

# Kelsall Parish Council

## NEWSLETTER October 2007

The Parish Council does not produce newsletters very often, but I think its councillors would rather spend their time doing the job than writing about it. So it takes something special to get us into print – and we certainly have something special! Over the past four years, we have initiated a number of projects which will have long term benefits for Kelsall; some of them conducted with the support of many members of our community, and others, of necessity, behind closed doors. After much work, and many thousands of hours of volunteer time, some of these have now come to fruition. The Parish Landscape and Design Statement will give us an unprecedented level of protection from inappropriate development, and the purchase of recreation land will give us the opportunity to develop much needed leisure facilities, particularly for our young people. We hope you support what we have been doing; either way we would like to hear from you!

*John Leather*



## ***Parish Council Buys Recreation Land***

For over thirty years, successive Kelsall Parish Councils have fought to obtain land suitable for recreation. We are delighted to announce that we have concluded an agreement to purchase 4.7 acres of land adjacent to the Morris Dancer. It is our intention to dedicate this land, in perpetuity, to recreational use. For some years a small part of this land has been leased to the PC, but with severe constraints on groundworks or any form of permanent structure. Now we are able to consider an imaginative development to meet the needs of children and young people. A committee is being formed under the chairmanship of Parish Councillor Ian Lowden to plan how the area should be developed, with due regard for safety and security - please contact the Clerk if you wish to be involved in some way. An inaugural meeting will be held in the Community Centre at 7.30 on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October**. All are welcome.

The success of this negotiation is largely due to the personal efforts of Noel Dutton, who announced his intention of pursuing this land when he accepted the chair in 2003. It has taken four and a half years of patient and often frustrating negotiation to reach this outcome. Along with all our predecessors as parish councillors whose efforts kept this dream alive, we thank Noel for his efforts and congratulate him on his achievement.

Of course, we can only buy land if the owner is prepared to sell it; the recognition that private development on this site would continue to be vigorously opposed by this community may well have influenced this outcome; this view is robustly supported in our new Design Statement - see next page for more on this.

To pay for the land, the PC are calling up commuted sums (money paid by developers in lieu of including basic recreational facilities within their development) from Chester City Council, some money from PC reserves, and a small loan, also from the City Council. We take the opportunity to thank those officers from the City Council who assisted with this. We will be seeking grants from various sources including the National Lottery to fund development of the land, but it is likely that there will be a rise in the parish precept, which will add a little to our Council Tax.

A generation of children have grown up in Kelsall without adequate play and recreation facilities; we think that this is a small price to pay to ensure that this never happens again.

We will reflect the views of all sections of our community in planning the facilities – we won't be playing cricket there next week, but we will make progress as quickly as we can.

# ***Kelsall Parish Landscape and Design Statement***

After 3 years of work by residents, the Kelsall Parish Landscape and Design Statement was unanimously endorsed by Chester City Council at its meeting in July, and is now included in the statutory planning framework.

For the first time in its history, Kelsall has guidelines for residential development, which are both widely accepted by the community and have legal backing. It will help to ensure that any new developments both respect and enhance the character of Kelsall. In particular, it gives us more protection of the views of, and from the sandstone ridge. Many other aspects of living in Kelsall arose during the course of the study, and some of these have been incorporated in the document as appendices. While these do not form part of the statutory requirements, they will be used by planning authorities to inform future rural planning and policy development.

The Parish Council launched the Kelsall Parish Plan in October 2004. It became clear very quickly that proposed developments by Persimmons, the largest housebuilder in the country, were of concern to the majority of residents. Earlier planning applications by Persimmons had been resisted vigorously by the Parish Council and by Kelsall's City Councillors - all without avail. It was necessary to derive local planning policies, and the only means open to us was to prepare a Village Design Statement. Accordingly, the Parish Council formed a steering group, chaired at different stages by John Leather and Joan Fairhurst, and the work began in December 2004.

One of the deficiencies of our planning system is that little attention is paid to the topography of the area. Even when it is included in planning applications, heights are often not to scale and the impact of a proposed development is difficult to assess.

Since this is so significant to Kelsall, it was decided to conduct a further project, a Parish Landscape Statement, to underpin the Village Design recommendations. Part of this is included in the Landscape and Design

Statement, and a major contribution was made to this by Evelyn Cragg-Hine.

Many residents contributed to this project. Some contributed a great deal, and many others contributed as and how they could. It consumed several thousand hours of volunteer time, and the essential background and preparatory work will probably never be fully appreciated.

