

Newsletter



Astley Hall Reopening

Walking Routes in Astley Village

Our Nature Reserve

www.avpc.org.uk

Issue 46 Spring 2022



Chair's Report



Welcome to our Newsletter for Spring 2022.

After more than two years, it is hard to believe that we are still in the heat of the Covid pandemic and that large numbers of people are still contracting this dreadful condition. A survey has shown that during the last week in April 2022 well over 100,000 people confirmed positive results. Admittedly, this showed a decrease from the previous week, but it does demonstrate to us all that Covid is not going away soon. The survey showed that the UK still has well over three million cases. In April there has been a

relaxation to the wearing of masks, but they are still recommended in high volume public places. First, second, third and now fourth vaccination figures continue to increase and we can only hope that this continues. However, the message is still simple, please '**GET VACCINATED.'** Currently, it is our only major weapon against Covid and it saves lives.

During summer 2021 we saw the opening of the West Way Sports Hub by Chorley MP, Sir Lindsay Hoyle and already this has become a major sporting facility within Astley Village. Phase II, which includes the additional football pitches, the jogging track, additional parking facilities and the public Children's Play Area is at an advanced stage and we hope to be able to advise dates for the work shortly. Residents are still coming forward with ideas for Phase II and we are very pleased to be able to take onboard these ideas and to be able to discuss them with the respective Chorley Council Departments. Phase II will be partly supported by Astley Village Council funds.

The 2022 mini meadows and wildflower borders initiative by Chorley Council along Chancery Road, supported by the Parish Council, is already underway with the preparation of the areas able to be seen. As previously mentioned in the last Newsletter the Parish Council has engaged with Chorley Council and with our residents and helped forge a Plan with the Chorley Council to achieve more acceptable results in the 2022 programme. All subject to the vagaries of the British weather.

2022 hails the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen's accession to the throne, along with her 96th birthday celebration, which has provided us with the opportunity to do something different. Unlike some of the older Parishes in Chorley Borough, Astley Village does not have its own War Memorial or Community Memorial Garden, so the Parish Council has entered into discussion with Chorley Borough Council to take advantage of the Borough Neighbourhood Grant Scheme available for unusual projects. Within the Newsletter is an articled outlining the Parish Council's plans, supported by Chorley Borough Council and we would welcome the residents thoughts.

Last year's summer and autumn season again brought about many social activities on Astley Park, such as the Flower Show, the Picnic in the Park, the Bonfire Night later in the year and many more and whilst these activities are supported by the Parish Council, they have landed us with some major parking problems. The parking facilities in Astley Park are totally inadequate to cater for such activities and Park and Ride provisions have also proved to be inadequate, resulting in major unlawful parking problems on Chancery Road itself, the verges and all of the cul-de-sacs coming off Chancery Road. The Parish Council has worked with Chorley Borough, South Ribble Council and Lancashire County Council on this problem resulting in a temporary and trial traffic order being approved by the County Council to make Chancery Road a one way system and to allow parking down one side only. The Order request had to be put forward with plenty of notice to give us the option of trialling it at Picnic in the Park on Sunday 5 June. Full details off the trial will be communicated as soon as possible outlining what we are aiming to achieve.

The Parish Council will have a manned Stand at this year's Chorley Flower Show which will provide us with an opportunity to meet up with so many people who attend the Show, but find it difficult to attend any of the Parish Council Meetings throughout the year. We look forward to seeing our residents when they visit the Flower Show.

As you can see from the above, though we have just come out of the winter season, your Parish Council have been engaged on many new and existing challenges and initiatives and will continue to be so throughout 2022.

In last year's Winter edition of the Parish Newsletter, we mentioned that, due to retirements, house movements and other genuine reasons we ended up with vacancies on the Parish Council. We do still have some vacancies and welcome your applications to join our dynamic and hard working team. The Notice Boards at Hallgate and at the front of the Community Centre, plus our Website advertise the positions and the procedure for application, through our Council Clerk at <u>clerk@avpc.org.uk</u>. Below are the requirements for application.

Astley Village Council Chair. Councillor Arnold Almond (Chair)

COUNCILLOR CASUAL VACANCY

Astley Village Parish Council have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor, which will be filled by co-option.

