



## Astley Parish Plan – 2023 Review of Progress and Priorities

Dear Resident(s),

It is almost 10 years since the residents of Astley Parish were consulted on their priorities for improving the local area, culminating in the publication of the 2014 Astley Parish Community-Led Plan, which you can find on our website at <http://www.astleyparish.org/community/astley-parish-12547/parish-plan/>

The Plan identified numerous Actions, across 8 broad categories, which have guided your Parish Council in the intervening decade. A number of the Actions have been completed, whilst others are ongoing issues which remain for the foreseeable future. We thought now was a good time to remind you of what **YOU SAID**, to let you know **WHAT WE DID (or DO)** and to ask you which **CURRENT PRIORITIES** we should focus on, in collaboration with Shropshire Council and other local partner organisations.

**Please take the time to look through this Review and (before 31 July 2023) let us know your household's priorities, by completing and returning the reply-paid card which was delivered to residents along with a paper copy of this document.**

We look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your support.

### **Astley Parish Council (APC)**

Councillors: Kate Lloyd (Chairman), Helen Mardell (Vice-chair), Edward Bedell, Nik Sherwood, Stewart Robinson, David Williams.





### **1. LOCAL CONNECTIONS**

**YOU SAID:** An Astley Parish Newsletter should be produced regularly and information on fibre-optic broadband roll-out should be included.

**WHAT WE DID:** We have regularly contributed to Astley Parish Matters, the bi-monthly newsletter produced since 2016 by a former APC member and delivered free-of-charge to households across the parish, publicising APC meetings, Church services, local events, broadband issues and other relevant information. We were sad to hear that the May/June'23 issue may be the last, unless a new volunteer steps in, and extend our thanks to Mr Nick Hall for his dedication over the past 7 years.

Broadband arrived in 2015 and is significantly improved and generally reliable.

### **2. TRAFFIC & ROAD SAFETY**

**YOU SAID:** Traffic speed, road safety and roads maintenance are key issues which APC should raise with Shropshire Council (SC), the Highways Agency and the Police. APC should also raise drainage/road flooding problems with the Highways Agency.

**WHAT WE DID:** The A53 and A49 are regular agenda items. We involved our MP Daniel Kawczynski on "hot spots" resulting in our submission of a "site of community concern" which was submitted to SC Highways. We have taken, and continue to take, action on maintenance of road signs, visibility, verges, road safety and speeding, particularly listening to public concerns raised at meetings or by email. We work positively with our Shropshire Councillor, Lezley Picton on these matters.

Of late we have campaigned for further road safety measures along the A53. Our concerns have been acknowledged, a survey was undertaken and we are soon to be consulted on a draft scheme of works which SC will include in its Capital programme.

### **3. LOCAL TRANSPORT**

**YOU SAID:** APC should consider retaining the "Open Countryside" designation for the Parish, recognising the heavy reliance on private means of transport.

**WHAT WE DID:** Astley retains its "Open Countryside" designation and Shropshire Council's Planning Policy CS5 sets out how new development in open countryside will be strictly controlled in accordance with national planning policies protecting the countryside and Green Belt. Details can be found in Shropshire Council's Core Strategy:

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/core-strategy-2006-2026/>

**YOU SAID:** APC should approach the Village Hall Committee, the landlord of the Dog in the Lane and the Parochial Church Council for their views on cycle parking at the respective venues.

**WHAT WE DID:** The Village Hall has installed a cycle parking facility, but it was found to be impractical to include one in the limited space around the Church. The Dog in the Lane no longer operates as a public house.



#### **4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE & ACTIVITIES**

**YOU SAID:** APC should consider supporting the Church, Village Hall, and the Dog in the Lane Pub as community assets.

**WHAT WE DID:** APC recognises that the Parochial Church Council and the Village Hall Committee (each constituted as an independent charity) manage important community hubs within the Parish, which APC seeks to support where appropriate. The Dog in the Lane Pub has recently ceased trading and APC carefully considered whether to seek its official listing as a “registered community asset”. Advice was sought from the Shropshire Association of Local Councils and Shropshire Council, but we concluded that there would be no benefit in doing so, to either the owner/landlord or the wider community.

**YOU SAID:** APC should seek to resolve a lack of communication about activities and amenities within the Parish and also encourage the organisation of local events.

**WHAT WE DID:** Alongside the aforementioned newsletter, APC set up and manages the parish website [www.astleyparish.org](http://www.astleyparish.org) which carries details of APC meetings, Church services, Village Hall events and much more, with each organisation managing their own pages. APC also maintains four public Noticeboards around the Parish. APC makes no charge for publicising local amenities and encourages and supports events where possible. We also submit articles to the Hadnall & Astley News magazine.

**YOU SAID:** APC should consider the viability of either a play area or a village green.

**WHAT WE DID:** APC considered this but no land was or is available. Should this change, then set-up costs and ongoing maintenance would need to be explored.