Significant work was done by Cathy Peel, Audrey Parker, John Forster and Anne O'Donnell. Led by John Gittins and Evelyn, the Cedar Class from Kelsall Community School devoted a week to Landscape Character Assessments. This was supported by Stephanie Wadeson of SEEN (Sustainable Environmental Education Network) and was also part of the Geographical Association's "Valuing Places" project - a national initiative. In the final stages, we received considerable support from officers of Chester City Council.

Members of the Steering Group write: "As members of the Village Design Statement team, we would like to thank John Leather and Joan Fairhurst for their determination and enthusiasm in driving forward the process of drawing up the document which has now been adopted by the City Council. Without their special knowledge and skill, and the hours of hard work and personal time they put in, the village and villagers would not have the benefits which it is hoped the document will bring when decisions are made on planning issues. We feel it is important that their special contribution be acknowledged."

Throughout the process, we were guided, advised and encouraged by John Gittins of the Cheshire Landscape Trust.

This has been a true community exercise, and we are grateful to all who have contributed, and to Cheshire County Council who provided the funds to enable this project.

There will still be difficult and contentious planning decisions - but a minimum standard has now been set to ensure that Kelsall

develops in a manner that preserves its essential character, yet allows it to adapt to future needs.

You can view the completed document at [Kelsall.org.uk](http://Kelsall.org.uk) and, over time, the background material and supporting studies will be added.

The completion of the project will be marked in a short ceremony at 11.30am on **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October** in the Community Centre. Please show us your support by joining us for half an hour.

### ***Recycling Exhibition***

Recycling is now available for paper-based drink cartons (eg. juice, milk) at the recycling point in the Morris Dancer rear car park. Please rinse cartons before depositing them.

Our Recycling Champion is John Gray who, with John Hammond, has organised an exhibition at the Community Centre from 10:30am to 2:00pm on **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October**.

### ***Affordable Homes in Flat Lane***

As you are no doubt aware, Arena Housing Association is building new affordable houses on Flat Lane. If you wish to apply to either enter into a part-buy scheme or rent one of the properties you can now apply to Arena Housing. We hope that people applying for the part-buy scheme will be informed if they are successful later this month, and, for the rented properties, in December or January.

Arena can be contacted on 01744 670221 or through their website [www.arena-housing.com](http://www.arena-housing.com).

Part of the Parish Council's strategy has been to forge stronger partnerships with the major institutions in the village, to avoid unnecessary duplication and to manage big projects more efficiently and with broader benefits for residents. In this case, part of the cost of providing off-road car parking at the Kelsall Community School was met from the Arena development. We expect that this will improve traffic flow along Flat Lane for most of the day.

The Parish Council has proposed the name "Rookery Close" for the new road.

### ***Tarvin Educational Foundation***

The Tarvin Educational Foundation is a charity set up to manage the endowment of the old Tarvin Grammar School. The purpose of the Charity is to assist the educational needs of students of secondary school age and older who live in the ancient Parish of Tarvin. These are the villages of Kelsall, Tarvin, Ashton and Clotton Hoofield. The Governors are representatives of the Parish Councils of the four villages, together with a member of the Cheshire County Council and up to three co-opted members.

The awards may take the form of financial assistance for tuition fees, maintenance, books, musical instruments or travel on approved courses. The Governors are happy to consider any application made on behalf of students residing in the qualifying area and a letter to the clerk indicating the subject or project being undertaken and some details of the funding required is the usual first step. Applications can be made at any time.

The clerk to the Foundation is  
Mr D.H. Cotgreave  
Brown Heath Farm, Tarvin  
Tel: 01829 740231

The Kelsall representative is Noel Dutton (751449).

### ***Tree Warden Needed***

Our trees are one of the defining characteristics of Kelsall's landscape which we wish to preserve and improve. The Parish has a Tree Warden who helps make decisions about maintaining and removing trees, and issuing Tree Preservation Orders.

Our industrious webmaster, John Hammond, finds himself so busy keeping the website abreast of village activities that he finds less and less time to devote to Kelsall's trees. If you are interested in taking on this job, John would be delighted to tell you what it entails.

He can be contacted on 759235 or by email at [webmaster@kelsall.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@kelsall.org.uk)

## ***Kelsall Website***

And while on the subject, John has done a terrific job of developing the Kelsall website, which grows weekly – see, for instance, resident David Fenton's aerial photographs of the Flat Lane development. We would like to see more village businesses use the website. There are no charges and it definitely brings in enquiries.

## ***New National Concessionary Bus Pass Scheme***

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 a new national concessionary travel scheme is being introduced that will enable free off-peak travel, on local buses, anywhere in England for people aged 60 or over and for disabled people.

Chester City Council has been getting in touch with existing bus pass users to ask them to complete a new application form and return it with a recent passport quality photograph.