Any person wishing to serve as a Councillor should write to the Parish Council via the Parish Clerk, contact details are on page 15, giving details and information about themselves, background and why they wish to become a Parish Councillor. To qualify, the applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be 18 years of age and;
- appear on the current register of the Voters List; or during the whole of the twelve months preceding the relevant date have resided in or within three miles of the parish; or
- · during the whole of the twelve months preceding the relevant date
- have occupied within the parish their only place of work.

Applicants must not be debarred from standing as a Councillor (further information is available by contacting the Parish Clerk)

Astley Hall Reopening



Astley Hall and Park was gifted to the people of Chorley, and whilst it is not actually park of Astley Village, it is the Hall which gave us our name. The Park is a key part of the surrounding area and heavily used by the residents of the village.

Astley Hall is a Grade 1 listed historic house, set within the beautiful surroundings of Astley Park which include historic woodland, a lake and a fully renovated Victorian walled garden. The Hall is perhaps best known for its stunning Jacobean plasterwork ceilings. The house structure is built around an internal Elizabethan courtyard and the 4 wings of the house were extended by the families who lived there over the years and most of the original features are retained to this day. The walled garden is a dedicated event space and since the Heritage Lottery funded renovation project in 2009 it has built up a varied programme of cultural events throughout the year. The Coach House building houses a museum, gift shop, art gallery and café which are open to the public.

Astley Hall has been closed since January 2020 to allow £1.1 million renovation work including removal of the external render to reveal original brick work, new and refurbished windows to the front of the Hall, strengthening the main staircase, adding an accessibility ramp and renovation of interior decoration.

But now we are pleased to say that the Hall is set to reopen to the public this spring/summer!

There is a new interpretation of the layout of the rooms including reinstating furniture and collections previously not on display. The visitor journey around the Hall is also being remapped to both elevate the experience and give areas of the Hall a break from heavy footfall. Drip sills are to be added to the front elevations of the Hall to prevent staining of the newly exposed brickwork. Maintenance of the house will continue, with the repairs to the cottage roof at the rear of the building continuing later into the year. www.avpc.org.uk 5

Chorley Borough Council, who manage it, have decided to introduce an admission fee for the Hall - Councillor Alistair Bradley, Leader of Chorley Borough Council has said:

It's important that Astley Hall becomes more sustainable, so the income generated from the admission fees will offset some of the costs of running the Hall, maintenance work that is required in the future and help us continue with the high level offer of exhibitions, events and other activities at the Hall. At the moment everyone in Chorley pays for the upkeep of the hall via Council Tax payments, and we think that those who actually visit Astley Hall many of whom are from outside Chorley should make a reasonable direct contribution as they would for other attractions across the UK. Introduction of an admission fee will also help us manage visitor numbers and the impact that heavy visitor footfall has on a building like this, helping to preserve the hall for future generations.

The good news for residents of Astley Village is that they will be offered a reduced admission fee to residents and the longer opening hours will provide more opportunities for people to visit. Residents of Chorley will be able to buy annual passes - entitling them to access for a full year - at a cost of £5 for adults, £2.50 for children and £15 for families of two adults and up to three children. The charge for a one-off visit will be set at £2.50 for Chorley adults and £1.50 for local children. All under-5s will get free admission, as will people with disabilities and their carers - irrespective of whether they live in or outside of Chorley.

Astley Village Proposed Community Remembrance Garden

The Parish Council and Chorley Borough Council have discussed taking advantage of the Borough Neighbourhood Grant Scheme and create a Community Remembrance Garden in the Village, combining it with the forthcoming Platinum Jubilee.

Parish Councillors and Borough Ward Councillors and Officers have held discussions regarding the location and the content of such a Community Remembrance Garden. The location was quickly agreed; the much, under-utilised Green, opposite Hall Gate, next to Buckshaw Primary School.

