



COPPULL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

THE PARISH COUNCIL

In May 2015 Councillor Michael Atherton was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the second time and Councillor Nora Ball was re-elected as Vice-Chair. After the resignation of two Councillors at the end of the last year, two new members were co-opted on to the Parish Council in July 2016 – Councillors Lynne Fogg and Alan Hughes.

At the end of March 2016, the Parish Council consisted of the following Councillors and the Clerk:

Michael Atherton	- 01257 792029	Lynne Fogg	- 07980 389104
Ken Ball	- 01257 792131	Elaine Jones	- 01257 793056
Nora Ball	- 01257 792131	Sheila Makin	- 01257 792896
Pauline Cobham	- 01257 792443	Marjorie Parkinson	- 01257 793566
David Cole	- 01257 483958	Maggie Peel-Impey	- 01257 470465
Judy Corrigan	- 01257 794510	Simon Thomson	- 07525 756190
Paul Eastham	- 01257 791713	Stella Walsh	- 01257 791868
Alan Hughes	- 01257 470364	Sue Edwards (Clerk)	- 01257 470120

The Parish council decided not to apply for the Quality and Quality Gold Scheme when the foundation level ran out. It was generally felt that there was no real benefit from obtaining this status, which took a great deal of time and effort to apply and at a cost. However, the Parish Council still strive for quality throughout all the work they undertake within the village.

Financial Statement: This is subject to audit - an independent internal auditor audits the accounts twice per year and an external auditor appointed by the Audit Commission undertakes a final audit at the end of the financial year.

Conclusion of External Audit 2014/15 - Issues arising from the audit are:

- Bank Account – Gratuity – This matter will be resolved when the auto enrolment pensions come into force.

Conclusion of the Internal Audit 2014/15:

- Completion of the annual internal audit of the Parish Council accounts by carrying out a selective assessment of compliance, with relevant procedures and controls being examined.

The Parish Council operates a very effective accounting system which shows the Council's control objectives are of an adequate standard to meet the needs of the Council.

There were no issues arising.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

COPPULL PARISH COUNCIL - CIL Levy		87,067.50
	Net	
Climbing Wall	28,550.02	
Byron Crescent	10,500.00	
Drainage at Byron	2,225.00	
Zip Wire	5,493.00	
Drainage	917.36	
Car Park	19,425.00	
Barrier	1,325.00	
Allotments - fencing	4,461.45	
Coppull Conservative Club - Defib. Housing	400.00	
Tanks for allotments	100.00	
Additional tanks for allotments	90.00	
2 Auto belay ropes for climbing wall	3,451.66	
T. Jolly Services - Repair to boiler ignition	249.47	
T. Jolly Services - repair to boiler	818.48	
3 steel benches	600.00	
Tarzan Swing for Springfield Park	5,795.00	
Groundwork & fixing of above	1,670.00	
Bollards for pavement	175.00	
Footpath near Springfield Park	1,653.76	
	87,900.20	
Funding received for Autobelay units climbing wall:		
Cllr Steve Holgate, Lancashire County Council	250.00	
Cllr Paul Clark, Chorley Council	100.00	
Cllr Richard Toon, Chorley Council	250.00	
Villages in Partnership	100.00	
Additional money received from Chorley Council	195.65	
	895.65	895.65
		87,963.15
		87,900.20
	Remaining:	62.95

Precept: The precept was set at £88,145.00 for 2016/17 – this represents an increase of just over 5% on last year's precept. Coppull now has a population of just under 8,000 according to the recent census.

ALLOTMENTS

The allotments behind St. Oswald's Church are now coming up to their second year and continue to be very popular. The allotment holders and committee are vigilant in keeping the area clean and tidy.

COMMUNITY

Christmas lights: The lights near the railway bridge were again extended and provided a lovely display throughout the Christmas period. Lighting was also installed in the Memorial Garden and Berry's Garden on Chapel Lane and both received extremely good comments. The uplighting of the soldier in the Memorial Garden will remain throughout the year.

Dog fouling: This is a continuing problem, with the winter months and dark mornings/nights being worse. Chorley Council's Dog Warden makes regular patrols around the village and can issue on the spot fines if someone is caught not cleaning up after their dog. A decision was made to name and shame anyone caught not cleaning up after their dog.

Grot Spots: Most grot spots in the village have now been dealt with and Councillors each have an area of responsibility in the village which they regularly check and report any concerns. The shop on the corner of Spendmore Lane / German Lane is still boarded up, but is of a standard required by Chorley Council for empty shops. However, Chorley Council will be actively looking at all empty properties in the coming year, with a view to getting them occupied.

