

PRESENT: **Chair:** The Mayor - Councillor Kathryn Davies

Councillors: J Batt, M Flood, H Gostlow, M Longhurst,
 S Oakes and M Walker.

Staff Present: The Clerk

Absent: Cllrs K Lacey, A Bell and J Pickard

Late Arrivals: None **Early Departures:** None

RESOLVED: To receive apologies and approve reasons for inability to attend from Councillors D Goode and H Westmancoat.

None for this meeting.

None for this meeting.

Mr Rhodes spoke passionately about his extensive research and thoughts on the future of Knaresborough, its Town, Castle, Gorge, and Forest and how Knaresborough's rich history links with current projects and opportunities such as devolution and the White Rose Forest. (See appendix for Profile details by Mr D Rhodes).

Meeting closed at: 8.40 p.m.

Signed by the Mayor:
Councillor Kathryn Davies

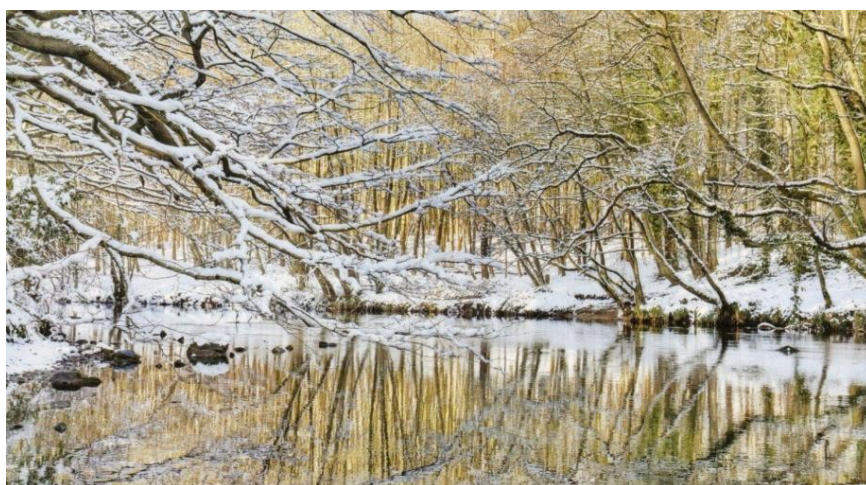


KNARESBOROUGH

Town, Castle, Gorge and ancient Forest

PROFILE

2023 – 2030



Photographs by Charlotte Gale

KNARESBOROUGH

Town, Castle, Gorge, and ancient Forest

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Preface

This is a very brief personal series of thoughts from a retired architect, who spent 40 years in local Government. The last 15 of those years were at Harrogate Borough Council. Knaresborough to me has been a delightful Castle Market Town, but looking back, over the centuries, it has taken three serious blows to its pride / natural and built heritage.

1. 1086 Chenardesburg gradually developed into a fine market town with its Castle being at times a grand regional royal residence. But c**1650** the Castle had to be dismantled so it could no longer be defended. Knaresborough lost its regional Royal residence and related importance
2. **1770** Enclosure Act gradually dismantled its Royal Forest / legal administration that reached westwards beyond Blubberhouses.
3. **1974** Local Government Reorganisation resulted in locally the formation of Harrogate 'District' Council taking over management of Knaresborough's – Market, Castle, Knaresborough House, Conyngham Hall etc. All the assets KTC had assembled. Also West Riding was consolidated and NYCC extended

2023 April 1st another Local Government Reorganisation will mean the end for Harrogate District Council. North Yorkshire Council will take over the responsibilities of 7 Districts and it seems that as and when its appropriate it will hand back to local Town Councils the related responsibilities they are willing to manage [item 3 above]

Too some this seems a marvellous opportunity for Knaresborough; to gradually re establish the true natural and built heritage of its remarkable setting / history.

1. Introduction

The Domesday Book of 1086 gives the earliest known written reference to Knaresborough as Chenardesburg and the Burg indirectly means defended settlement. Illustrating that this defended location, high above the River Nidd, has been appreciated for well over 1000 years.

