



Parish Website Launched!!



The initial working framework of our parish website is now 'live' at www.astbury-parish.org.uk (although this address may change). Our plan is to offer links to local bodies and other local websites, including the school, church and social groups etc. A priority will be to promote local businesses, whom we will be contacting soon. Suggestions, comments and feedback are very welcome! More news next time!

Threat returns to Sandy Lane

Plans to develop an industrial estate on 90 acres of land along Sandy Lane have once again resurfaced. In a baffling move, the Borough Council which dismissed such plans several years ago now seems more receptive. A location near to Holmes Chapel which was generally felt to be more suitable is no longer under consideration after strong public opposition – the same pressure must again be exerted in Congleton, and we are joining forces with other Parish Councils to defeat these plans finally. A co-ordinated effort with public support will be mounted. Please don't assume others will fight this on your behalf – every letter of objection will count. The Parish Council have contributed to a fund to engage specialist legal advice.

More traffic calming measures

After concerns from a number of residents, we are investigating methods to prevent vehicles turning into the village off Newcastle Road from the direction of the town centre mounting the kerb.



Parish Council precept

Our precept for the year 2008/2009 (which is the amount collected through your Council Tax) shows a nominal increase of 9% from the previous year. This will support a number of areas which the Parish Council must now fund instead of the Borough Council.



The land off Sandy lane as it appears now...we think it should stay looking this way!!

At last – dangerous bridge gets traffic lights!

After sustained pressure, the railway bridge at the junction of Peel Lane, Mow Lane & Moss Road which a notorious accident blackspot will soon have traffic lights installed. We have felt a serious incident – possibly involving both cars and trains travelling on the busy track below – was inevitable, and indeed, the Area Highways Manager cited previous similar incidents elsewhere in his report. Network Rail and Cheshire County Council will share the estimated £50,000 costs.





Astbury Cum Moreton Community Car Scheme

Your Parish Council is investigating the possible introduction of a Community Car Scheme which would cover the two parishes of Newbold Astbury and Moreton cum Alcumlow.

Residents who are without private transport and are unable to access public transport are obviously greatly disadvantaged. This is particularly so when they live in the remoter areas of the parishes. Everyday journeys can become extremely difficult and even impossible.

The objective of the Community Car Scheme is to assist with journeys for both necessary and social purposes. These include visits to doctors, dentists, opticians, shopping and also visiting friends and relatives. Hospital visits are covered but not hospital appointments as these are normally covered by the ambulance/social services.

Firstly, we need to determine if there is sufficient demand for the service and secondly if there are sufficient volunteer car drivers/owners to make the scheme workable. It may be that a scheme organiser would be required.

The cost of the scheme is likely to be in the region of 30-50 pence per mile payable to the driver, with a minimum cost of £2.

Bookings would have to be made at least 48 hours in advance to allow the necessary driver arrangements to be made.

This is the outline of the proposed scheme.

Future actions will obviously depend on the level of interest shown.

If you would wish to take advantage of such a service or would be willing to become a volunteer driver please contact Charlie Pointon, Clerk to the Parish Council. Contact telephone number is Congleton (01260) 274891 or by email to astcfp@tesco.net

Litter! A sensitive subject!!!



Litter remains a persistent problem especially illegal tipping and roadside litter from vehicles, and has generated recent press coverage.

We are pleased to report that some Parishioners and PC members are undertaking local forays to collect and clear roadside litter on their own patch.

We would be very interested in hearing from any Parishioners who would like to be involved in occasional organised "Litter Picks" – Bags, High Viz. Vests and Lazy Tongues/gloves can be provided along with disposal of collections. Please contact your nearest PC Member if interested.

Apart from general litter discarded from vehicles, a more disturbing aspect is the increasing level of illegal tipping – some of it commercial, which is prevalent in the Parish especially in Lay-by's and pull-in areas in the Lanes.

In some cases particularly hazardous materials can be encountered, e.g. window frames still partially glazed, fridges and other white goods and chemical containers.

Any examples of this or other suspicious types of debris should be reported to a PC Member or the Clerk who will arrange with the Local Authority removal where it is located on public land i.e. verges or Lay-bys.

Tipping on private land e.g. from the roadside but over hedges and fences can be more problematic and usually involves the co-operation of the land owner but in any case should be reported if possible with as much information as available.

One recently reported case of tipping in the Parish is currently being pursued by the Authorities where the culprit left documentary identification in discarded paperwork.

Prosecution for tipping now carries heavy penalties.

We would encourage all Parishioners to co-operate in jointly endeavouring to overcome this blight on our countryside.





