



COPPULL PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

1. THE PARISH COUNCIL

In May 2018 Councillor Michael Atherton was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the fifth consecutive year and Councillor Nora Ball was re-elected as Vice-Chair. There was one vacancy on the Council due to the resignation of Simon Thomson in January 2018 and Councillor Ashley Whittaker was co-opted on after the AGM in May 2018. Former Councillor Don Hoyland passed away in September 2018 after a lengthy illness.

At the end of March 2019, the Parish Council consisted of the following Councillors and the Clerk:

Michael Atherton	- 07780 971364	Paul Eastham	- 01257 791713
Nora Ball	- 07584 494923	Steve Holgate	- 07876 844243
Pauline Cobham	- 01257 792443	Elaine Jones	- 01257 793056
Neil Coggins	- 01257 470609	Sheila Makin	- 01257 792896
David Cole	- 01257 483958	Marjorie Parkinson	- 01257 793566
	(retired April 2019)		
Jan Colecliffe	- 01257 793069	Maggie Peel-Impey	- 01257 470465
Matthew Crook	- 01257 791036	Paul Taylor	- 07713 097432
		Ashley Whittaker	- 07794 122568

Sue Edwards – Parish Clerk – 01257 470120

All Parish Councillors are volunteers who work for the residents of the village and try to keep the area clean, tidy and a pleasant place for all to live and work. The Parish Council is non-political. Elections are held every four years and the next elections are in May 19.

Allowances: As all Parish Councillors had been co-opted (not elected), they are not entitled to any allowances. However, all Parish Councillors for many years previously have agreed to forgo any expenses, with the exception of mileage costs if they are doing work on behalf of the Parish Council – but not for travelling to and from the Parish Council office/meeting room.

Employees: The Parish Council continues to employ the Clerk, one full-time and two-part time Lengthsmen, and a cleaner for the Parish Council offices. The gardener works on a self-employed basis.

FINANCES:

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): An amount of £3,169.39 was put aside from the CIL income towards the proposed footpath on Clancutt Lane at the junction with Spendmore Lane. This is subject to other funding from Lancashire County Council and Chorley Council and also with the permission of the landowner of the large hedge, which would be taken down to make way for the footpath. Further funding has been received from this levy and consultation took place through the Newsletter to see what residents wanted. The projects put forward were a new Village Hall and a Neighbourhood Plan.

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. The Auditor's appointed were PPK Littlejohn and there were no issues arising from their audit for last year.

The end of year internal audit will take place shortly. The half-year internal audit stated:

"Completion of the half-year internal audit of the Parish Council accounts is 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.

The Parish Council has also put in place internal checks in accordance with Financial Rules and Regulations. A Councillor undertakes a complete check of all payments and receipts against invoices issued, on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Precept: The precept was set at £96,700.00 for 2019/20 - this represents an increase of only £560 on last year's precept.

Christmas lights: Additional lights were obtained this year, some to replace broken ones, but also to build on the displays. Many positive comments have been received and it is hoped to build on these displays each year. The uplighting of the soldier in the Memorial Garden will remain throughout the year, at the request of residents.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): This new law came into force in May 2018. Information of any individual or group is not be kept unless the matter is ongoing. Policies were introduced and all information is now deleted after three months, unless there is still a need for it, i.e. historical information, personnel information. This also includes emails received and sent.

Newsletter: The Newsletter continues to go from strength to strength and is now usually a 16 page full colour brochure. It is very popular with residents and is an ideal way to communicate with residents, as it is hand delivered to everyone in the village. It is issued four times a year – Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter and part of the cost of this is recouped from local advertising.

Speed Indicator Device (SpID): A Speed Indicator device has been purchased from another Parish Council who no longer had the need for it. The money to purchase the device was donated by Matthews and Leigh on Chapel Lane. The Parish Council has to have permission from Lancashire County Council to install it on lampposts which LCC decides. At the present time, the brackets are awaiting fitting by LCC.

Training: The Clerk attends relevant training course through Chorley Council or the Society of Local Council Clerks. Any other relevant training for employees or Parish Councillors is always looked into.

Website/Facebook: The website is up and running and a new Facebook page is to be set up shortly. Information will be inputted on a regular basis and information is also put in the two notices boards (in front of the Library and at The Berry Garden on Chapel Lane) and also in the Leisure Centre.

2. CHORLEY COUNCIL

Chorley Council look after the town centre and surrounding Chorley areas, plus 23 parishes in conjunction with the relevant Parish Councils. Chorley Council is responsible for council tax, waste collection, fly tipping, tree work, some bus shelters, housing, planning, environment, licences to name just a few. More information is on their website.

Adoption of Estates: Chorley Council has been working with Lancashire County Council to get new estates adopted quicker.

Call for Sites: This was a request for sites to meet Government targets and for all planning authorities to have a five year supply of sites available. It gave the Parish Council the opportunity to have a say on what land within the Parish is allocated towards future development. The Parish Council is proactive in keeping the green belt from future development.

Chorley Youth Zone (Inspire): The Youth Zone opened its doors in May 2018 and has attracted many members from all around the Chorley Borough area.

Designated Public Protection Order (DPPO): This is around the Leisure Centre, Library, Memorial Garden and a few roads around this area continues to be under this order, which gives Chorley Council and the Police power to confiscate alcohol (no alcohol area) and to help combat anti-social behaviour.

Housing: Chorley Councillors continue to work with the Parish Council and Adactus Housing (now Jigsaw) to make improvements to the housing estates within the village.

