

Preston on Stour Parish Council Update

Caring for Preston on Stour



What has been done and What has still to be done

New Groups Formed

Preston Environmental Group:

PEG has organised walks, talks and has completed a habitat survey of the area surrounding Preston. Membership is just £5 per year. Contact Sally Jennings (450797) or follow the links on the village website.

Local History Group:

Aspects of village history will appear on the website in a series of short articles. The group is very interested in personal memories of times past.

Walking around the village:

Working closely with Alscot Estate, it is possible for members of this group to walk certain routes which are not normally accessible. You can contact Margaret Brocklehurst (450710) for details.

Work in Progress

A new **cycle route** is being investigated.

Dog-fouling: We strongly request that dog owners clear up after their animals. Remember, the maximum fine is £1,000

Ways of reducing **speeding** in the village have been examined. A statutory 20 mph limit is not possible but advisory signs could be put up.

Other Achievements

- A **defibrillator** has been installed outside the Village Hall.
- There is now a **Neighbourhood Watch** facilitator, Les Coulson who e-mails messages relating to local incidences. To get on his list, please 'phone him on 450897 or e-mail him on lescoulson@live.co.uk
- A **Housing Needs Survey** has been carried out.
- The **Bus Shelter** has been repaired.
- A **Parish Directory** has been compiled and distributed.
- We have a **Snow Warden** who will be incorporated into the Revised Emergency Plan.

Can you help?

We need your ideas, but also volunteers to help to make things happen.

Your Parish Council:

Anna Corser (450778)

Mick Jennings (450797)

Roger Reed (450202)

Lester Smith (07867 988364)

Will Spencer (chair) (4502904)

Dionne Sambrook (clerk) (450870)

2016/17 has been an exceedingly busy year for the Parish Council with several planning applications to consider, resulting in extraordinary meetings and attendance at planning meetings. There have also been additional meetings to deal with urgent matters and very many consultations to comment upon, both individually and collectively. We have also written/reviewed most of our policies and procedures in order to ensure that our governance is at the standard required. This includes the Aims and Objectives of the Parish Council.

Please make a note in your diary of this year's Annual Parish Meeting which will be held in the Village Hall at 7.00p.m. on 25th May. This is not a Parish Council Meeting, but an open forum giving residents the opportunity to raise and discuss issues important to them, hear about local groups and to also raise issues/actions for the Parish Council to consider.

Precept:

Over the years it has been the aim of the Parish Council to keep the precept as low as possible. In some years it has even been considerably reduced. The last two years it has not been increased, but this was achieved mainly by drawing down funds from the reserves.

These are now at the minimum recommended level. This year therefore there will need to be a substantial rise. Our main expenditures are mowing costs which we are seeking to reduce and those associated with having the essential services of a fully qualified Parish Clerk which is even more necessary in these exacting times. However Councillors are seeking, wherever possible, to augment the work she does so that she is able to work within her very restricted hours to keep the costs down.

Our planned annual expenditure will be £6,500, very little more than last year. However, unless there are any specific grants which we will always apply for when appropriate, we have no other sources of income to cover everyday running costs (maintain/mow the greens and verges, provide the bus shelter, hold public meetings, maintain the website, employ a clerk etc.)

Last year the precept was set at £3,500 and this year it will be £6,500. Further details will be provided at the next Parish Council meeting which is at 7.30 p.m. on 25th March, in the Village Hall.

To keep costs down we will put further information on the village website www.prestononstour.org