The Town developed easterly away from the Castle located on the Gorge, whilst the ancient Royal Forest developed westerly for 30mils. Today these remarkable natural and built parts of the town's heritage, are mainly appreciated separately. Today there is now a marvellous opportunity to link them together as a whole to raise the important profile of Knaresborough in the Yorkshire region.

North Yorkshire Council [NYC] will absorb the present tasks of Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmond, Ryedale, Scarborough and Selby Districts. Knaresborough will have its 12 local Councillors and just two NY Councillors.

NYC departments, senior officers, staffing arrangements and use of various District Centres is still being resolved.

It seems that Devolution financially will be from central Government to the recently established York North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership [YNY LEP] and then to York City and NYC.

As KTC and the community think about the potential roles, tasks, structure, Pride in the Towns natural and built heritage, it is important to appraise the natural and built heritage of NYC. In particular the remarkable:

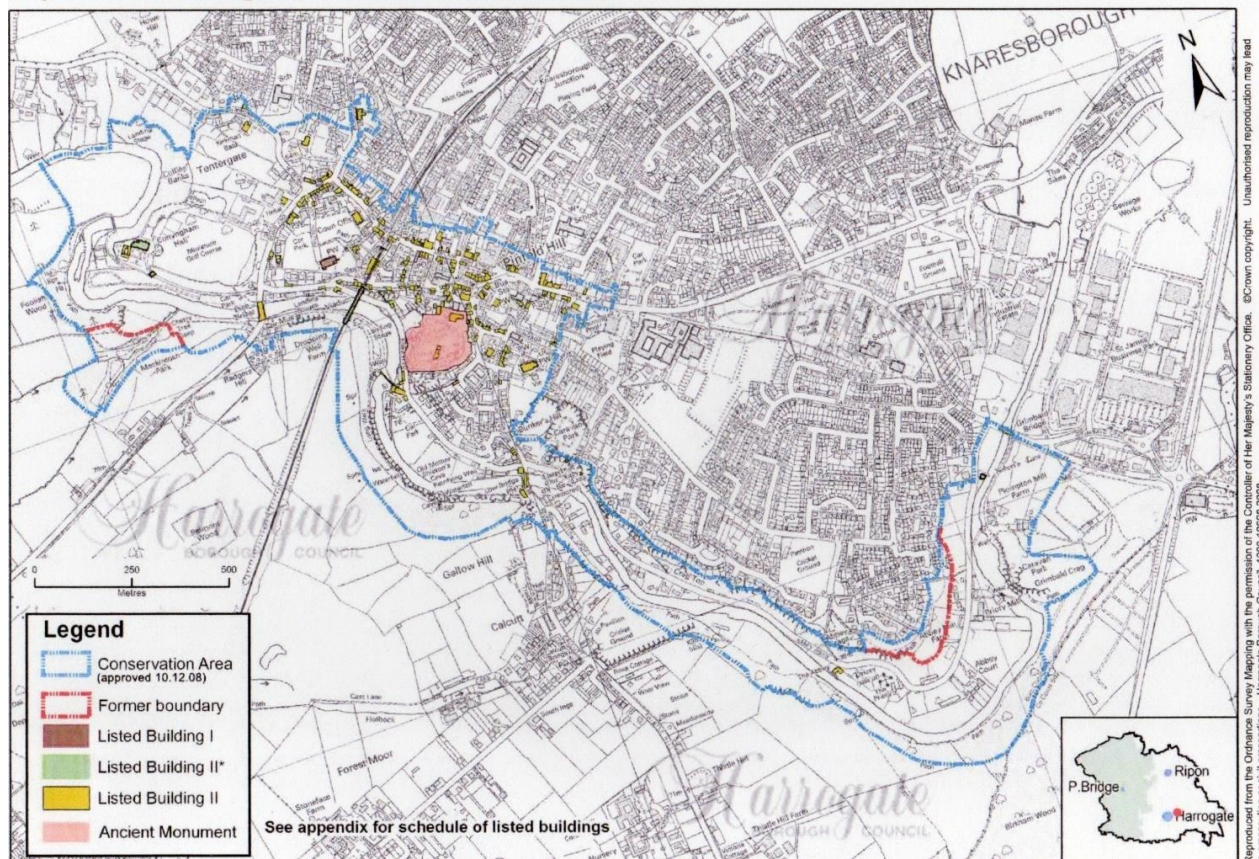
Coast-line, North Yorkshire Moors, Yorkshire Dales, Vale of York, etc. In addition the numerous NYC market towns, river settings, private & English Heritage Castles and Ripon as a Cathedral City, all need to be considered.



