

Helmsley Traffic Report v1 Dec 2018



This report was prepared by Helmsley Town Council in response to the growing number of complaints about traffic related issues in Helmsley. It has been produced to inform the responsible agencies of the daily dilemma faced by road and footpath users in Helmsley both residents and visitors.

Helmsley Town Council December 2018

Some Comments from **Helmsley Traffic** **Facebook Page** **facebook**

I have lived here for 20 years and never knew that the parking in front of and at the side of The Black Swan are actually public car parks! Enlightening, thanks for creating this page..
AJ

4 men x 8hrs = 32 traffic cones placed on the pavement. Well done North Yorkshire County Council .CP

Standard chaos in Helmsley. ML

Just had to help an elderly couple with a wheelchair because they were too scared to go down the road..
RS..

Crazy glad we where are up Farndale. I'm going back to Canada where its easier to park & walk on pavements. NR

Read more and see the pictures on **Helmsley Traffic** Facebook page

Although Helmsley Town Council has no direct responsibilities for traffic and parking issues in Helmsley it is hoped that this report will enlighten interested parties and enable work to improve matters to commence with a clear understanding of the issues for consideration and determination.

The report is being produced under the three headings below with some natural overlap of issues.

Helmsley Parking

Helmsley Traffic

Helmsley Road Safety

This report is appropriate because of:

- ⇒ **The failure of the responsible agency to carry out a promised review of traffic, parking and related issues.**
- ⇒ **Elements of road safety which are being ignored, even compounded.**
- ⇒ **The frustration of Helmsley residents both vehicles users and pedestrians including the disabled who battle daily to complete their journey in Helmsley.**
- ⇒ **The exasperation of agricultural and commercial users of the roads in and surrounding Helmsley.**
- ⇒ **The risks of emergency vehicles not being able to get to their destination.**
- ⇒ **Police recommendations.**
- ⇒ **The misuse of Disabled Parking Permits.**
- ⇒ **Increased traffic levels**
- ⇒ **Opportunities for improvement to the current situation**

Helmsley Parking

Whether the statement that ‘Helmsley is a victim of its success’ is relevant or even true is debateable. What is certain is that the agencies responsible for managing and planning for increased traffic levels for whatever reason have failed to support Helmsley by its avoidance of any action to mitigate the problems of parking in Helmsley.

The Market Square

Parking in Helmsley Market Square is operated by Ryedale District Council which collects the parking fees and employs a Scarborough based agency to issue parking tickets for parking offences. Parking Tickets in the Market Square can only be issued by Ryedale District Council’s enforcement officers who visit Helmsley on a rota basis.



Recently Ryedale District Council created 5 free short term (20 minutes) parking spaces on the south side of the Square. They are used by people for brief shopping visits to Helmsley which require a vehicle and necessitate the display of a parking ticket dispensed from the parking ticket machines outside the Town Hall. What is less clear is: Has RDC replaced the two disabled parking bays effectively taken out of the parking equation in the square?

For some disabled visitors 20 minutes to park exit their vehicle, remove a walking aid from the vehicle, traverse the car park and return with a timed display ticket renders any remaining time for shopping, non-existent.

Recognising that two of the 20-minute parking bays created on the south of the square were originally disabled parking bays, have they been replaced in the main aspect of the Square’s parking? If not, Helmsley Square has lost two full time disabled parking bays which if nothing else increases ‘on road’ disabled parking.

The Market Square is due for an upgrade which should include:

- ⇒ The redesign of the parking space/s
- ⇒ The creation of a kerbed pedestrian walkway around the car park thus creating the requirement for a redesigned egress and exit.
- ⇒ Some planting.
- ⇒ A 'you are here' display board.

The Black Swan Car Park

The car park in front of the Black Swan on the northern elevation of the Market Square is a **public car park**. It has a 10 minute waiting rule again for visitors who only want to stay or shop briefly. It was policed by Ryedale District Council who gave up enforcement when every ticket they issued was set aside after it was claimed to be a hotel resident who receive a dispensation if they are staying at the Black Swan. This allowance appears undocumented and no reason has ever been given for its existence or whether a fee is

The Long Stay Car Parks

Situated to the north and north west of Helmsley Castle Helmsley's Long Stay Car Parks are popular but poorly signed from the main thoroughfares. Various policies on charging and vehicle usage have in previous years lead to some confusion and the advent of the overflow car park being used for free overnight mobile home use has caused issues with residents and some businesses which supply a chargeable overnight 'mobile' stop. This free service was supposed to create night-time usage of local hostelries but with barbeques, and takeaways this is not generally the case. There have also been issues with people sleeping in cars and caravans on both aspects of the north westerly long stay car park.