Speedwatch update

Some time ago, we investigated the possibility of purchasing our own 'gun'...not to shoot drivers who clearly drive too fast through the parish (wishful thinking!), but to check the speed of moving cars. The device is exactly the same as used by the Police, and it's visible use along our roads & lanes would clearly be a deterrent. **But**...we'd need some volunteers to receive training and actually 'man' the unit. Motorist's 'caught' receive a stern warning letter from the Police and the 'offence' is noted, so this really is a genuine move to slowing down traffic and avoiding an accident. So...get in touch if you'd like to help.



How to contact the Police...

We recently heard of some confusion regarding the various contact numbers available for the local Police...here is a simple guide to the services available...

For genuine emergencies, accidents, serious crime in progress or threat of violence etc 999

To report crime, request assistance or to pass information (the situation will be assessed, and an officer assigned immediately or at a later date) 0845 458 0000

For community problems and support 0845 458 6382

To call the Community Wardens regarding abandoned vehicles, anti-social behaviour or nuisance youths 01270 529599

To pass on anonymous information (your anonymity is totally guaranteed) 0800 555 111

WAGS (Women of Astbury Group) update!

The ladies latest night out was to well-known local restaurant 'Pecks', which is now under new ownership (welcome & good luck to Mr & Mrs Pear!) As you can see, they looked splendid (and generally sober, which makes a change!). If you'd like to join the group or even just discuss what they have planned, please to call Michelle on 01260 272463 or Lindis on 01260 270045.



Photo courtesy MRB Photography

Cheshire Forest Hunt

The Cheshire Forest Hunt recently set off from a local farm, and what a magnificent sight it was. Around 50 riders (and many more hounds!) covered over 30 miles around Astbury, Mow Cop and across the A34 to Alcumlow, totally undeterred by the chilly day (there were rumours of 'warming drinks' in hip flasks!). Dozens of people gathered to watch the event, with many following in a fleet of vehicles throughout the day. It is hoped to stage the event again next year.



Environmental news



Firstly, may we thank both the William Dean Trust and local farmer John Ward for donating and planting a huge amount of daffodil bulbs. The village green is famous for its wonderful display, and John has taken time to 'spread' even more along the verges on the A34. We look forward to seeing them in full bloom – they may even slow traffic down as drivers take a look!



Over 40 'kissing gates' are being installed along pathways & walks throughout the parish. These have been donated by PRoW (Public rights of way). We'll keep you updated.



It seems we have some rather rare trees in the parish...these fine examples of Black Poplar trees can be seen on Bent Farm. Over the last hundred years or so, the true Black Poplar has hybridised with two more common American species, and although often difficult to distinguish, these are 'the real thing!'

We are carefully monitoring a number of hedges in the parish which need trimming. Feel free to report more!

Finally – we have access to a number of young trees, which we'd like to plant throughout the parish, as we did last year along Brook Lane. Could any volunteers with a spade please get in touch so we can organise some digging teams!

News in brief

- We have a number of 'Action Groups' within the PC which focus on certain areas –
- Social / Community • Business
- Environment / Housing • Traffic / Roads. If you think you'd like to help, please get in touch or come along to our next meeting.

News in brief

- Congratulations to patrons and staff of The Egerton Arms who raised more than any other pub in the Congleton District during last year's poppy appeal. Fantastic!
- The organisers of Astbury May Day would ask new volunteers or organisations to get in touch – contact Cathy Banks on 01260 281194 for a chat!

Thanks

- Special thanks to Julie & Stuart Pirie who own Astbury Garage for supplying power to the Christmas lights which looked so splendid on the village green. Similarly, thanks to Rob Lomas for putting the lights up (and taking them down!)

Accident & Tipping Reports

Please do continue to keep us informed of any accidents you may be aware of in the Parish. This helps us to make the case for change to speed limits etc as only incidents involving injury are normally recorded by the Cheshire Police. Similarly, let us know of any illegal tipping you may notice : again, we guarantee your own details will not be passed on!!

We will need brief details of location, time, date and vehicles involved wherever possible. Contact any member of the PC or Clerk.

Who Are We?



Roger Sutton 01260 273677

Charles Kennerly 01260 272205

Mel Lawton 01260 27838

Peter Cliff 01260 278641

Andy Banks 01260 281194

Terry Depledge 01260 271058

Nick Sharman 01260 271374

Rob Lomas 01260 272061

Lindis Pattison-Tadman 01260 270045

Michelle Padmos 01260 272463

Jane Shelmerdine 01260 279870

Dave Roberts 01260 275010

Chairman : John Carter 01260 275828

Clerk : Charlie Pointon : 01260 274891

We meet in the Astbury Village Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm. Please feel free to come along!

Item for the next newsletter, or any comments? Contact Andy Banks. Read minutes of our meetings in 'The Chronicle'.