2. Knaresborough TOWN

Clearly the town has developed from Medieval times with Georgian, Victorian, and modern overlays of development. In 1969 the heart and setting of the town was designated a Conservation Area to conserve the town's natural and built heritage. This was reviewed in 1978, 1994 and 1995 and a comprehensive 68 page appraisal of the Conservation Area carried out in 2008. [See below HBC Map 2 for the blue Conservation Area boundary]

Map 2: Knaresborough Conservation Area boundary



Compared to other town centres in the North East this historic town has had various projects carried out in recent decades:

- Town Scheme grants - late 1980/early 90's
- CAP Conservation Area Partnership HBC, NYCC & EH £100,000 grant/yr for six years restoration of fabric / structural issues - late 90's early 2000.
- LOTS Living over the shop scheme creating over 20 new dwellings in town centre derelict buildings

However the town still has numerous concerns over various issues related to:

- Traffic on the High Street, Street enhancement for the Market Place etc.
- Linkage from Waterside to the Castle and Market Place.
- Limited parking and the need for park & ride.
- Potentials for the semi derelict Cattle Market area.
- Pedestrian access from Waterside up to the Castle area.
- Sustainability, biodiversity and Public open play space in the town centre.

3. Knaresborough CASTLE

Today the Castle is owned by the Duchy of Lancaster, a theoretical sovereigns ownership going right back to John of Gaunt as the 1st Duke of Lancaster c1360. However the Castle was managed by KTC until 1974 and since then by HBC up to 31st March 2023.

1st April management will transfer to NYC and there is the question as to who should gradually work to realise the true significance of the Castle, and the important Kings Tower – NYC, KTC or perhaps English Heritage who manage so many Castles etc in NYC. Perhaps a partnership, with EH managing the actual Kings Tower /archaeological interpretation, and KTC managing the public open space.

1925 – 26 Castle excavations by S. C. Barber

1947 Earliest known Guide to Knaresborough Castle

1984 Dilapidation Report by Napper Collerton Partnership

2007 Atkins of Leeds – Conservation Management Plan- mainly consolidation.

2008 A Country Life article by John Goodall entitled 'A Royal Gift' really brought to life the fact that the Kings Tower c1310 really was designed, financed and built by Edward II, primarily using stone masons from York Minster, as a gift for his companion Piers Gaveston. In short it was a house that could be defended, rather than a Castle that might be lived in. As JG says 'it offers valuable insights into the development of English architecture at the time ... with sumptuous interiors and designed with deliberate delicate complexity it deserves to be much better known'

Liaise – with NYC & Duchy & EH over a long term lease on the Duchy land

Study – Atkins Plan and consider potential for archaeological reinterpretation.

Commission – EH style Castle booklet with front & back foldout covers.

Visit – Duchy castle's at Peveril/EH managed, Pontefract/ Kirkless managed. Also NYC area EH Castles at Spofforth, Richmond, Middleham, Helmsley etc

Consider – A total revue of the Castle and its setting to be implemented for a 900th Anniversary of the Castle for 2030, negotiate extensive grant potential

Link – the **Castle's** potential with its **Gorge** setting and the ancient **Forest**.



Terry Ball illustration courtesy of John Goodall

C1320 The King's Tower at Knaresborough Castle.

