



Lathom South Parish Council

servicing our local community



Newsletter 33

Spring 2024

Welcome to the spring/summer edition of the Lathom South Parish Council newsletter which we hope will give a snapshot of just some of the activities in our community.

To regularly keep abreast of Parish Council activities you would be welcome to attend the Parish Council monthly meetings which are generally held on the second Wednesday of the month at Skelmersdale Cricket Club, Blaguegate Lane, commencing at 7.30pm. A list of all dates is displayed on the Parish Council noticeboard at the entrance to the Skelmersdale Cricket Club and on the Parish Council website www.lathomsouthpc.co.uk

We hope you will also be able to attend the **Annual Parish Assembly (APA) on Wednesday 15th May at 8pm**. This year the APA will be attended by a representative of WLBC Green and Clean team who will give a talk about the ground maintenance and street cleaning services they provide and answer any of your questions.

Resident involvement with the Parish Council is always welcome whether it be attendance at meetings, sending in your suggestions, participating in work parties with 'Friends of Jacobs Wood' or becoming a Parish Councillor.





Parish Precept

Last year we explained that our approach to control of expenditure in the face of rising costs was what allowed us to keep the Parish component of your Council tax demand steady.

This Parish has been in the position of increasing its population, chiefly as a result of the “Lathom Pastures 1” development and this has allowed us to spread the load of our costs across more households. We had also accumulated a reasonable “reserve” (savings) over many years, which allowed us to keep our budget level with the previous year, knowing that we could absorb any unexpected, but reasonable, increases in costs without running into financial difficulty. This was especially important at a time of high inflation.

Another factor was that our focus has been on improving the two adjacent woods that we had acquired in recent times, using “Community Infrastructure Levy” funds. Two further developments, named “Lathom Pastures 2” (Bellway) and “Latune Gardens” (Wain Homes) are providing more such windfall funding, which can only be spent on “infrastructure” projects.

Our normal day to day expenditure has to be covered by the precept, as we have to keep our savings reserve as provision for unexpected costs (for example, if we need to cover any of the Clerk’s absences, or have to replace “street furniture” – benches and signs). Even so, we are pleased to announce that, once again, we are able to keep the demands on individual households level with last year, even though costs - and therefore our budget requirements - have risen significantly.

Local Plan Timetable

West Lancashire Borough Council has announced details of a revised timetable for producing the new Local Plan, known as the Local Development Scheme. Details follow -

The Local Development Scheme provides the project plan for the preparation of the new Local Plan for the Borough and in summary shows that:

- The next stage of public consultation will take place at the end of 2024;
and
- A consultation on the publication version of the Plan will take place in 2026 with the Plan being submitted for independent examination later that year.

Development of a Local Plan does not take place in isolation of local and national factors and therefore this timetable is subject to change, should it be required. If we have further updates to provide about the Local Plan or other associated planning policy documents we will communicate this via email through our Strategic Planning Customer Database. This information has been communicated to all Borough Councillors and people who are signed up to the Council's Strategic Planning Customer Database which includes residents, stakeholders, landowners and developers.

Source - West Lancashire Borough Council



Percy dies after hit and run on Firwood Rd

It is with much sadness that we must announce one of the Firwood Road residents has passed. Percy Peacock was hit by a vehicle on Firwood Rd around the date of 16th January 2024. Sarah Wood tried to nurse him back to health but unfortunately she was unsuccessful. He eventually died five weeks later.



Percy was a much loved addition to the local area and would often bring traffic to a standstill as he calmly walked up and down the road.

Gone, but not forgotten.

Boundaries and hedges

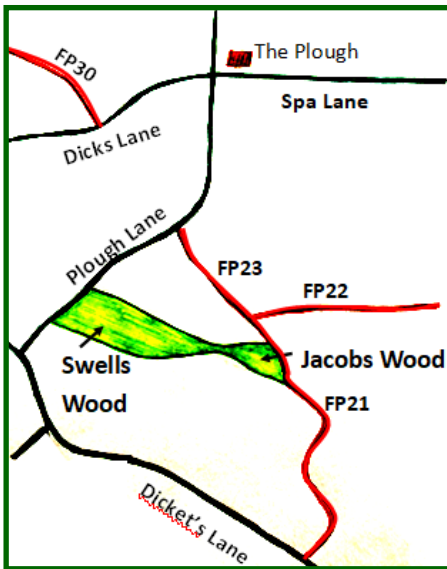
Spring is here and the days are getting lighter and brighter - hopefully some dry, sunny weather will follow soon.