The design is a much wider subject, with many suggestions including Planting a Tree (or trees), to mark Her Majesties Platinum Jubilee; installing a large Tommy Planter and/or a Tommy Soldier Statue, or a life-sized, six foot Tommy Statue which serves a poignant and effective purpose; to serve in communities as a universal, touching reminder to those who lost in service both historically, during World War One and Two, and in more recent times. The Tommy Statue is now being widely adopted by Councils and Local Authorities nationwide as a way for communities to pay tribute to and respect those who have given all during WW1, WW2, the Falklands, Iraq and Afghanistan. The Remembrance Garden could provide seating, bushes and flowers where people can spend time in reflection of what happened to them and their family and/or friends through these difficult times, which should never be forgotten, including during the current Covid Pandemic.

Chorley Borough Council have been kind enough to prepare for 'discussion' indicative site plan to consider and agree a way forward, governed of course by the costs. Our target is to agree an outline plan by the end of June and to have the final project signed off by all parties during July, so that work can be begun in autumn this year. There will undoubtedly be many local residents who would like to have an input into this project and we would welcome their input just as soon as possible, by contacting the Parish Clerk <u>clerk@avpc.org.uk</u>. We want you to be involved in this project.

AIM-to create a community space for all to enjoy, spending time either together or alone to relax and reflect .

PATHS—1.2m wide bound gravel paths with edging boards, subbase and 6mm wearing course. To provide a smooth level route.



TREE PLANTING—specimen ornamental cherry tree to commemorate the "Queen's Platinum Jubilee"

BENCHES—2 new benches to be installed to match existing. Plaque for the Jubilee and Lest We Forget.

The back of the **existing notice board** to be designed "Community Remembrance Garden". Ideally using vinyl wrap so this can be updated and changed in the future.

Proposed single 6ft Tommy to be placed in the back of the existing raised planter facing into the open space.

Planting in the bed of grasses and ornamental poppies. Plant around the arc of the base of the planter with a low growing hedge like Box or Photinia Red Robin with flag path to allow viewing of the tommy and lay wreath or crosses.





Astley Village Development Plan

The current Astley Village Development Plan can be found on the Parish Council Web Site on the "Other Documents" page.

This year the Parish Council have added two new items to our to our ongoing development plan, namely:

1. Improving Community Engagement and Raise the Profile of the Parish Council

We will have a presence at Chorley Flower Show this year, Friday 29 to Sunday 31 July, with a display explaining what the Parish Council is for and members of the Parish Council will be on hand to answer questions from visitors.

2. Safety (Footpaths and Lighting in Astley Village)

This is in response to issues raised by residents. Whilst the Parish Council has no statutory powers we will encourage the appropriate bodies to maintain footpath surfaces and lighting throughout Astley Village.

There is an ongoing commitment to work with Chorley Borough Council with respect to the **Mini-Meadows and Wildlife corridors project**.

Last summer much of the grass verge along Chancery Road was left unmown to allow "wildlife friendly corridors" to develop. In addition a one metre wide strip was prepared and planted with wildflower seeds. There was also a seeded area of wildflowers at the junction with The Farthings. These initiatives have brought mixed reaction from residents (though the bees were reported to be happy).

Seeded Wildflowers in front of shops at Village Centre

The wildflower seeding worked well in some areas, notably in front of the shops at the Village Centre, and not so well where trees overshadowed them. The Parish Council have worked with the Borough to identify where to concentrate our efforts this year and hopefully we will get an improved show of wildflowers later in the summer.



The wildlife corridors were a great success in allowing the naturally occurring grasses and wildflowers to flourish providing colour and fragrance. This started with dandelions providing a mass of yellow after the daffodils faded. There are many flowers that pop up providing an opportunity to test your knowledge of native species such as Cowslips.



Unwelcome Dock plants



Natural wildflowers - Cowslips

One negative aspect from last year were the Dock plants that started to dominate in some areas and the Borough responded to complaints and removed many of the larger specimens.

Finally, the expected timescale for the **Children's Play Area** at the sports hub should mean that works will have started when this newsletter goes out. The Parish Council are working with Chorley Borough to provide this facility along with new footpaths to access the facility from Astley Village.

ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE PARISH NEWSLETTER

The village newsletter is produced by the Parish Council and distributed to all Astley Village homes. It has spaces for local businesses to advertise to subsidise the cost of its printing and distribution in Spring and Winter. A total print for the newsletter is 1600, delivered by local distributor to every house, just short of 1500 properties in Astley Village.