4. Knaresborough Gorge

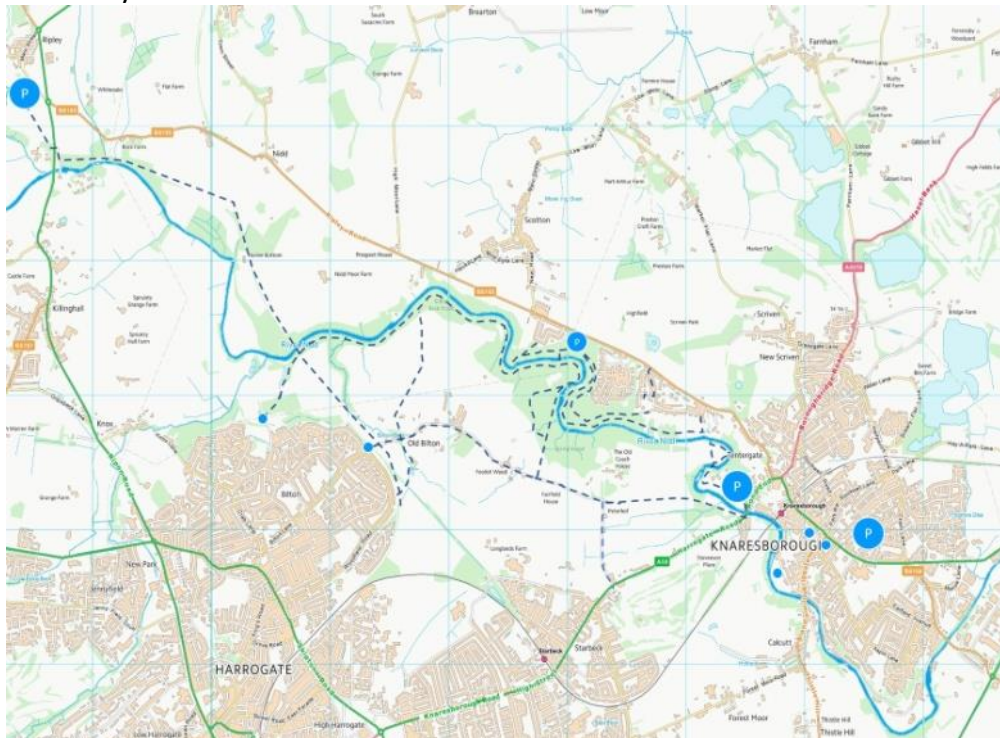
The true geological significance of the Knaresborough Gorge is fully covered in a British Geological Survey of 2008 entitled '*The Geology of Knaresborough Gorge*'. Clearly there is a need to produce a report fully covering the natural and built heritage of the Gorge asap. There is a strong case for NYC and KTC to form a Working Group to investigate the full potential of this remarkable Gorge. In particular consider the recent Glover Report which advocates the need to identify new 'National Nature Reserves'.

For decades Bilton Conservation has been doing a great biodiversity role in that area. Woodland Trust with others has developed their Nidd Gorge site for all to enjoy 24/7. Similarly Sustrans have developed the 'Greenway' from Ripley to Harrogate and Knaresborough 24/7.

Liaise – KTC and NYC along with WT, YWT etc. All to be based on three core sections:

- Killinghall Bridge to High Bridge – a very natural heritage biodiversity section
- High Bridge to Low Bridge – clearly a built heritage section with Knaresborough Town, Castle and cliff face on one side of the river and Mother Shipton's rural setting on the other
- Low Bridge to Grimbold Bridge – featuring more dramatic cliff face, House in the Rock, Chapel in the Crag, mixed natural and built heritage with Saint Roberts Cave close to Grimbold Bridge

The developing Longlands project is showing the community spirit in the area, along with other woodland planting initiatives. All lead to links with the new community 'Yorkshire White Rose Forest' scheme.