Street Parking in Helmsley

It is this aspect of parking in Helmsley which causes most concerns to residents and some visitors. Of all the responses received by the Town Council and those posted on the Helmsley Traffic Facebook Page 'on street parking' has produced the largest response.

There can be no argument that pinch points and bottlenecks in on street parking cause residents' and businesses huge issues. Combine this with indiscriminate over the kerb parking, the lack of yellow lines, and the flagrant misuse by a significant number of Disabled Parking Permit holders and it is easy to understand the frustration of residents, agricultural and commercial vehicle users as they strive to negotiate the Town's choked highways and footpaths. The primary areas of concern for 'on street parking' include:

Carlton Road & Bondgate

(eastern end)

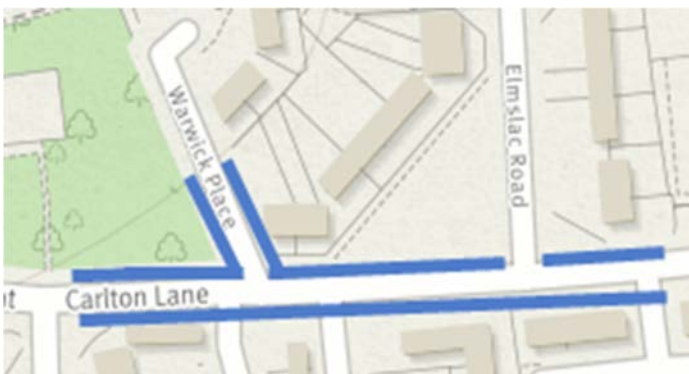


Within the blue lines on the map at the junctions of Bondgate, Carlton Road, Ashdale Road and Linkfoot Lane there are within 50 metres of each other:

A staggered crossroads, a Puffin Crossing, a bus shelter and bus stop, two stop signs a traffic light warning sign (partially obscured), a petrol station forecourt, a recently expanded 'convenience' shop, a country store entrance/exit, two garage entrances/exits and a school bus stop, two directional signs, a housing development sign. There are no parking restrictions in this area. At busy times this junction has been described as an accident waiting to happen.



Carlton Lane/Elmslac Road/Warwick Place At the western of Elmslac



The junctions of Warwick Place, and Elmslac Road with Carlton Lane make Carlton Lane as far as the School effectively a single carriageway road. On the advice of the Police two signs have been erected on the corner of Elmslac Road and Carlton Lane to try and discourage parking on Carlton Lane as without these temporary signs the road closes to less than the wheelbase of a large tractor. This also has an adverse effect on emergency vehicles traversing the road who are not always able to squeeze through the parked vehicles.

