



Astley Village Parish Council

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Notice is hereby given that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Wednesday 2 March 2022 at 7.00 pm at Astley Village Community Centre**

All members of the public are welcome to attend.

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### **'Agenda'**

- 1. Introduction and Welcome.**
- 2. Annual Report of the Parish Council 2021/22 by the Chair, Councillor Arnold Almond (Attached)**
- 3. To invite the public to raise any matters of interest.**

The Parish Meeting is an opportunity for parishioners on the Electoral Roll for Astley Village to raise any matters of concern to them that relates to their local community. It would be helpful to have written notice of any matters to be raised but it is not essential. Matters can be raised at the meeting without prior notice. For any queries, please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council (Craig Ainsworth at [clerk@avpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@avpc.org.uk))

**The Parish Council Meeting will follow immediately after this meeting.**

**Councillor Arnold Almond  
Chair, Astley Village Parish Council  
23 February 2022**



# Astley Village Parish Council

<b>Title</b>	<b>Annual Report 2021/22</b>					
<b>Report of</b>	<b>Councillor Arnold Almond, Chair of the Parish Council</b>					
<b>Date</b>	<b>2 March 2022</b>					
<b>Type of Paper</b>	<b>Decision</b>		<b>Discussion</b>		<b>Information</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Purpose of Report</b>						
To present the Annual Report for Astley Village Parish Council for 2021/22.						
<b>Key Issues</b>						
<p>At the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May 2021, I was elected Chair of the Parish Council, following Councillor Laura Lennox’s decision to retire from the Chair and the Parish Council, along with her husband Chris Lennox, both Parish Councillors for many years</p> <p>Laura had occupied the Council Chair position for more many years and has been a focal point of contact for the village residents throughout her tenure. In addition, Laura has held the positions of Chorley Borough Councillor, Buckshaw School Governor and has been involved in many other Committees and positions serving the Astley Village community. Both Laura and Chris lived in the village for almost 40 years, they will both be greatly missed for their experience, their hard work and for their combined energy and drive on the Village Council; I wish them both a very long and happy retirement.</p> <p>We also lost two other valuable members of the Council during this 2021/22 Council year, namely Councillor Rod Fraser and Councillor Anne Price. I would like to thank Rod for his many contributions during my term in office and for his work with the General Working Group. Rod has been a very active Astley Village Parish Council member for many years and his experience and contribution will be very much missed. Anne, due to her personal circumstances had a short tenure on the Parish Council, but again I would like to thank her for her Council work. I’m sure that I speak for the whole of Parish Council when I say that we wish them both all the very best in their future endeavours.</p>						

On a positive note, during this same Council year, our Parish Council co-opted Councillor Keith Ashton, resident of Long Croft Meadow, and Councillor Emma Barraclough a resident of Broadfields onto the Parish Council and both have settled in well and are proving to be hard working dedicated Councillors. In addition, Councillor Matt Lynch of Buckshaw Hall Close has been co-opted onto the Parish Council after a three-year absence. Again, Matt brings a wealth of experience back to the Council. We welcome them all as their experience and hard work will be a great asset to us all.

At the time of writing this report, we still have vacancies on the Parish Council, and we would welcome applications from village residents and others residing within three miles of the Parish borders. We have a very active and dynamic group of Councillors and further new and diverse blood will be most welcome. We meet formally as a Council just six times in the year, bi-monthly, though our activities are daily 365 days per year. The Notice Boards at the Hallgate entrance and at the front of the Community Centre and our Website have details of how applicants can apply or find out more about the role of a Parish Councillor.

Throughout the winter months of 2021 and into 2022 the Parish Council has continued to push forward quite a number of initiatives including:

- We Continue to support the planting and replacement of our village's lost trees. The Village Council is working in tandem with Chorley Borough Council on an environmental initiative on 'Climate Change' and a 'Green Agenda,' supporting our commitment to become more carbon neutral. Most of our Council efforts will focus on replacing trees that have been lost. During 2020 10 new trees were planted along Chancery Road and in 2021 a further 30 trees were planted, most of them filling gaps left by the removal of dead trees.
- Chancery Road Bus Shelters. A complete refurbishment of the 10 Bus Shelters along Chancery Road, which was long overdue. Again, the Parish Council has worked together with Chorley Borough Council to have the shelters, the seating, the waste bins and the surrounding base areas power washed and the shelters repainted.
- The two Gateway Signs at each end of Chancery Road have been refurbished. The Parish Council will also be completing the refurbishment of the Notice Board at the junction of Chancery and Hallgate.
- A number of new Finger Posts are to be erected along Chancery giving visitors directions to Astley Park, the new Westway Sports Hub and the various walks around the village.

During the Summer of 2021, the official opening of the West Way Sports Hub took place, the ribbon cut by our Chorley MP and Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle. Though raining on the day, the opening was very well supported and the opening speech by Sir Lindsay was very well received, as was his involvement with the footballing youngsters who had been invited to take part (though we didn't see any threat to Ronaldo or Moh Salah on the day). The Parish Council has agreed to provide a financial contribution towards a new children's play area and associated paths.

Another significant event in the 2021 calendar was the G7 Speakers Conference, held in July, again hosted by Chorley MP and Speaker of the House, Sir Lindsay Hoyle. The Conference took place over three days, 17 – 19 July and ended with a Red Arrows flyover of the village and Astley Hall. We believe that it was a very successful Conference, and it was certainly a once in a lifetime event for Chorley, Astley Hall and therefore, for Astley Village.

The mini meadows and wildflower borders initiative by Chorley Council along Chancery Road, supported by the Parish Council, certainly eventually brought some additional wildflowers to the village, along with correspondence from our residents, both positive and negative. The initiative is a long-term commitment by Chorley Council in line with the national effort to improve the environment and reduce the problems caused by CO2 emissions; our Parish Council has engaged with Chorley Council and has submitted a proposed plan to them to achieve more acceptable and less contentious results in the 2022 programme.

The annual Village Carol Singing event took place on Wednesday 15 December 2021, close by the Christmas Tree and the Community Centre. It was attended by our Parish Councillors, Chorley Borough Councillors and a good number of local residents. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the event had to be scaled back somewhat, but hopefully we will be able to return to a more inclusive event in December 2022.

Further projects are currently under discussion within the Parish Council, with the overall aim of continuing to improve the landscape and facilities in the village in which we all reside, making it a pleasure for all our residents to share and to be proud of. Throughout this current Council year, we have continued to work on further developing our working relationship with our Lancashire County Councillors, Chorley Borough Councillor colleagues and with individual Chorley Borough Council Departments. We have also endeavoured to build stronger relationships with the schools and other private organisations and charities operating within the Parish boundary and will continue to do so.

As we meet in March 2022, we are moving to a National Government Covid-19 policy of 'living with Covid,' with most restrictions being eased or completely retired. Only time will tell us if this new policy works to the benefit of us all and allows us to return to an acceptable 'new normal.' The past two years has presented us all with hitherto unknowns which has brought much heartache to many and the loss of close family, friends and neighbours of most of us. The rest of 2022 and probably for years to come will be a challenge for us all, but we are filled with an indomitable resolve to cope with this challenge, for sure.

As I mentioned earlier, we have a very active and dynamic group of Parish Councillors and a professional hardworking Parish Clerk and Financial Officer and my personal sincere thanks go out to them all for their help and support during this, my debut year of tenure as Council Chair.

Councillor Arnold Almond  
2 March 2022.