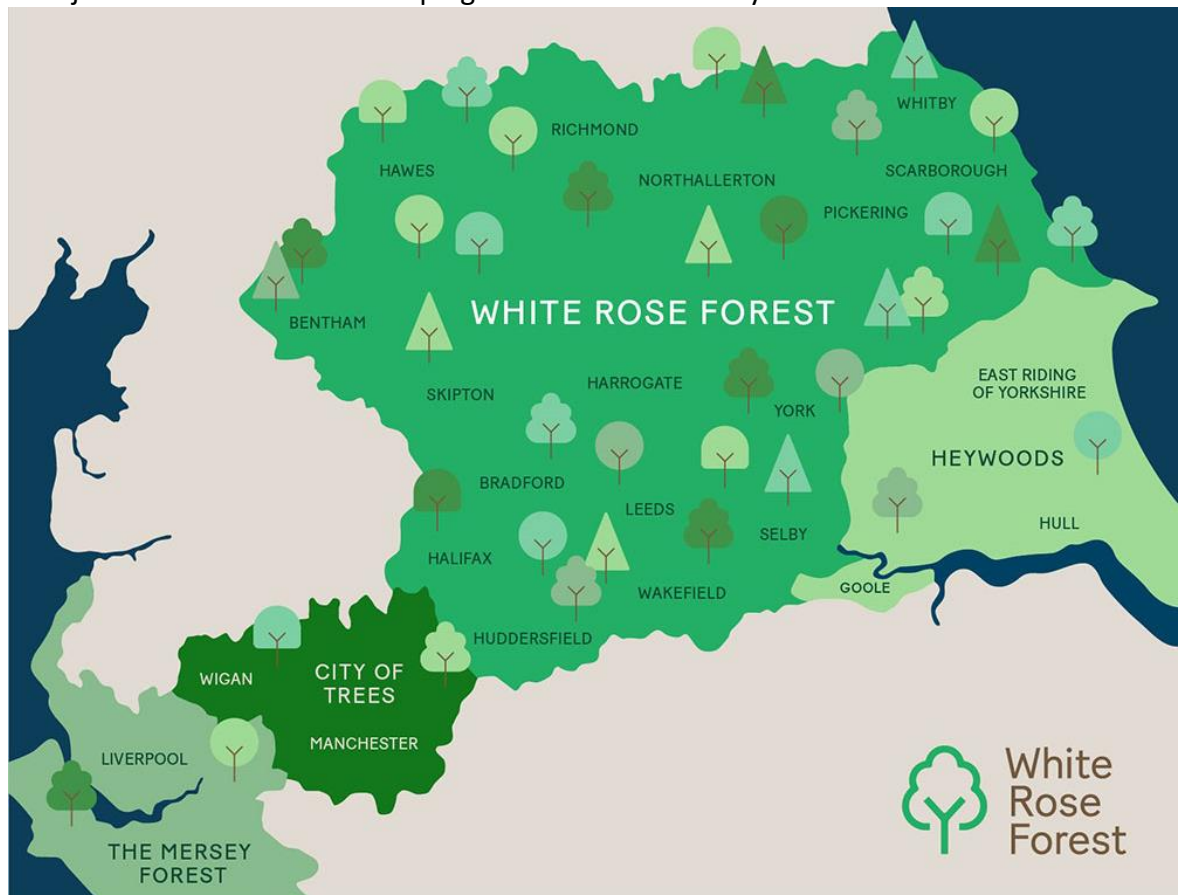
Knaresborough River Nidd Gorge

5. **Knaresborough FOREST** – [see the KTC leaflet] - Knaresborough Forest past, present & future 2018

The 1770 Enclosure Act has meant the gradual disposal of the ancient Royal Forest of Knaresborough that had been a major legal Royal domain for centuries. It is rather ironic that the requested 200 acres of Common land would become what today is Harrogate Stray.

2020 was to have been a 250th Commemoration and a rebirth of the ancient forest. However Lockdown prevented that event happening.

2025 could be a 255th Commemoration of the 1770 Enclosure Act and it may be an appropriate promotion for the remaining centrally located forest features to become a major attraction in the developing Yorkshire Community **White Rose Forest**?