#### **5. CRIME, SAFETY & HEALTH**

**YOU SAID:** APC should publicise Neighbourhood Watch and Police contact information.

**WHAT WE DID:** APC receives regular reports from the local police Community Support Officers at its meetings, has signed up to the Local Policing Charter and confirmed local policing priorities as tackling burglaries, rural crime and speeding. We have promoted the Neighbourhood Matters email alerts from West Mercia Police and also feed into local Neighbourhood Watch communications. In March 2023 we arranged for our local policing team to visit the Village Hall to provide information on Smart Water property-marking kits, which they successfully delivered to over 20 households.

Our local policing contacts currently include:

Safer Neighbourhood Team for Shrewsbury Rural East: [shrewsburyRE.snt@westmercia.police.uk](mailto:shrewsburyRE.snt@westmercia.police.uk)

Rural and Business Crime Officer for Shropshire [graham.donaldson@westmercia.police.uk](mailto:graham.donaldson@westmercia.police.uk)



**YOU SAID:** You rated Emergency Services response times and local GP surgeries (in Clive, Severn Fields & Shawbury) very highly.

**IS THIS STILL THE CASE?** APC receives very little feedback on local health services, but if you think we should know about an issue, then tell us via the “OTHER PRIORITY” box on the reply-paid card.

**WHAT WE DO:** APC has installed, and continues to manage, two defibrillators in the parish: one located on the outside wall of the Village Hall, the other on railings outside Interior Design Ceilings, adjacent to Sundorne House, in Bings Heath.

## **6. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

**YOU SAID:** APC should note there is no great pressure amongst local people for additional, new housing, but some support for converting existing buildings, whilst retaining the “Open Countryside” designation.

**WHAT WE DID:** APC has supported a local family in a “Build your own affordable home” project and noted a number of conversions providing additional residential accommodation in the Parish.

**YOU ALSO SAID:** There should be a 4-5 year review of the Astley Parish Community-Led Plan.

**WHAT WE DID:** The Community-Led Plan was compiled in 2013 and reviewed in 2017, when further concerns relating to the A53 were noted and incorporated into the Astley section of Shropshire Council’s Place Plan. A major review of Place Plans will take place this year and your priorities for Astley can be put forward by completing and returning the reply-paid card.

## **7. ENVIRONMENT**

**YOU SAID:** APC should seek to maintain the rural integrity of the Parish ie. the peace, quiet and unspoilt nature of our countryside.

**WHAT WE DO:** This ethos underpins our response to planning applications, our focus in the Local Policing Plan on reducing speeding and the urgent action which we take to minimise inappropriate traffic diversion through the village when the main highways are blocked.

**YOU SAID:** Litter is a blot on our landscape and APC should facilitate a litter-picking initiative.

**WHAT WE DO:** Shropshire Council and Highways England engage contractors to litterpick along the trunk roads, with SC’s Street Scene team clearing litter along the minor roads. APC reports fly-tipping issues to SC and encourages local litter-picking initiatives where it is safe to do so.

**YOU SAID:** People should be made aware of owners’ responsibilities to clear up their dog’s mess.

**WHAT WE DID:** APC has posted Notices widely around the area and renewed these as necessary. Please let us know if this is still a significant problem.



**YOU SAID:** APC should initiate a balanced dialogue between the largely non-agrarian rural community and those involved in local agricultural activities.

**WHAT WE DO:** APC continues to liaise with local farmers when particular issues arise, recognising that large agricultural vehicles negotiating narrow lanes can cause concern for residents and other road users.

**YOU SAID:** You want to see stiles, footpaths and grass verges maintained. APC should publicise its role in these matters.

**WHAT WE DO:** APC reports repair and maintenance issues for stiles and footpaths to the Countryside Maintenance Team, Shropshire Council. Verges along major roads are maintained by the Highways Maintenance Team, those around the village are maintained by SC's Street Scene. APC has requested minimising use of weedkillers to promote wild flower growth.

**YOU SAID:** APC should publicise its role in offering support to those affected by flooding.

**WHAT WE DO:** Drains and gully issues are an ongoing seasonal issue and are reported to Drainage and Flood Risk Services, Shropshire Council.

**YOU SAID:** APC should note there is general support for suitably-located solar panels in the Parish, but no such support for wind turbines or mobile phone masts.

**WHAT WE DID:** APC has noted a number of successful planning applications to install solar panels on or adjacent to local properties.

## **8. FOOTPATHS & BRIDLEWAYS**

**YOU SAID:** APC should publicise its role regarding footpaths and bridleways, perhaps publishing a leaflet showing rights of way, their classification and related information. APC could also encourage establishment of a local working group on footpath improvement and continue to support a footpath between Bings Heath and Astley.

**WHAT WE DID:** Shropshire Council publish a comprehensive booklet on Rights of Way, a copy of which is available on our website [www.astleyparish.org](http://www.astleyparish.org). When we are aware of stiles, gates and marker posts needing attention, these are reported to the Countryside Maintenance Team, SC who have acted promptly. We looked seriously into the footpath suggestion across the A53 but were told it would not be practical on safety grounds.

The Shropshire Way passes through our parish and there is also a network of other Rights of Way, which can be seen on the Definitive Map at:

<https://shropshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d6ab15037ca741589b262f27170843c1>

*(Please click on Rights of Way in the Drop-Down Menu under Layers on the left of the screen and put Astley into the search box at the top left of the map, then, in the dropdown box that appears, input Place Name.)*