Besides this delivery, the Parish Council gives a supply to the Community Centre for visitors to collect, the shops and at Derian House. Also, the newsletter appears on the website.

Full Page Adverts
Half Page Adverts
Quarter Page Adverts

Size: A5, artwork produced, £70 per issue. Size: half A5, artwork produced, £45 per issue. Size: quarter A5, artwork produced, £25 per issue

Walking for pleasure or with a purpose?

The estimated population of Astley Village for 2020 was 3,078. Of those, nearly 30% were over 65, about 50% were between 18 and 64 years of age and about 20% in 0 - 17 age group. But what we all have in common is the need to travel in and out of the village either by transport or by walking and hopefully get some exercise along the way! Astley Village is accessible from the north via Euxton Lane, onto Chancery Rd, by-passed to the west by the 65252 known as Westway and reached from the south from Southport Road, the A581 and onto Westway. The only direct routes into or out of the village to the east (A6) are by footpath. [See Map 3]

Walking counts as a form of low impact, moderate intensity exercise with a range of health benefits and few risks. It is recommended that younger adults aim for 10,000 steps per day or 5 miles. This figure may rise or fall depending on a person's age, current fitness level and health considerations. For older adults, a daily goal of 7,000 - 8,000 steps may be sufficient to see significant benefits such as maintaining good flexibility, muscle strength, alleviating stiffness, and improving mental health and sleep. Without a daily target, on average most people would only achieve one and a half to two miles per day. Astley Village has numerous interlinking paths between adjacent housing clusters. Recent newcomers to the village may not be aware of how these little paths link to create longer walks or to reach wider destinations.

Whilst Chancery Road has footpaths, sometimes on both sides of the carriageway, Westway does not encourage walkers as there isn't a proper footpath along the whole route, not even to reach the new Sportshub. Hopefully the County Council can be persuaded to rectify this at some point in the future. Promoting health and fitness by walking, means providing adequate footpaths especially to sports facilities and play areas. With this in mind, Astley Village Parish Council have been active in working with Chorley Council, to improve the footpath from the village centre down to the new Sportshub and to the new playground facilities which are to be an integral part of the development.



There will be two new fingerposts directing visitors and residents. The first will point from the path by the Community centre (A) via the underpass towards the wildlife ponds and then onto the

Westway Sportshub (Map I.) This route takes approximately six minutes or about 650 steps.

Map 2. shows the location of the second new fingerpost (A) on the roadside approaching The Farthings. It will indicate the path through Judeland Wood to a www.avpc.org.uk



small bridge ,which crosses the River Chor into Astley Park itself and onto the main path leading from Ackhurst Lodge towards the hall. It emerges next to the Astlev Hall Trail post. Hopefully the sign will point visitors in the right direction and prevent them getting lost in any of the Farthings' several cul-de-sacs. This route takes approximately 6 minutes or about 735 steps.

There are a few paths which lead eastwards, towards the main road leading into the town centre itself or to commercial areas on the outskirts of Chorley. The reasonably straightforward route from Chancery Road to the A6 begins opposite the entrance to Broadfields (A) and continues through Studfold crossing Edgefield (B) following Foxcote (C) and then climbing gently through a narrow "ginnel" to the green space with trees, where the new play area will be built (PA). Continuing up the hill and crossing over Rookwood Avenue (D) then following Fairway will lead to a turn left into Highfield Rd North (E) and then to the A6 Preston Rd. This route takes approximately five minutes or about 450 steps to the play area and then the path to the A6 takes another four minutes or about 850 steps in total (Map 3).



Continuing at a gentle pace along the A6 into Park Rd and then to Astley Park gates takes another twelve minutes covering 2100 steps. If you follow the path back through Astley Park and via the diagonal path crossing the playing fields towards Dog Trap Wood and emerge near the village centre you will have covered a further 1450 steps taking approximately fifteen more minutes.