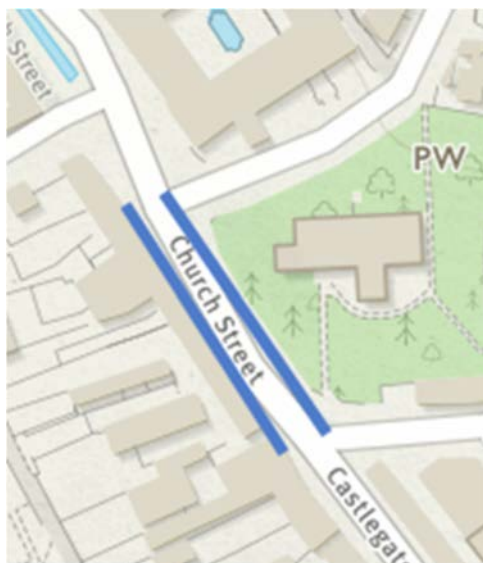


Station Road and Ryegate



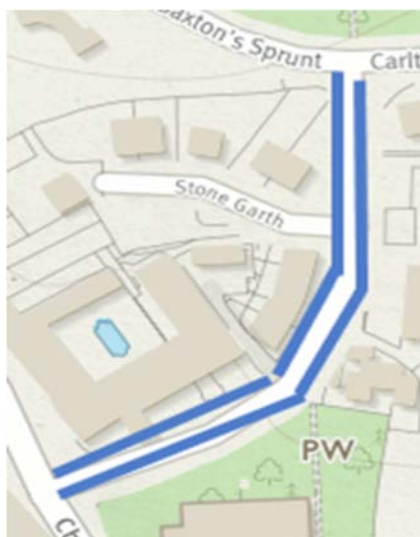
Perhaps these roads more than any other in Helmsley cause the most frustration to road users. These roads provide direct access from the A170 to Helmsley's industrial estate entrances and consequently heavy lorries and all types of commercial vehicles attempt to traverse these roads sometimes with no success. Parking on both sides of Ryegate and Station Road causes heavy vehicle users to abandon these roads for both Pottergate and Ashdale Road which can and does cause even more chaos in trying to reach the industrial estate.

Church Street



Although Church Street is restricted in parking it is continually abused by Disabled Permit Holders who park on the western side of the road and reduce the carriageway to single file traffic. Combine Harvesters and large vehicles frequently must mount the kerb on the eastern side of the road to clear parked vehicles. At busy times traffic has to wait at either end of a seventy yard strip to travel this road.

Cannons Garth



Cannons Garth connects Carlton Lane with Church Street. On the south side of the road half way down towards Church Street there is single yellow which allows non-seasonal parking at all times.

No other restrictions on parking on Cannons Garth means this road at busy times is only navigable with stop start movements as vehicles continually meet and either reverse or pull in to driveways to get past each other. Agricultural traffic uses this road to service Low, Middle and High Farms on Baxtons Lane Frequently they find it impassable.

Bridge Street



Bridge Street between the Market Square and Buckingham Square has double yellow lines on both side of the road and the narrowest section of the A170 on this main arterial road. It is then unfortunate that Disabled Parking Permit Holders chose this section of road to exercise their right to park 'anywhere'. The disabled occupants of the vehicle below chose to park with their lights on on this section of the A170 while they lunched at a local hostelry. They appeared ignorant to the traffic queues for which they were directly



Market Square Northern Aspect



Together with Station Road/Ryegate and Church Street this is the worst section of Road in Helmsley. The yellow line allows for parking outside All Saints Church, the purple line has double yellow lines which are massively abused by Disabled Parking Permit holders who reduce the carriageway to one direction by their inconsiderate parking. The red line follows a single white line in front of the Black Swan Car Park which is supposed to designate a pedestrian walk pathway but in fact provides for short stay inconsiderate parking by anyone who is unable to park in front of the Black Swan as that public car park is always full of hotel guests.

The gentleman in the blue shirt is the coach driver. He abandoned his vehicle to remonstrate with the driver of the blue mini and the Black Swan delivery vehicle. Traffic stood still for 12 minutes while this was cleared and is another example of road rage because of inadequate parking restrictions in crucial parts of Helmsley.

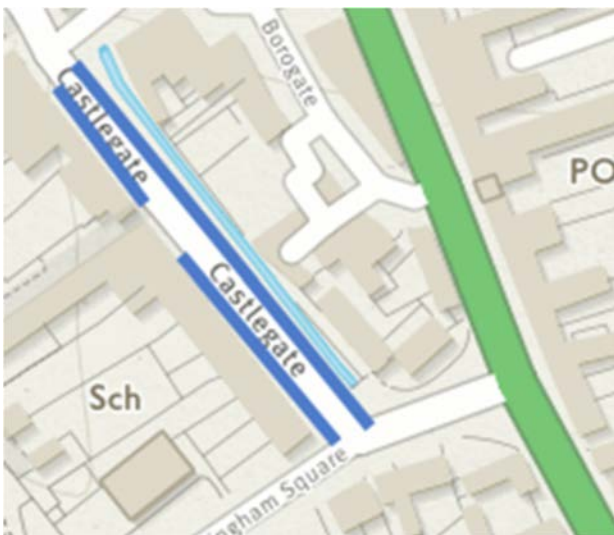


Borogate



Borogate in Helmsley is an Access Only road. Regrettably it is rarely policed. It has no apparent parking restrictions and there are no, no parking/no waiting signs and no yellow lines. With the advent of Barkers Yard, a new shopping complex, off Borogate delivery access essential. Again there is a huge amount of frustration with shop/café owners when cars that are not delivering park and block delivery access.