Plants and trees are bursting into life and everything is now growing fast. One downside of this is that hedges (and the nettles and brambles that spring out of them!) grow faster than anything else and can soon cause problems alongside roads, pavements and public rights of way. Please, if your property borders an area of public access, check your boundaries and trim back any problem growth as soon as possible - after checking for any nesting birds. Please also ensure that any road signs, street names etc do not become obscured by hedges and trees.

Thank you for your help in keeping our area tidy so that we can all safely enjoy our lovely countryside walks.

Friends of Jacobs Wood

Hopefully everyone is aware of Jacobs Wood and Swells Wood that reside within our beautiful Parish of Lathom South. They are both wonderful natural woodlands which can be found just off Plough Lane (Swells Wood) or from footpath 21 through the kissing gate into Jacobs Wood. The Parish Council is always looking for ways to improve the woods. This includes the addition of benches and a rubbish bin as well as employing people to control the weeds and keep the footpaths clear.



Last year we had our very first Friends Of Jacobs Wood meeting when people met up to clear away rubbish, dig up some invasive bamboo and remove unused tree protectors. It was a great day and we were very fortunate with the weather. Our next planned Friends of Jacobs Wood working group is on Saturday 1st June, meeting at 10am near the benches. Hopefully some of you will be able to make it and we look forward to seeing you there.



RSPCA National Nestbox Week – February 2024

Influenced by the RSPCA's initiative we have undertaken the installation of some nesting boxes in Swells Wood.

In addition to the Barn Owl nesting box and Tawny Owl nesting box purchased last year, we have used our Biodiversity grant this year to purchase

- ◆ 3 bat boxes
- ◆ 9 bird boxes
- ◆ 2 hedgehog shelters



The loss of habitat for birds in the UK means a lot of bird species are struggling in numbers.

We can all help overcome this problem by positioning a bird box in our gardens, whilst recognising that boxes have been provided on new developments under their planning conditions. Further information can be obtained by visiting www.Gov.UK and search for Nest Boxes for Birds.

Become a Parish Councillor for Lathom South?

If you are interested, you need to live* in the parish or within three miles (4.8 km) of it. Vacancies are advertised on Parish notice boards as they arise and if more people apply than the number of advertised vacancies then an election is held. Otherwise the applicant(s) can be co-opted.

It is likely that at least one vacancy will occur this year so, if you feel that you could make a positive contribution as a councillor, why not think about it now? The role involves protecting the interests of your local area, corresponding by email and attending monthly meetings. It is not onerous in the way that being a Borough or County Councillor can be. It is actually quite enjoyable and rewarding for enthusiastic people who work well as members of a small team. In considering the option, you would be made very welcome at our meetings (as a member of the public).

*business people qualify by virtue of running a business, rather than by residency.



Respect, Protect, Enjoy -

The Countryside Code

We are very lucky in Lathom South to have access to rural walks in picturesque surroundings which we hope many of you are able to enjoy. Whilst out making the most of our beautiful surroundings, please remember the Countryside Code. Issued by Natural England, it is designed to make rural areas safe for visitors to enjoy, without infringing the rights of those for whom the countryside is a place of work.

Respect everyone

- Be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside -

Leave livestock alone, even if an animal appears to be in distress. In this case contact the local farmer.

- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking.
- Be nice, say hello, share the space.
- Follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available -

Keeping to paths is especially important in a field where crops are growing.

Protect the environment

- Take your litter home – leave no trace of your visit -
Litter isn't just dangerous to wildlife, dumping rubbish is a criminal offence.
- Do not light fires and only have BBQs where signs say you can.
- Always keep dogs under control and in sight.
- Dog poo – bag it and bin it – any public waste bin will do.
- Care for nature – do not cause damage or disturbance.

Enjoy the outdoors

- Check your route and local conditions -
Some areas are restricted during wildlife breeding seasons.
- Plan your adventure – know what to expect and what you can do -
Some areas of land are restricted if work is being carried out.

Dicks Lane

speed limit reduction request denied

In July 2023, Lathom South Parish Council forwarded a petition, signed by local residents, requesting a speed limit reduction to 40mph on the section of Dicks Lane which currently has a national speed limit. LSPC have been informed that the request has been denied.

