ALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL
“Working for Altham”

PARISH PLAN UPDATE

INDUSTRY AND PRUDENCE CONQUER

ALTHAM
In August 2007 the Parish Council sent a questionnaire to all the residents of Altham Parish for the purpose of assisting the Parish Council in adopting a 5 year plan. The purpose of the plan is to investigate and discover what needs to be improved, and what are the issues that people feel strongly about, so that something can be done to address them and the interactions with the various agencies are made easier and more straightforward. The results of this questionnaire have identified some interesting facts which are laid out throughout this newsletter.

Community

Comments and Concerns

1. Amongst the replies to the questionnaire a considerable number of people identified information as an issue, most people get their information from the local newspaper but would also like an improvement in local information points.

2. Concerns where raised about the lack of recreational facilities for children, one particular area was suggested.

3. People would also like a Community Centre providing facilities for a variety of activities including, Adult education, recreational groups, activities for young people and maybe a community shop.

4. Another point raised was about the number of young people congregating on the streets at night.

5. The survey also identified the need for our more senior citizens of the Parish to become involved in more social activities.

6. It was suggested that residents of Altham West are isolated from the community of Altham Parish due to the distance between the 2 areas.
Actions

1. Links with the local newspaper have been strengthened and will be ongoing.
   - We are looking to update the local information points with new weatherproof boards and are reviewing the locations.

2. The Parish Council are looking into the possibilities of increasing recreational facilities for children.

3. Regarding the provision of a community centre we are seeking funding from various organisations and will continue to do so. This is a more difficult task and will take longer to achieve, however, it is not insurmountable.

4. Whilst we are aware of young people congregating on 'street corners', working alongside other agencies we must and will address this problem. Further information on clubs and organisations for young people are listed under the Services and Facilities section of this update.

5. We are looking into the possibility of holding some social events in the not too distant future for the enjoyment of our senior citizens within the Parish.

6. The Parish Council, on several occasions, have included residents of Altham West in mail shots regarding Council meetings and Parish events, on numerous occasions we have provided a facility at Accrington Stanley Football Club specifically for Altham West residents to attend council meetings. We are also keen that the residents are not seen to be isolated and we are mindful that the community needs to be brought together.
   - Within the Parish we have a twelfth century church that Altham West residents are very welcome to attend. We also have a very well established and high achieving Primary School that Altham village and Altham West residents are entitled to apply to send their children.
Comments and Concerns

1. The questionnaire highlighted major concerns regarding the conservation of our countryside, woodlands, public rights of way (footpaths) and hedge rows. These aspects together form the 'green lung' quality of the area and need to be looked after and kept clean and tidy. This also applies to the increasing litter problem across the whole parish.

2. Dog fouling and the lack of dog bins were raised as an issue within the Parish.

3. Issues have been raised regarding the Whinney Hill Landfill.

Actions

1. The Parish Council has for the last 3 years been addressing this issue and we think we are finally making inroads to making Altham a tidier place. One of the problems we had was relying on the local authority to deal with street cleaning etc. and although they were doing a reasonable job we felt that more needed to be done.

   - The Parish Council applied for and obtained funding so that we could employ a Parish Lengthsman to assist with the cutting back of the grass verges and maintaining the Public Rights of Way. Whilst the street cleaning is still being carried out by Hyndburn Borough Council with whom we have formed a strong common interest over the last 2 years to keep the Parish clean and tidy.

   - In the summer of 2008 we placed floral hanging baskets around the Parish and these have been maintained by the Lengthsman. The Parish Council are thinking about other means of floral displays for 2009, as we feel the hanging baskets are too labour intensive.

   - On the question of Public Rights of Way we have spent many man hours clearing and making footpaths more accessible to the public and will continue to do so.

   - In the spring we again had a very good show of daffodils and we are planning to plant more this year.

2. We have been talking to Hyndburn Borough Council and the local Dog Warden about this problem. We have been informed that there will be several dog bins strategically placed within the Parish. Recently information has been sent out to residents about the serious health issues caused by dog fouling.

3. The Parish Council are constantly in contact with the relevant agencies that are responsible for this site.
Transport, Highways & Road Safety

Comments and Concerns

1. The questionnaire identified concerns for road safety and the need to deal with some motorists that are exceeding the speed limit in the area and would like speed cameras put up in Altham.

