lights were discussed, Barwick have recently applied for Well Being funding for Christmas lights, and Aberford expressed an interest in information on festive lights.

Harewood PC raised a query regarding responsibility for milestones and were advised to contact the Milestone Society.

The next meeting is on Thursday 13th November 2008 at Harewood Village Hall.