

Garsdale Parish Council

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To The Planning Department,
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority,
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Bainbridge
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Planning permission for conversion of redundant and dilapidated buildings in Garsdale

Garsdale Parish is located entirely within the YDNP in a area of outstanding natural beauty. As a result of this, a much larger than average proportion of properties in Garsdale are being used as second homes, either privately by the owners, or being let out commercially to holiday makers (holiday lets)

This is causing several concerns for the local residents: these holiday properties are unoccupied most of the time, with just occasional use by people whose primary residence is elsewhere, and hence are not interested in or able to engage with the local community – for instance joining the parish council, supporting the local church or joining groups such as the first responders.

More worryingly, the demand from the holiday market is pushing demand and prices of the smaller entry-level properties up, leading to a severe lack of affordable housing. This is a particular problem for local young people, many of whom have grown up on farms in Garsdale and still work on their family farm. Unfortunately, this type of farm work requires people to be available pretty much 24 hours, 7 days a week rather than just 9-17 on weekdays, so it is not practical to commute from Kendal or even just from Sedbergh.

The lack of affordable housing, and the resulting loss of a whole segment of society including young people, is causing a serious skew in the population demography in Garsdale, which is a concern for the future viability of the community.

Garsdale Parish Council would strongly encourage the Yorkshire Dales National Park's planning authority to approve future planning applications for derelict and/or redundant buildings to permanent residences. If a derelict/redundant building fulfils the requirements for conversion to a holiday let, then the Parish Council believe there are no valid arguments against conversion to a permanent dwelling, which would be much better for the community in Garsdale.

For conversions within the farm diversification scheme and similar, where a conversion is expected to provide an on-going income for the farm, the Parish Council would suggest allowing conversions for permanent rental; this would both supply a more seasonally independent and reliable income than holiday lets, whilst also providing an affordable home for the segment of population unable to afford larger-than-average mortgages.

*Annette Colton, Chairman
On behalf of Garsdale Parish Council*

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