To the north of the village, the path from Euxton Lane (B5252) by the edge of Derian House (A) towards Chancery Rd. gives a choice of two routes. (Map 4)



The one away from the traffic crosses Chancery Rd. (B) onto Buckshaw Hall Close and circles round the duckpond (C) then follows a relatively straight path through parts of Broadfields until it reaches the bus shelters on Chancery Rd. (D). Here you can use the zebra crossing and make your way past 'The Astley Inn' and into the village centre.

Alternatively following the curving footpath/cycleway along Chancery Rd. will bring you to the same bus stops. Both routes take about 10 minutes and cover roughly 1050 steps.

There are several pathways into Astley Park following the brown signs from the roads. One path which is not marked as such leaves Chancery Road near the Deerfield bus stops. It is a beaten earth path through the wooded area known as Damhead Wood. In springtime it has a display of bluebells. This path has an uneven camber and winds between trees and over tree roots which can be a trip hazard. It makes its way via a little wooden bridge and several steps.

It is not recommended for prams/pushchairs or wheelchairs or people with walking difficulties. There is an alternative path adjacent to the Harewood sheltered housing buildings which has a better metalled surface, which then meets up with the woodland walk and proceeds to Astley Park where there is a choice of paths. The one to the right curves round towards the lake, another turns left via Dog Trap Wood skirting the main field and reaches Park Rd. The third continues diagonally across the field towards the main path and playground and eventually to the top gates.

Our Nature Reserve

The Westway Ponds Community Nature Reserve is not well known, despite it being part of the Village. It is located near to the new West Way Sports Area and can be accessed by paths from the Chancery Road Underpass, Judeland and Wymundsley. The ponds were once part of the Astley Park farmlands and would have been used by cattle as a natural drinking hole. As Astley Village was developed, the ponds were left undisturbed apart from the installation of the footpaths and bridges to create the nature reserve. The wet woodland was designed to be unmaintained as open water, to marsh, to firm ground that supports a variety of animals from mammals to amphibians.



Unfortunately, over the years the paths, boardwalks, bridges, and observation platforms have rotted and become unsafe. There has been some fly-tipping and rubbish left in the wetland. The grass trail from the village area to the nature reserve has become sodden and difficult to traverse. Also, the entrance fencing to the area has been damaged and left in a potentially dangerous condition.

We urge visitors to proceed with caution if they intend to visit.



With the development of the West Way Sports Hub so close to the nature reserve, the area is likely to have more visitors in the future. It is our hope that we can work together with Chorley Borough Council and Buckshaw Primary School to redevelop the nature reserve with the view to making it safer and more child-friendly, without disturbing the naturalised landscape and resident wildlife.



The Chorley Flower Show, live from Astley Park, is back with a 3-day show: Friday 29, Saturday 30, and Sunday 31 July 2022, 10am - 5pm each day.

Show highlights include:

Some of the finest professional exhibitors with multiple gold medals from the country's largest

flower shows and RHS events. National and local societies will be displaying their plants and running regional competitions. The Flowers, Fruit and Vegetable and Floral Art competitions and Begonia competition will be back. The gardening theatre will be there with demonstrations from professional gardeners including Jonathan Moseley and Martin Fish. A selection of excellent local and national horticultural traders for all your gardening needs. The Schools and Community groups Garden Competition will be taking place with their mini show gardens. The amateur photography competition will be back. Many food and drink traders will be at the show to cater for all tastes. Live entertainment will take place throughout the weekend with a selection of live music and walkabout acts in the Park.

Also, for the first time Astley Village Parish Council will be in attendance with our own stall! We will be displaying information regarding our Village and the plans we have for future improvements. Councillors will be available for a face-to-face chat throughout the weekend this is an excellent opportunity to catch up, get involved, raise concerns, or make suggestions. This is especially beneficial if you are unable to attend the Parish Council Meetings at the Community Centre. (Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every-other month, commencing at 7pm. The next meeting is 6th July.) We will do our best to answer your queries on the spot, but if we cannot, we can take you details and get back to you.

So come, enjoy all Chorley Flower Show has to offer, and take a moment to chat to us!



