



## Your Voice – Your Choice!

At a Borough Planning meeting on September 9<sup>th</sup>, the Chief Planning Officer recommended the committee refuse an application to site football pitches on agricultural land on Watery Lane. Your Parish Council had also recommended refusal after considering representations from residents, in addition to believing the plans were contrary to greenbelt policy as the development is not **essential**. We are convinced that the surrounding lanes are simply not suitable for the obvious increase in traffic such a project would generate. The applicants suggested 'Travel Plan' (ie where participants would be 'bussed in') is both impractical, un-enforceable and fundamentally flawed. It is for these reasons – and others – the Chief Planning Officer agreed with our own objections. And yet, the members of the planning committee (local councillors) came within a whisker of granting the application, possibly influenced by the huge number of letters of support received (possibly from members of the club!).

The Parish Council intends to re-submit it's objection. **Local residents must do the same – in large numbers - if you wish to prevent this application succeeding. Use your voice. Don't assume others will do it for you! Protect your parish!**

### Goodbye, Jeff!

It is with sadness we bid 'farewell' to our much-loved Rector, Jeff Cuttell and his family (and dog!). Jeff is now the Dean of Derby, and we wish him well. Many of us will hold fond memories of Jeff's often 'unique' sermons along with the warmth and passion he brought to his role. His views were often entertaining and always thought-provoking, and he will leave a legacy lasting rather longer than he may think...



Will Jeff ever forget his last May Day?

### Traffic lights - update

Plans to put traffic lights on the railway bridge on Peel Lane have been delayed to consider concerns from some residents about causing traffic queues. Network Rail (rightly) considered alternatives, but have decided to continue with the project.



### WAGs – latest adventures!

Goodness – imagine meeting this lot on a dark night! The 'Women of Astbury Group' recently held a barbeque...future events include a trip to see an ABBA tribute act and a visit to the theatre. There is talk of holding a special evening's entertainment in the village hall...oh dear! Contact Lindis or Michelle (if you're brave enough..)



A modern lengthsman at work

### Lengthsmen – the reincarnation of an old tradition...

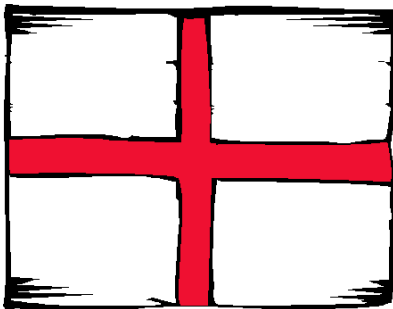
We are actively investigating the possibility of having our own 'Lengthsman' – a local person, employed to maintain verges, drainage, hedges and public spaces. There are 20 such people already used between 46 parishes across the country. This would enable us to rapidly respond to reported issues, as well as having a structured maintenance programme covering the parish.

## Planning applications – 'granted' doesn't mean 'the end'...



Planning applications can be hugely emotive matters, and very worrying when the peace and tranquility of an area, a view or quality of life seem threatened. People may have lived somewhere for many years, and resent the plans of a 'newcomer', particularly if it is for a quick profit. Should one individual gain to the loss of another?

All these matters are considered by the council when reviewing applications, but both we and the ultimate Borough Planning Officer may recommend 'conditions' be attached if granting plans. For example, restrictions on operating hours for a business...controlled parking...no use of external lighting. These are all measures residents can monitor. You can be our eyes and ears in many ways. Let us know if anyone takes 'advantage' or has an apparent loss of memory...we'll remind them on your behalf, and pass your comments on to the enforcement officer.



### St George's day

Thinking ahead, we'd like to celebrate St George's day in some way. After a few jokes about 'dragons in the village', we thought planting white and red roses around the parish, including by the benches on Newcastle Road (opposite the village green) might be nice. Have you any other ideas?

### An early Christmas gift!

We recently checked the condition of the Christmas lights which are hung around the tree on the village green. They were rather 'tired' and clearly needed replacing. A local resident, Mr Martin Noad who operates 'Event Solutions', has very kindly offered to supply a completely new set at no cost, for which we are very grateful! With Christmas closer than you might think, look forward to 'the switch on'....

### Website update

We've been developing our website, one step at a time! Minutes of meetings are now available to view online, as well as our usual report in 'The Congleton Chronicle', and we hope to publish details of the planning applications we'll be discussing at the next meeting, too. Keep looking checking on [www.astbury-parish.org.uk](http://www.astbury-parish.org.uk)

### Any budding 'Masterminds' out there?

We thought it might be fun to join in with 'The Cheshire Village Quiz', starting in October! Moving from village to village for each round, if you'd like to join the team, PLEASE get in touch! (Did that sound like we were a bit desperate and worried what we might have let ourselves in for?). Phone our democratically elected team leader, Charlie, on 01260 274891.

## PCSO's - Valuable additions to local Policing....

At our most recent meeting, Claire Ford came along to explain how the PCSO project works. Police Community Support Officers work closely with local communities, dealing with minor and nuisance crimes and anti-social behaviour, when perhaps the 'regular' Police force may struggle with resource. Highly visible in the areas in which they operate, the PCSO's are a valuable addition to Police family, and there are over 200 within Cheshire (funded by parish's), acting as a reassuring link between the main force and social and business communities.