The Governments coast to coast **Northern Forest**, is a long term 2050 aim to Plant 50 million trees, in the five developing Community Forests.

The ancient Royal Forest of Knaresborough is centrally located to provide a Dynamic heart to the Governments coast to coast concept.

Perhaps a **White Rose Forest** – visitor centre at Conyngham Hall servicing the Forest, Gorge & Town

Liaison & Funding – KTC, NYC, YNY LEP, FC, NHLF, WRF, WT, YWT etc

6. CONCLUSION

The Governments Devolution proposals for NYC, York and the YNY LEP provide an opportunity for all the Parishes of the County to totally rethink their roles, responsibilities and the natural and built heritage.

For Knaresborough it is a chance to regain the proud heritage it had created with vision up to 1974. It is a great opportunity leading up to the 900th Anniversary of its Castle in 2030, to develop over 7 years the heart of its Town and the remarkable natural and built heritage of its Castle, Gorge and ancient Royal Forest.

2025 is the 255th Anniversary of the 1770 Enclosure Act, perhaps a year to launch a full appreciation of the ancient Royal Forest? [Lock down sadly prevented the planned 250th Commemoration planned for 2020] Obviously the Gorge and Forest extend beyond Knaresborough's Parish Boundaries and there is a need to work with other Parishes and NYC, alongside YNY LEP, Duchy, NHLF, HE etc. Clearly there is also a need to embrace the local community and the numerous Town organisations, Charities etc. over the next seven years and be ready for a 12 month 900th Anniversary in **2030**

Throughout this brief personal PROFILE there have been numerous potentials, pointers, and references to how the people of Knaresborough might link together to develop town pride in its natural and built heritage.

It is up to all aspects of the town to come together in a bonding of unity and vision, gradually raising its 'Profile' for in **2030** an embracing 900th Anniversary of its Castle / Town on its Gorge by its ancient Royal Forest.

1 MP – Liaising with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster etc

2 County Councillors – providing collaboration with NYC Departments

12 Town Councillors – linking, lobbying and promoting

Numerous town amenity groups - developing themes

16,000 people – having fun caring for the town & its setting

Numerous over lapping groups & organisations, religious, social, commercial, sporting, political - all ideally working together on numerous areas that relate to their basic aims and roles in the area

1086 Chenardesburg to **2023** Knaresborough to
2030

KNARESBOROUGH – Basic BIBLIOGRAPHY

1770 Enclosure Act

1871 **rp 1988**-William Grainge - Harrogate and the Forest of Knaresborough

1882-Thomas Parkinson –Lay & Leaves of the Royal Forest of Knaresborough

1894-Harry Speight – NIDDERDALE and the GARDEN of the NIDD

1959-NikolausPevsner – Yorkshire West Riding [Buildings of England]

1967-Bernard Jennings and others – A history of Nidderdale

1984 Dilapidation Report by Napper Collerton Partnership

1991-Arnold Kellet – Historic Knaresborough

1997-David Alred – Washburn Valley

2001- David Alred – Nidderdale Yesterday

2003 – N. M. Soc. –The Book of Nidderdale

2004-Maurice Turner – Yorkshire Castles

2005-Malcolm Neesam – HARROGATE Great Chronicle1332 –1841

2007 Atkins of Leeds – Conservation Management Plan- mainly consolidation.

2008-John Goodall – Country Life article 17th January –A Royal Gift –Knaresborough Castle

2009 -Sir Thomas Ingilby – Ripley Castle

2009-Christopher Butterfield –Cyril Mason & John Webster-The boundary stones of Knaresborough Forest.