Noah's Ark: The Pre-school continues to run from the Village Hall and provides excellent care and education. The exterior front of the hall is to be painted when time/weather permits.

COPPULL IN BLOOM

The Parish Council and Coppull in Bloom agreed not to enter into the Best Kept Village and North West in Bloom competitions in 2015. This was mainly due to lack of people who are fit and available to help and the pressure of completing all the gardening work for a certain time. Volunteers are always welcome, even if it is only for an hour or so each week. In 2016/17, Chorley Council will be contracted to take on more of the planting in the village and the Parish Council still contracts out the heavy gardening work, i.e. mowing, strimming, to a private contractor.

Wheatsheaf Island/Birkacre Brow: Volunteers continue to weed, plant and maintain this island.

Seats/Flower Beds – A49 at both boundaries, Jolly Tar Lane and small bed near Police Station: These are also looked after by volunteers and 101 Carnations sponsors, plants and maintains one of the beds.

New Road Flower Beds and beds near Spendmore Lane Bridge: These are planted and maintained by Chorley Council on behalf of the Parish Council.

Chapel Lane – Old School: A new volunteer now looks after the small piece of land by the former old Parish School.

DEFIBRILLATORS

The Leisure Centre holds an automatic defibrillator and the Conservative Club also has one that is available at all times for public use. A list of other defibrillators in Coppull can be found in the Parish Council newsletter.

EMPLOYEES

The Parish Council continues to employ one full-time and two-part time Lengthsmen, a cleaner for the Parish Council offices and the Clerk. A new gardener was appointed in April 2015. Auto-enrolment pensions are coming into effect in April 2016 for the Parish Council and a pension provider was sought. It was agreed to enrol applicable employees in NEST (a government approved pension scheme), but all employees to be given the opportunity to join the scheme.

The Leisure Centre Manager is now employed by the Leisure Centre, which has charitable status and continues to run successfully, but independently from the Parish Council.

GARDENS

Berry's Garden (formerly Community Garden): The land has been donated to the Parish Council by Keith Berry and will always remain as a garden in memory of his wife, Kathleen. A plaque has been installed in memory of both Keith and Kathleen. The sculptures have recently been varnished and the seats will be done shortly.

Jubilee Garden (formerly Tanyard Garden): The Jubilee Garden continues to be kept in a very natural state, at the request of local residents.

Springfield Leisure Park: The park is host to a number of flower beds, a natural area and a sensory raised bed

Memorial Garden: A grant was received from Chorley Council to help revitalise the garden, by replacing a number of broken flags and powerwashing the remaining flags. The soldier was given a coat of varnish and electricity cables were connected to provide up-lighting for the soldier and for Christmas lighting.

There was again good attendance at the Remembrance Day parade.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

In 2016/17 year the County Council will face a severe reduction in their budget and will be under extreme financial restraints. Coppull Library is under threat, together with the Children's Centre and the Youth Centre. The bus service will also face cuts.

Bus Services: Bus services throughout the borough are losing subsidy from LCC and this will affect the old parish part of Coppull. Another company has agreed to provide a limited service through the old parish, but if it is not used it will be lost.

Chisnall Colliery Site - Diamond Jubilee Woodlands and Woodlands from Waste: Lancashire County Council look after this site and have held regular meetings with residents. However, due to severe budget constraints, LCC is looking for someone to take over the site and the future of the site is now uncertain.

Highways: Pot holes are prolific throughout the village and Lancashire County Council are constantly being contacted regarding these. Additional works required/planned in the village are:

- Reduction of speed limit on Wigan Lane (at the junction of Jolly Tar Lane) to be implement in June/July 2016.
- Repairs to Chapel Lane and Jolly Tar Lane's road surface (2016/17 budget) and also parts of Spendmore Lane.
- Work to improve the mini roundabout at the junction of Spendmore Lane and the A49 (2016/17 budget)
- Work to improve the mini roundabout at the junction of Spendmore Lane and Clancutt Lane (imminent).
- A new pedestrian crossing has been installed on Spendmore Lane, close to the junction of Clancutt Lane, and the two other crossings on Spendmore Lane have been updated. LCC has also been asked to also update the crossing on the A49 Preston Road.