2. Many people say that congestion, pollution, road surface mud and dust is caused by lorries and thru traffic.

3. There was a number of comments and requests for an increase of parking bays in some areas.

4. The issue of a lack of a safe pedestrian facility over Whinney Hill was raised by several respondents.

Actions

1. The Parish Council along with the grants from other organisations has now purchased a SPID unit (speed indicator sign). This means that data can now be collected on the speed in which vehicles are travelling and identify the number of motorists that are exceeding the speed limit. This piece of equipment has already proved a success.

   • There were also concerns from residents living in the Syke Side area of Altham, regarding the number of accidents on the bend with an adverse camber. The Parish Council decided to purchase (with help from other agencies) an electronic sign that alerts motorists of the dangerous bend and camber. Since the sign was first introduced 15 months ago, there have been no reports of any incidents in that location.

   • Concerns were also raised regarding the lack of flashing school signs on the approach to Altham Primary School. Following months of debate with the highways authority we are delighted to see the signs up and running.

   • A scheme is now in place to operate the SPID unit in conjunction with other area councils.

2. The Parish Council has an ongoing commitment to improve these issues and work closely with the County Highways Authority to improve the situation.

3. This has been discussed informally by Parish Councillors and as we crystallise our thoughts we will pursue the matter further.

4. This is another issue for the Highways Authority and will become part of our discussions with them.
Services and Facilities

Comments and Concerns

A number of people say:

1. That it would be good to have improved disability access for buses.
2. That there is a lack of ‘children at play’ signs.
3. More environmentally friendly street lights would be welcomed.
4. Would like a more visible police presence.
5. Would like a community centre with a shop, cash machine, post office facilities, internet café and a coffee shop.
6. Would like to see more activities for young people aged 12-17

Actions

Altham Parish Council are very aware of local concerns and are keen to react to any concerns raised by the residents.

1. The local authority has made provision for disabled access to buses by adjusting the pavements at the majority of bus stops. We are aware that not all bus companies are equipped with the latest hi-tech passenger access e.g. ramps and hydraulics. Should you have a specific enquiry please contact us.

2. We would ask residents to identify any places where they feel ‘children at play’ signs are required. We need this information in order to take further action.

3. The Parish Council would welcome more environmentally friendly street lamps but, in the meantime, are proactive in ensuring that the current lighting is in working order. If you have any problems with the street lighting please contact the Parish Council.

4. The Parish Council are in weekly contact with the Police Authority regarding all aspects of policing in the community. If you have any concerns of public nuisances please contact the Parish Council.

5. As mentioned in the Community section of this update this is a more difficult task and will take longer to achieve. However we are concerned that the commitment from the local community to this project may not be sufficient to support its viability. We would welcome considerably more dialogue from the residents on this issue.

6. We are very conscious that already we have a number of youth organisations within walking distance of the Parish such as the Sea Cadets, Cubs, Scouts, Girl Guides and Brownies. But we are concerned that these organisations are under supported and are constantly seeking new members. We are also talking to Accrington Stanley FC about the possibility of working with them to widen sporting activities for young people. Shortly we will be sending out more information once we have plans in place. For further information on other youth organisations please contact the Parish Council.
Development

Comments and Concerns

Points were raised about the following possible developments in the parish by some of the respondents:

1. Additional small businesses creating more jobs within the Parish.
2. Tourism and attractions.
3. Un-adopted roads.

Actions

1. Altham Parish enjoys quite a number of small businesses within the Parish and we are keen to see small businesses thrive within the Parish and this, of course, leads to additional jobs being created. We are also very mindful that we have some very prestigious companies that hold national esteem for their standards of excellence and we as a council are very proud that this been achieved.

2. As an area Altham Parish has some historic buildings worthy of a visit but provide only a limited basis for tourism. Under the heading of 'attractions' the issue of the proposed race course has been mentioned in several different ways. Until plans have been furnished to the relevant authorities, the Parish Council cannot make any assumptions or comments as this would be highly inappropriate at this time. The Parish Council will endeavour to make sure that every avenue will be thoroughly researched and residents will be updated of any further developments.

3. The Parish Council are very mindful regarding the state of un-adopted roads and we are making advances into seeking funding to alleviate this problem. We will of course keep those residents that are affected by this problem updated at every stage.