2011-John Goodall – English Castles

2013-Claro Community Archaeology Group – The Chronicles of Scriven

2013-Mike Brough – History & Hikes of the ancient Royal Hunting Forest of Knaresborough

2014- Ed. Mike Baxter – Tudor and Stuart Knaresborough

2014-Diana Parsons – The Washburn Valley

2015-Rob Cowan – Common Grounds

2016 Jane Sellars HBC – A Souvenir of KNARESBOROUGH CASTLE

2017-Jim Brophy & Mark Haley- The Metes and Bounds of Knaresborough Forest

2017- Kathryn Warner – EDWARD II the unconventional King

2020- Kathy Allday – “Our Knaresborough Our Stories”

2020 – Carey Tourism – Knaresborough Cliff Lift Feasibility Interim Report

2022- Kathryn Warner – Philippa of Hainault – Mother of the English Nation

2022- John Goodall – The CASTLE a History

TOWN – is a Conservation Area, and has ancient Monuments, almost 200 listed buildings [Grades I, II* and II]

CASTLE – Ancient Monument, listed buildings & Public Park

GORGE - 2004 HBC Landscape Character Assessment AREA 53

British Geological Survey of 2008 - ‘The Geology of Knaresborough Gorge’.

FOREST – KTC leaflet for Forest area c1770 / boundary

!6 free woodland walks

5 Castles

8 Ancient Churches

10 Visitor attractions

7 Historic Parks & Gardens

KNARESBOROUGH - Brief CHRONOLOGY

- 1066** William the Conqueror granted the Manor of Knaresborough to Serlo de Burgh from Tonsburgh in Normandy for services to the King
*The Manor was known as the **Honour of Knaresborough**, consisting of the **Forest of Knaresborough**, the **Borough or Town** and the **Forest Liberty** comprising- a dozen villages on the level farmland to the North*
- 1086** Domesday survey refers to the Manor of Chenardesburg
- 1130** Earliest known reference for the castle, Henry I spent £11 on works
- 1132** Lord Eustace Fitz-John sent a 'cart-load of fine bread' to the starving monks at the recently established Fountains Abbey
- 1167** Earliest mention of the Honour of Knaresborough [Borough, Forest & Liberty]
- 1170** Hugh de Moreville, Constable of the Castle was one of the four Knights that killed Thomas Becket
- 1204/12** accounts show £1290 spent cutting/enlarging the ditch, primarily to stop the new siege engines
- 1210** Earliest known Maundy Thursday gifts by King John
- 1216** Feb 17th King John visited the hermit Robert Floure in his cave
- 1257** First known Charter for Knaresborough Priory granted by King John
- 1300** Castle reverts to Edward I who undertakes repair & new work to great hall, great chamber, chapel of St Thomas, White & Great Towers
- 1307** Edward II gave the Honour and Forrest of Knaresborough to his favourite Piers Gaveston
- 1310/12** Main construction period, old tower on north side demolished and the Kings Keep erected in grand style with twelve towers
- 1312** Edward II takes refuge at the castle whilst the rebellious barons including Thomas of Lancaster capture and then behead Gaveston
- 1317** October 5 John de Lilleburn takes the Castle on behalf of rebels and holds it until 29 Jan 1318 retaken by Roger Damory the Constable
Later marauding Scots destroy 140 houses and the parish church
- 1328** Edward III marries Queen Philippa in York and later grants her the Castle, Town and Forest.....
- 1332** Earliest known mention of Harroagte
- 1372** Edward grants his son John of Gaunt the Honour of Knaresborough and starts the long link with the Duchy of Lancaster
- 1408** John the Mason constructed the Chapel of our Lady of the Crag
- 1536** Dissolution starts of Knaresborough priory and Fountains Abbey
- 1644** Dec 20 after the Battle at Marston Moor royalists surrender the Castle to Fairfax
- 1648** December Act of Parliament confirms that numerous royalist castles be 'slighted'-taken down until they no longer can be defended
- 1760** Enclosures Act marks the end of the Royal Forest of Knaresborough
- 1790s/1826** Turner sketched/painted the castle / Nidd Gorge
- 1851** Nidd Gorge Railway viaduct in use
- 1890's** Castle Public park created
- 1920's** War memorial
- 2010** Greenway - Knaresborough to Ripley uses disused railway in Nidd Gorge
- 2030 900th Anniversary of Knaresborough Castle**