Parish Councillor Contact Details

Councillor Arnold Almond (Chair) Merefield, Astley Village Tel: 07525 700 709 *Email:<u>cllr.arnold.almond@avpc.org.uk</u>*



Councillor John McAndrew (Vice Chair) The Farthings, Astley Village Tel: 01257 262914 *Email:<u>cllr.john.mcandrew@avpc.org.u</u>*



Councillor Keith Ashton Long Croft Meadow, Astley Village Tel: 07722 455949 *Email:<u>cllr.keith.ashton@avpc.org.uk</u>*



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Councillor Matt Lynch Buckshaw Hall Close, Astley Village Tel: 07922 281300 *Email:cllr.matt.lynch@avpc.org.uk*



Councillor Gillian Sharples Wymundsley, Astley Village Tel: 07850074326 *Email:<u>cllr.gillian.sharples@avpc.org.uk</u>*

Councillor Chris Sheldon The Farthings, Astley Village Tel: 01257 266463 *Email:<u>cllr.chris.sheldon@avpc.org.uk</u>*





Parish Council Information

You can Contact the Parish Clerk, Craig Ainsworth by emailing him at clerk@avpc.org.uk or write to him at Astley Village Parish Council, 5 Clarendon Gardens BL79GW.

Visit the Parish Council website for information such as meeting minutes and other interesting information: www.avpc.org.uk

Parish Council Meetings are normally at 7pm on the first Wednesday of alternate months, at the Community Centre, Hallgate, Astley Village, at 7pm unless otherwise notified. Meetings will be held on:

- Wednesday 6 July 2022.
- Wednesday 7 September 2022.
- Wednesday 2 November 2022.
- Wednesday 4 January 2023.
 - Wednesday 1 March 2023 at the rise of the Parish Meeting.

Parish Newsletters are published in Spring



and Winter and delivered to all homes in Astley Village, a circulation of nearly 1600.

The Parish Council has two notice boards located one at the junction of Chancery Road and Hallgate and in the village centre next to the Community Centre.

The Parish Council's Community notice board is mounted on the shop wall, near to the Pharmacy entrance and is now being used as a Community notice board where groups can post messages about Community activities, events etc. Email any notices to the Parish Clerk:clerk@avpc.org.uk

Small Grants Fund

The Parish Council can offer grants to local organised groups for local projects. The grants available are in the hundreds, not thousands of pounds but can make a real difference.

If your group would like to apply, all they need to do is submit an application form with some details. A copy of the grant criteria and application form are on the Parish Council website: www.avpc.org.uk

Useful Contacts



Village issues relating to litter, trees & hedges, fly tipping and graffiti. Also, your household waste collection service. Report directly to Chorley Council on: **01257 515151**

or at: https://main.chorley.gov.uk/

or at https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/report-it/ or https://www.chorley.gov.uk/

You will need to register at 'my account' then you can report any issue directly and pinpoint on a map.



Coronavirus: We are experiencing an increase in telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre, so it may take longer than usual to speak to an advisor. To avoid waiting please submit an online enquiry. *https://my.placesforpeople.co.uk/signup.aspx*

You can contact us by telephone on 01772 667002.

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm (excl. bank holidays). Please note: calls to local numbers may be cheaper or included in your call package. Always check with your provider. When you call, please have your property reference number, house number or postcode ready. Emergency repairs: All emergency repairs need to be reported by phone. Please call us immediately on 01772 667002. The line is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Emergency repairs that should be reported immediately include:

- Gas leaks · Uncontainable water leaks
- Electrical or fire risk Property security
- Complete loss of heating and hot water

An emergency repair is any problem that could be a security risk or cause harm to you, another person or to your property.

Hard of hearing? - Customers who are hard of hearing can text us on $\underline{07790\,886\,967}$.

Translations- We can use the Big Word language service to translate if English is not your first language.



If you need to report any Lancashire County Council faults such as problems with pavements, roads, street lights, flooding, bollards, gritting or any main infra-structure items you can do this simply online at: *https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/report-it/* or telephone Highways reports on: **0300 123 6780**



Lancashire Police offer a free crime alert messaging service. If you would like to receive these free crime alerts you can do so by filling in some basic details at: www.stayintheknow.co.uk

You can also report crimes via the internet at: https://tinyurl.com/y92qm4um

Chorley Police Station01257 269021Central Control Centre101Crimestoppers0800 555 111(anonymous reporting)999