The reasons, given by LCC Highways and Transport Department, for the rejection of lowering the speed limit are:-

- ◆ The current national speed limit in place along the eastern section of Dicks Lane is comparable with many similar sections of road both locally and throughout the county and reflects its more rural characteristics and the reduced direct habitation presence along its length.
- ◆ As with all speed limits this represents the maximum speed allowed but does not indicate a safe speed to travel under all circumstances, for example harsh weather conditions, and as required by the Highway Code drivers are required to adjust their behaviour to match individual circumstances and road layouts at any particular time ensuring they are able to stop in the distance they see to be clear. Information provided by Lancashire Constabulary does indicate that this is currently the case for Dicks Lane with road safety surveys showing the majority of vehicles to be traveling well within the maximum limit and no recorded injury incidents, related to speed or otherwise, within the past 5 year period.
- ◆ Department for Transport guidance makes it clear that setting speed limits in isolation, or setting limits that are "unrealistically

low" can prove ineffective and lead to driver disrespect and disregard. Speed limits on their own do not necessarily reduce traffic speeds where their purpose is not clearly communicated by the surrounding environment. Consequently, implementation of the requested 40mph limit would be likely to result in an increased potential for non-compliance and as records do not reveal a clear, demonstrated speeding issue at the location the requested limit would not receive the required Police support for implementation at this time.

A representative of the Highways and Transport Department at LCC commented,

'The county council, working as part of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership, take requests for safety engineering measures such as this very seriously however it is unfortunate that every year the number of requests we receive exceeds what we can implement. As a result the council consider requests in line with the Lancashire Road Safety Strategy published by the partnership (<https://lancsroadsafety.co.uk/>) which allows us to prioritise the measures that we take forward. At this time, without diminishing your concerns for this location, we have other locations where road safety concerns have been demonstrated that have been prioritised for delivery of safety measures.'



Although this is not the result that LSPC had hoped for, it does appear that procedures were followed and full consideration was given in assessing the request to reduce the speed limit.

Highways



Two years ago Lancashire County Council introduced the option to report highway issues to LCC via the **Love Clean Streets** app. Since then, Love Clean Streets has expanded providing a convenient way to report various issues related to highways, road cleaning, vegetation and trees.

How it works

It's simple to use and your issue can be logged in seconds. The reports will go directly to LCC and be filtered to the relevant team to action but you will be able to report issues on your mobile whilst out and about. Alternatively, you can use the App to report an issue when you get home. Although the App picks up your current location you can move the map to place the pin in the location of the issue being reported.



You will also be able to keep up to date on the progress of your report via the app.



Download the app

Simply download the 'Love Clean Streets' app for free from the **App Store** or **Google Play Store** on your mobile phone or tablet.

Set Lancashire County Council as your home authority.

Don't want to use the App? No problem..... You can still report issues by phone on 0300 123 6780 or on line via the Report It website

[Report it - Lancashire County Council](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/report-it/)

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Use the Love Clean Streets app to report:-

◆ **Highways Issues**

Attaching a photo to your report (optional) will help LCC inspectors to assess the situation promptly.

◆ **Road Cleaning**

If you encounter debris or shards of glass on the road snap a photo, report the issue on Love Clean Streets and help keep your Parish clean and safe.

◆ **Vegetation and Trees**

Again the Love Clean Streets app is the go-to tool for reporting vegetation and tree-related concerns along verges.

Remember, your proactive reporting contributes to a cleaner and more pleasant environment for everyone!

Lancashire Constabulary - Report Online

An increased number of off-road motorcycles being used illegally has been an issue for police forces throughout the country, including the Lancashire Constabulary. Any incidents involving the illegal use of motorcycles, like any crime, should be reported directly to the police.

Reports can be made using the Lancashire Constabulary online reporting system [Home - Lancashire Constabulary - Report Online](http://doitonline.lancashire.police.uk)
<http://doitonline.lancashire.police.uk>

It is essential that reports are made directly to the police from the person who witnessed the incident. Any reports from a third party become 'hearsay' and are dismissible.

The online reporting system can be used for reporting various crimes/incidents. However, always call 999 if the crime is being committed now, the offender is nearby, or if you or other people are injured or in danger.

Contact Details

Clerk: Mrs Jane Smith
3 Old School, School Lane, Melling, L31 1FE
Telephone: 07495 970005
Email: lathomsouthpc.clerk@yahoo.com
Website: www.lathomsouthpc.co.uk

Your Parish Councillors are:

- Andrew Beeston
- Carol Blackledge (Vice-Chairman)
- Andrew Chanter
- Roger Clayton (Chairman)
- Ernie Pallas
- Darren Steele
- Andy Taylor

All contact via the Clerk

Meetings held at 7:30pm at the
Cricket Club, Blaguegate Lane, Lathom, WN8 8TY
Meetings are usually held on the second Wednesday of
the month but please check the website

Please contact the Clerk (details above) to raise any items
you wish your Parish Council to discuss.

**Annual General Meeting, 6.30pm
and
Annual Parish Assembly, 8pm
Wednesday, 15th May 2024**

Agendas will be available on the Parish website and displayed on
the Parish noticeboards from 8th May 2024.