The City Council is now trying to contact people who are newly eligible or those who haven't claimed before. Customers can contact Chester City Council directly for an application form. Full details are on the poster displayed on the Parish Council notice board situated at the side of the Co-op.

The deadline for gathering all of the data is very tight and we would urge that forms are completed and returned as soon as possible with the appropriate evidence and photographs to enable you to take advantage of this fantastic new scheme. If you have any queries or concerns please telephone the concessionary travel helpline on 01244 402148.

PS - If you hate using those photo booths, Sainsbury offer a passport photo service in store at the dry cleaning service section. They will replace free of charge any photos that are rejected by any government departments.

## ***Footpaths***

Footpaths are being improved in several places with the introduction of kissing gates to replace older stiles. When walking, please keep to the marked paths and keep dogs under control. Cutting across a field is trespass, and some local farmers have complained of damaged crops.

If you find that a public right of way across private land has been blocked or cropped over, then it can be reported to the Public Rights of Way Unit at Winsford 01606 541801. They also carry definitive maps of the rights of way, which can be viewed by arrangement.

Our thanks to Rev Ian Enticott, who has walked all these footpaths and identified the problem areas.

## ***Dog fouling***

Dog fouling is still a major issue in the village. Some residents have complained about poop bags being thrown onto their property, including St Philip's Church.

This is littering and carries the same penalty as dog fouling. There are plenty of dog bins around. Please use them, and contact the Parish Council if you have a suggestion for where one is needed.

Free bio-degradable poop bags are available in small quantities from the Vet (Mr. Christian on Dog Lane), The Forum, the Dog Warden, local City Councillors and Community Safety Wardens on patrol.

For more information, and to report incidents of dog fouling see: [www.chester.gov.uk/council\\_services/dog\\_warden/dog\\_fouling.aspx](http://www.chester.gov.uk/council_services/dog_warden/dog_fouling.aspx)

## **Mini-bike Advice**

The Parish Council has unfortunately received a number of complaints from residents about the misuse of mini-bikes or mini-motors as they are more commonly known. A significant number of young people have been reported riding the bikes on village roads and especially on the footpath which runs from the Morris Dancer to Flat Lane.

There is a wealth of legislation which vehicles such as these may be subject to, not to mention the very real issues of user safety and the social impact of improper use. Everyone, particularly parents considering purchasing one for a child, or indeed if your child already owns one, should be aware of these issues.

Without delving into the intricacies of the law too deeply, the following is a good starting point should you be considering using a mini-motor on a road or other public place:-

- | Machines must meet European construction requirements.
- | Must be registered with the DVLA.
- | Must have road tax.
- | If the vehicle is over 3 years old, it will require an MOT.
- | Riders must be 17 years old or over, unless the vehicle meets the specifications of a moped, allowing a 16 year old to ride it.
- | Riders must have insurance
- | Riders must have an appropriate driving licence.

There are also additional obligations in respect of protective equipment and standards of riding.

If you have no intention of riding them on the highways then the following is appropriate:- It is illegal to ride them on pavements, footpaths, bridleways, parks, playing fields and if the above points are not in place, car parks. Mini-motors can only be used on private property with the owner's permission.

The illegal use of mini-motors in such places can have serious consequences for the rider and others. Seizure and crushing of bikes,

ASBOs, fines, driving licence revocation and the risk of serious injury are possible consequences of unsupervised, illegal use. In short, ride an unlicensed and uninsured mini-motor out of your garden gate and you're breaking the law. Parents and owners may themselves be committing offences if they permit anyone, including children, to use mini-motors illegally.

*Please be sensible and enjoy your bikes safely and legally.*

## **Vandalism and Litter**

To keep down expenses, many members of the Parish Council help with maintenance, repair and improvement of public facilities around the village; Tony Castle, for instance, is often seen with a pair of shears in his hand giving hedges a haircut between scheduled visits from our contractors. In co-operation with KADRAS, John Gray has lead bulb-planting expeditions.

On a more negative note however, almost every day, our Clerk picks up litter, beer cans and broken glass from the recreation land. She also has to replace mandatory "No Smoking" signs in the bus shelters with monotonous regularity.

Noel Dutton and John Leather have repaired the wooden fence around the swings on numerous occasions. We could, of course, install a much stronger steel fence, but that would make the area resemble a prison camp rather than a rural village. Much of this work is created by wanton vandalism, and should not be necessary.

On several occasions we have borrowed a mobile CCTV unit, and we will repeat this exercise in the future. Meanwhile, help us to identify who is smashing glass, discarding litter and wrecking fences - we will take action.