Castlegate



Castlegate which runs parallel with Helmsley Beck has double yellow lines on the eastern side of the road. On the western road aspect parking is allowed and there is a 'waiting place' in the middle of the western parking to allow vehicles to pass as it is impossible to have 3 traffic lanes on this road. This situation is about to be exacerbated by a small housing development off the western side of Castlegate which can only add the melee.

Pottergate



Pottergate runs north to south from Bondgate to Ryegate/Station Road.

The housing on Pottergate is terraced which means that vehicles park on both sides of the road with little thought or opportunity to seek safe and unobstructive parking.

Add to this larger vehicles that visit the delivery access road to the shops on Bridge Street and those trying to visit the industrial estate and this road is no longer fit for purpose.

Matters have reached such an extreme that the recycling and refuse collection operatives no longer use this road preferring to walk the bins to the bottom of the road where the vehicles wait for the refuse or recycling bins.

Helmsley Traffic

Whether it is the increase use of Satellite Navigation Systems, the popularity of Helmsley as a destination, the growth in the use of powerful, very fast and very noisy motorcycles, the increased housing in Helmsley or the ability to speed in Helmsley almost without sanction Helmsley Traffic is reaching arguably threatening levels.

Three roads lead into Helmsley. The main A170 which runs east to west and the B 1257 which enters Helmsley from the north. All these roads have speed restrictions as they enter Helmsley. Oddly the A170 from the west has no speed calming measures as it enters town until the 30mph sign just prior to the bridge, thus speeding vehicles need to reduce their speed from the maximum speed limit on a main A road to 30mph in a relatively short distance. A 40mph sign prior to the 30mph restriction seems worthy of consideration to help reduce speeding traffic over a longer distance.

From the east the A170 enters Helmsley through a 40mph speed restriction to a 30mph zone delineated by a central traffic road narrowing island. The well surfaced but unlit road is then straight in to Helmsley inviting users to speed into Town. Leaving Helmsley on this road towards Scarborough even allowing for the 'calming' chicane because of its uninterrupted length almost ensures traffic speeding away from Helmsley before leaving the 30mph and 40 mph restriction zones.

It is not uncommon to see vehicles leaving Helmsley at a safe speed overtaken on the other side of the central traffic island by vehicles speeding away from Helmsley.

The B1257 enters Helmsley from the North and is the start/finish of the infamous 19 mile Helmsley/Bilsdale TT. The road is restricted into Helmsley initially by a 40 mph limit which reduces to a 30 mph limit nearer to Helmsley. Again this road is attractive to speeding vehicles as it is wide and fast. This can be evidenced by the number of speeding vehicles both arriving and leaving Helmsley. Noise from speeding motorcycles accelerating through their gears away from Helmsley is a very frequent 'sound in the summer time' as is the late braking and going 'down' through the gears of the motorcycles arriving into Helmsley on this road.

Carlton Road/Ashdale Road/Bondgate/ Linkfoot Lane



The Carlton Road/Ashdale Road/Bondgate/ Link-foot Lane junction causes some of the largest concerns in respect of traffic. Within 50 yards a staggered crossroads, a Puffin Crossing, a bus shelter and 2 bus stops, two stop signs, a traffic light warning sign (partially obscured), a petrol station forecourt, a recently expanded 'convenience' shop, a country store entrance/exit, two garage entrances/exits and a school bus stop, two directional signs and a housing development sign does not bode well for traffic issues.



Some of the more notable traffic issues occur entirely because of the flagrant misuse of Disabled Parking Permit.