Library and Children's Centre: A campaign to save Coppull Library is underway and this has been supported by the Parish Council, Chorley Council, the MP for Chorley, local authors and members of the public. It is hoped that the campaign will be successful, so that the village does not lose this important service.

Public Rights of Way Scheme: The Parish Council joined this Local Delivery Scheme, whereby LCC pays a certain amount of money for various type of work to be undertaken by the Parish Council. Strimming of three ginnels in the parish was undertaken through this scheme and it is hoped it will continue in the future.

Youth Club: The Youth Club is also under threat due to the cuts, but it is hoped that it will continue, although the Parish Council is striving to get the youth club open more.

NATURE RESERVES

Blainscough Nature Reserve: This is looked after by Chorley Council on behalf of the Parish Council and provides a relaxing place for people to walk and take their dogs.

Hic-Bibi Nature Reserve: This is also looked after by Chorley Council on behalf of the Parish Council and is kept in a very natural state, with wild ponies being kept on for part of the year to help control the vegetation. Numerous deer have also been sighted in the reserve.

Yarrow Valley Park Nature Reserve: Chorley Council have complete control over the park and is very successful in making improvements and winning awards. This park is used by many people from Coppull, but also from out of the area. There is an award winning play area and a café which is going from strength to strength. The Friends of Yarrow Valley Park undertake many tasks and put on events for adults and children. The Park has an abundance of wildlife both on the lakes and the surrounding grounds.

NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter continues to be very popular with residents and will now be issued four times a year, as previously – Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. The number of advertisements has increased, which has helped to fund a further issue.

PLANNING

A number of small developments have taken place in the village – new bungalow on the Lancaster Street cul-de-sac, a pair of semis on Mavis Drive, low cost houses on the Longfield Avenue estate and proposed low cost houses on Byron Crescent. This will implement additional CIL money for the Parish Council. Some CIL money has also been promised for improving the play area at Tansley Avenue.

PLAY AREAS

Byron Crescent Play Area: The play area has now been completely refurbished with money received from the Community Infrastructure Levy. Seating was also installed. The play area is suitable for younger children and is complemented by an adjacent basketball area.

Springfield Leisure Park: Two further items of equipment have been installed – a zip wire and tarzan swing – and additional seating. A safe walkway has been created for children, keeping them off the road area, and this will hopefully be extended to cover the ball park in the very near future. Some trees had to be taken down on the park and one of the stumps has been carved into a very friendly monster and friend. Another tree has

had a man's face carved into it. A competition is taking place in regard to naming the sculptures.

Tansley Avenue Play Area: CIL money is to be provided to update this play area, hopefully during the next financial year.

POLICE

The Police Station is open to the public on Wednesday evenings between 5pm and 7pm and a representative attends the Parish Council meetings when possible. This service has also been effected by the budget cuts.

SPRINGFIELD PARK LEISURE CENTRE

The car park at the rear of the Centre was completely refurbished using CIL money. The climbing wall was installed thanks to a donation from the Parish Council through the CIL money and the pavement leading up to the centre, which was badly in need of resurfacing and considered a trip hazard, was also completed through the CIL money. Activities available are Climbing Wall, Trampolining, Free Running, Gym Tots, Zumba.

The Café is doing very well and hosts children's parties with an activity at very reasonable rates.

WEBSITE

The website is now up and running: www.coppullpc.co.uk. This will be updated on a regular basis and added to when possible.

THE FUTURE (2016/17):

- To continue to maintain all the gardens, barrels and beds throughout the village and maintain the children's play areas owned by the Parish Council – Springfield Park, Byron Crescent and Tansley Avenue and to make improvements throughout the village.
- Extension of the safe "walkway" at the Springfield Leisure Park.
- To consider installing Christmas lighting in conjunction with businesses along Spendmore Lane again.
- Turfing of the area of land just before the railway bridge on the right hand side going towards Wigan.
- Coppull in Bloom – to reinstate this group and encourage more people to volunteer.

- To consult with Chorley Council on the upkeep and maintenance of the Blainscough Wood Nature Reserve and Hic-Bibi Nature Reserve.
- Chisnall – the community woodland will continue to be developed through Lancashire County Council over the five year plan at the present time, but with the cessation of the countryside service, its future is now uncertain.
- Leisure Centre – to increase the usage in the centre during the day time and to continue to build on the activities on offer.
- Youth Club – To liaise with LCC to try and obtain additional opening hours.
- Consultation – Continuing to ascertain from the residents of Coppull what improvements they would like to see in their village (through the newsletter).