Your parish councillors would rather spend their time on projects which can offer long term improvements to the quality of life in Kelsall.

## ***New Police Constable for Kelsall***

Our new Police Constable, Andrew Wilson, was welcomed to Kelsall at the Parish Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> September. His predecessor, PC Robin Fisher, was withdrawn for other duties last year. Since then, and with the support of our MP, Stephen O'Brien, the Parish Council has been pressing the Cheshire Police for a replacement.

Andy says, "I am absolutely delighted to have been given the position of local community officer for Kelsall and Ashton Hayes and would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I joined Cheshire Police approximately 8 years ago. Initially I was posted at the old HQ in Chester covering the town centre on foot; however once I completed my response driving course, I was asked to patrol the Blacon area. Since then I have worked in both Chester and Ellesmere Port in various capacities, but all front line duties. I am also a fully trained firearms officer.

I volunteered for this position and I started at Mickle Trafford on Monday 20th August. As you can imagine I am also being tasked to investigate and carry out enquiries in the neighbouring area. I do however try to get into Kelsall and Ashton as much as possible and I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can while I am out and about."



PC 3689 Andrew Wilson  
C Block Mickle Trafford

Tel 01244 612703

## ***Speeding in Kelsall***

At the request of City Councillor Garman and residents of Chester Road, the Parish Council will again conduct a campaign of speed measurements in Chester Road.

We have just received approval from Cheshire Highways to site the SID (Speed Indicating Device) at some new locations on Chester Road.

This campaign will be co-ordinated by Parish Council Vice Chairman, Noel Dutton. Unlike the two previous campaigns, operation of the SID is no longer restricted to members of the

Council. If you wish to help us, please contact Noel or the Clerk.

We support the Cheshire County Council voluntary initiative to combat speeding, "Set the Pace". If you are interested in this scheme, please contact John Leather.

## ***Farewell to Joan***

Joan Fairhurst was a resident of Kelsall for many years and throughout that time she has contributed to the good of the community. As an officer in the County Council, she was appointed as a “friend” to the Parish Council, which she subsequently joined. More recently, she was elected to the City Council whence she founded the Kelsall Youth Support Group and played a leading role in the Parish Landscape and Design Statement project. Throughout her tenure, she used her position to support the Parish Council in many of its endeavours. She moved to North Wales last year, and retired from the City Council in May. The Parish Council wishes her well, and records its thanks for all her valuable contributions to improving life for the residents of Kelsall.

## ***John Burke***

At its August meeting, the Parish Council paid tributes to Cheshire County Councillor John Burke, who died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August following a long battle with Motor Neurone Disease.

Noel Dutton said, “John was an Officer and a Gentleman. He was educated at the Duke of York’s Royal Military School and served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Parachute Regiment and the SAS. Following his career in the military, John joined the UK tyre industry. At the County Council, he was a member of several boards including Highways. He was also a Governor at Christleton High School. John continued to attend our Parish Council meeting right to the end; we all last saw him at our meeting in July. We all appreciate that it must have been very difficult for him.”

Chester City Councillor Hugo Deymen said, “John was a real doer who always carried out his promises.” Nancy Sutton said John had been a great help to her while she was Chairman of the Parish Council and that he was always such a kind and helpful man.

We note his passing with sadness, and record our thanks for the work he has done for the benefit of our community.

## **KELSALL PARISH COUNCIL**

Where they exist, parish councils are the first tier of local government. Its members are elected and give their time voluntarily.

Although its members may be active in political parties, it is not a requirement or even preferable. The Kelsall Parish Council contains members of at least three political parties, but it operates as a non-political body and does not follow the policies of any political party.

The projects run by the Parish Council have no connection to any political party.

The current membership is:

Natalie Read (Clerk)	751352
John Leather (Chair)	752100
Noel Dutton (Vice-Chair)	751449
Tony Castle	752315
Rev. Ian Enticott	751472
John Gray	752833
Mrs Ann Lacey	751237
Ian Lowden	759266
Mrs Nancy Sutton	751611
Mrs Ro Cowell	

## **CITY COUNCILLORS**

Hugo Deynem	0786 014 1005
Andrew Garman	751557

## **COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Mrs Eleanor Johnson 01244 300339

## **CHESTER CITY COUNCIL**

General Inquiries 01244 324324

Kelsall Parish Council meetings are open to the public and press and are held in the Community Centre on the second Monday of every month, starting at 7.30pm.

During each meeting, an open forum is held wherein members of the public are invited to ask questions or raise concerns that affect this community.

If you wish to write, the Clerk’s address is:  
8 The Wynd, Kelsall, Tarporley  
Cheshire CW6 0PX