Opposite All Saints Church on the B1257 is one favourite place for disabled badge users. Indiscriminate parking on double yellow lines on the western aspect of the road, where the shops are situated, leads to one way traffic on this section of the road. Larger agricultural vehicles, combine harvesters, tractor and trailer units, spraying machines frequently must mount the kerb to get past this traffic. In Government guidance on the use of disabled permits it is quite clear that badge holders should not park **WHERE IT ENDANGERS OR INCONVENIENCES OTHER ROAD OR PEDESTRIANS** which it obviously does here and yet the only parking 'action' that seems have taken place on the section of the road is a shop owner who was ticketed while loading!



Department
for Transport

The Blue Badge scheme: rights and responsibilities in England

The Blue Badge is not a licence to park anywhere. If you park where it would cause an obstruction or danger to other road users you could be fined or receive a Penalty Charge Notice or have your vehicle removed.

Do not park where it would endanger, inconvenience or obstruct pedestrians or other road users. Examples of dangerous or obstructive parking include the following, although there are others:

- school entrances, bus stops, on a bend, or near the brow of a hill or hump bridge;
- school entrances, bus stops, on a bend, or near the brow of a hill or hump bridge;
- parking opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space;
- **where it would make the road narrow**, such as by a traffic island or roadworks;
- **where it would hold up traffic**, such as in narrow stretches of road or blocking vehicle entrances;
- where emergency vehicles stop or go in and out, such as hospital entrances;
- where the kerb has been lowered or the road raised to help wheelchair users
- on a pavement, unless signs permit

Northern Market Square



On the road outside the old National Westminster Bank is another favourite place for badge holders to park with absolutely no thought for other road users. Please see the earlier photograph of the irate coach driver a delivery lorry.

Indiscriminate parking near or at road junctions and partially on footpaths causes disabled pedestrian users' huge issues especially those on mobility scooters, please see the previous section of this report

Road Safety



Parking and traffic have a direct impact on Helmsley Road Safety as does:

Incomplete and worn road markings, faded to non-existent zig zag lines outside the garage/puffin crossing, all types of yellow lines within the Town, breaking up, poorly maintained and in some places inadequate and non-existent.

No 'no loading' signs in critical places in the Market Square, no yellow lines on the northern aspect of the square, leading to parking and obstructions on the 'painted footpath'.

Poor Market Square signage with access to the Car Parking area available from several points. Wherever vehicles and pedestrians share common areas the risk of injury increases considerably and with no control of access and egress to the parking area this can only magnify this problem.

Swan Lane



Locally known as Black Swan Lane this single track road runs from the top of the Market Square to Carlton Lane adjacent to the Black Swan.

It services the Black Swan car park, parking behind the former Crown Hotel, now Fat Face, parking and access to houses and shops to the rear of Bondgate together with most of the deliveries to the Black Swan, which are considerable.

Large delivery vehicles approaching from the north fail to realise, there is no signage, that they will be unable to exit on to the Market Square at the south end of the road because of the buildings which are very close together.

This leads to large vehicles having to either reverse out to the north or attempt to turn around near the bottom of Swan Lane.

Neither option can be described as safe or satisfactory.

Some suggestions from the public, both Helmsley residents and visitors included in comments made to Helmsley Town Council via the Council's website and a specific Facebook page as well as responses to hand delivered questionnaires include;

- ⇒ A170 west: 40 mph restriction at the top of the hill leading into Helmsley
- ⇒ A170 east rumble strips from the Ashdale Road / Linkfoot Lane junction to the 30mph central island
- ⇒ A170 east rumble strips from the 40mph speed signs to the 30mph central island
- ⇒ A one way system around Helmsley's main centre utilising:
Bridge Street—Castlegate—Buckingham Square—Market Square (north)
- ⇒ A 20MPH speed restriction where the 30mph speed restrictions now apply
- ⇒ A 20mph restriction on Bridge Street
- ⇒ A traffic island at the junction of Linkfoot Lane and Riccal Drive with an access road from the island to the Wharfedale Homes site to the north of Swanland Road
- ⇒ More speed monitoring
- ⇒ More ticketing of offending vehicles.

Finally, this document is a work in progress report. As matters become resolved they will be deleted from this report. As other issues are raised, they will be added. It is therefore essential that readers check with Helmsley Town Council that they are reading the most up to date issue. This is V1. dated December 2018

Please also remember that Helmsley Town Council is NOT responsible for Parking/Traffic/Road Safety in Helmsley and this report can only ever be advisory. Thanks