### Who Are We?

Roger Sutton 01260 273677

Charles Kennerly 01260 272205

Mel Lawton 01260 278384

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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 reports of our meetings in 'The Chronicle' and remember our website – [www.astbury-parish.org.uk](http://www.astbury-parish.org.uk). Finally, contact us via e-mail at [astcfp@tesco.net](mailto:astcfp@tesco.net).



**As presented by Parish Council Chairman John Keith Carter at the Annual Joint Parishes Meeting held at Astbury Village Hall on Wednesday 14 May 2008.**

The Chairman opened his report with a reference to the Parish Action Plan update, (copies provided at the meeting). He congratulated the Council on the extent of the progress made to date which was sometimes underestimated. A monthly report will continue to be made at the Parish Council meetings to which all parishioners are welcome.

The content of the Borough Council Local Development Framework (LDF) has caused much concern and opposition in the parishes due to the inclusion of an extensive site in Sandy Lane designated for employment land. The site is on the Astbury parish boundary and the Parish Council has joined with three Parish Councils and other individuals to form the Sandy Lane Action Group (SLAG). Provision has been made in the 2008-2009 budget for a contribution to the fighting fund should it be necessary to involve a planning consultant. The Parish Council has signed up to the revised Code of Conduct introduced during the past year which emphasises the need for all local councillors to be fully open and accountable in all dealings while giving the same right to comment as any member of the public.

A planning application has been submitted for the extension of Bent Farm sand quarry toward Jolly Hay Lane but all future expansion will be in the direction of Pitcher Lane, Smallwood across Wallhill Lane.

Certain planning applications, particularly the Lavender House in Gorse Lane, have raised concerns with parishioners. In all cases the opinions of the concerned parishioners have been represented to the County/Borough Councils by the Parish Council which has also included comments as to local and national policy infringements.

There has also been a revision of the Astbury Village Conservation Area which has tightened restrictions in certain areas of the village.

An air quality monitor has been operating in the village for several months and readings have proved to be below the national requirement. Thanks to Eileen and Colin Hill for their co-operation.

The Chairman then reported the Parish Action Plan update in detail as follows -

- a link to transport services was contained on the website,
- traffic lights were to be installed on the Peel Lane rail bridge this year,
- press reports had been included in the Congleton Chronicle for most meetings.
- the WAGS had continued to expand the social life of the parishes.
- the quarterly Police Forum was now attended regularly,
- the Parish Newsletter now appeared quarterly,
- the website continued to improve and expand,
- liaison with Congleton Ramblers continues,
- many stiles on local footpaths have been replaced by kissing gates.
- traffic volumes continue to increase but it is hoped that Cheshire Highways will agree to extend the 30mph zone in the village and allow a speed indicator (SID) post to be provided on Peel Lane,
- fly tipping, waste disposal and litter continue to be problems. Parishioner help is vital, please report any instances so that the Parish Council can liaise to find the culprits,
- the Parish Council is in correspondence with Cheshire Highways in the hope of resolving the parking problems in the village and Peel Drive.

The Chairman thanked everyone who had assisted the Council during the past year, all Parish Councillors, Vice Chairman Roger Sutton, Borough Councillor John Wray, County Councillor Peter Mason and John Ward. He mentioned those who had represented the Council on outside bodies, Michelle Padmos - Cheshire Police Forum and County Forum, and Nick Sharman - Congleton Borough Council Area Forum 4.

Thanks also to the Lead Members on the Parish Action Plan who were continuing the work which commenced in 2005. Nick Sharman who is bringing the website to full potential, Michelle Padmos controlling the WAGS, Andy Banks who has rightly received many compliments for the Parish Newsletter which is now eagerly anticipated quarterly in all dwellings in the parishes, Lindis Pattison-Tadman for the reports to the Chronicle and Robert Lomas for his work with the Christmas lights. Finally thanks to Charlie Pointon, Clerk to the Council, for his assistance and advice on all matters affecting the running and organisation of the Parish Council.

In conclusion the Chairman speculated as to the place of Parish Councils in the new Unitary style local government to be introduced in Cheshire in May 2009. He promised that the Parish Council would continue to serve the community to the best of it's ability.

#### SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS – FINANCIAL YEAR 2007-2008

The following table shows the comparative simplified rounded totals (in pounds), for income and expenditure in financial years 2006-7 and 2007-8, as provided to the External Auditor in the Annual Return Full accounts were available at the meeting and copies can be obtained from the Clerk.

	<u>2006-2007</u>	<u>2007-2008</u>
Balance forward	8367	8907
Plus Precept	6050	6150
Plus other receipts	<u>268</u>	<u>532</u>
Total Income	<u>14685</u>	<u>15589</u>
Minus Staff costs	2700	3000
Minus other payments	<u>3078</u>	<u>3254</u>
Balance forward	<u>8907</u>	<u>9335</u>

#### **NOTES TO ACCOUNTS**

1. The precept is the total amount included in the Council Tax collected by the Borough Council for the Parish Council. The amount is determined by the Parish Council after a budgetary exercise.

2. This figure includes Bank Interest, Refunds of Pavement Lighting and VAT.

3. Total staff costs.

4. This figure includes all expenditure other than staff costs. It includes Insurances, Audits, Administration, Meeting Room, Pavement Lighting, Membership Fees, Noticeboard costs, Training, Grant for Churchyard Upkeep and Parish Action Plan costs.

5. This figure represents financial year end Cash at Bank and is added to the 2008 precept to provide the monies necessary to cover the costs and reserves for FY2008-2009. It includes reserves for election expenses, projected traffic measures and Parish Plan action improvements.