- **Arcon Estate:** There had been trouble with drug dealing on this estate, but this was sorted out by the Police when enough evidence had been collated. At the present time there is a problem with anti-social behaviour, which will hopefully be sorted out soon.
- **Byron Crescent Estate (Poets Corner):** Numerous improvements have been made to this estate over the year, one of which was the orchard project, where planting was undertaken with local residents. A wicker dome and bugs house was also made with the help of local children.
- **Longfield Avenue Estate:** The Parish Council is not aware of any concerns on this estate.

Neighbourhood Priorities: The Jubilee Garden received funding from Chorley Council towards improvements and most of the improvements have been implemented. The neighbourhood priorities proposed for this year have been the footpath on the corner of Clancutt Lane, which is still ongoing, and a community garden on the Byron Crescent Estate which is being implemented by Chorley Council.

3. COMMUNITY

Allotments: This is the fifth year for the Parish Council Allotments and they continue to be extremely popular with local residents. There is a waiting list and as an allotment becomes vacant, people on the list are asked if they would like to take it over. The Allotments have their own Association, providing help and advice, insurance, etc. and they have also been successful in obtaining grants to further improve their open space.

A1 Fitness: A1 Fitness took over what was the former Youth Club at the Leisure Centre and appears to be working very well for local residents.

Chorley A & E: A big campaign took place to try and keep the accident and emergency department at Chorley open. This is still ongoing.

Circus: A non-animal circus is to come to Coppull in Autumn. Further details will be circulated nearer the time.

Community Champions: The Parish Council is working in partnership with the Volunteer Association and Lancashire Constabulary to appoint a Community Champion(s) for Coppull. Three volunteers have come forward and are at present undertaking training. It is hoped that the volunteers will be able to help residents with any concerns they have, bringing them to the attention of the Parish Council. They will volunteer a few hours each week.

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.

Digital Inclusion: The Leisure Centre has again played host to a number of free classes on "Making the Most of Your Smartphone/Ipad". It is hoped that further digital courses will continue throughout the next year.

Dog Fouling: This continues to be a big problem, especially during the winter months this year. The Parish Council has been putting dog signs around the Leisure Park, which was extremely bad during the winter months. The signs indicate what can happen to children if dog faeces goes into their eyes Chorley Council's Dog Warden can be contacted over problem areas 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. A stencil is now used to mark on the ground any areas of repeat offending, which is hoped will act as a deterrent to those people who do not clean up after their dog, with a trial of free dog bags in problem areas. Since then, the local Scout Group has taken over with providing dog bags in plastic bottles on numerous lamp posts throughout the village.

Grot Spots: Any grot spots in the village are now dealt as soon as possible. Most Parish Councillors each have an area of responsibility in the village which they regularly check and report any concerns back to the Clerk, for reporting to the relevant authorities.

Noah's Ark: The Pre-school continues to run from the Village Hall and provides excellent care and education. A number of repairs have been undertaken, but the building could do with replacing, as the majority of it is a wooden building which was built many years ago.

Remembrance Day Parade: This is organised by the Royal British Legion and was again extremely well attended, especially as it was 100 years of the end of World War I. Ghostly silhouettes were obtained from the British Legion to commemorate this campaign, "There but not There", and they were placed in the Church and the British Legion Club. Numerous organisations made their own displays to commemorate this as well. The Parish Council contributes financially to the event and obtains and places a wreath, together with a great number of other organisations. The motorcycle group attended again and followed the very large procession this year from the club to the church and back.

4. GARDENS/FLOWER BEDS

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.

Jubilee Garden (formerly Tanyard Garden): The Jubilee Garden received some funding from Chorley Council and together with funding from the Parish Council, some improvements have been made. A children's mushroom table and seats has been installed, with a bench for adults. The paths have been resurfaced. Some plants and trees were donated by a local company and more will be planted if received from the Woodland Trust. A sculpture has also been obtained and will be installed shortly. Hic-

Bibi Nurseries have donated numerous plants. Mr and Mrs Armstrong from Highfield Farm have donated stones for paths for this garden and also the Springfield Park.

Memorial Garden: This garden continues to be maintained by the Parish Council's previous gardener, Bill Bailey, on a voluntary basis, and is a credit to his expertise and time.

Springfield Leisure Park: The park is host to a number of flower beds, a natural area and a sensory raised bed. The Parish's Council's Gardener, George, tends to the beds, etc. throughout the spring/summer months. The Parish Council's contractor, James Riding, continues with the grass cutting on a regular basis. There was a huge problem with dog fouling not being picked up during the winter months. This is a major concern as the park is used by many children and could cause a terrible eye condition which can make a child blind.

New Road Flower Beds and beds near Spendmore Lane Bridge: These are planted and maintained by Chorley Council on contract to the Parish Council, together with the planning of the hanging baskets and regular watering. The Parish Council is restricted to only use lampposts that LCC have determined are suitable.

Wheatsheaf Island, Birkacre Brow / Seats/Flower Beds, A49 at both boundaries, Jolly Tar Lane bed, small bed near Police Station and beds on Chapel Lane at the old school: These are looked after by volunteers and the Parish Council gardener. Rivington View Nursery sponsors a flower bed on Preston Road and also a bed on the Berry Garden. The Wheatsheaf Hotel sponsors the island.

A new resident has just volunteered to help with any gardening around the village and has been attempting to clean up German Lane, planting up numerous beds.

Thanks go to all the volunteers and sponsors for helping to make Coppull a nicer place to live and work and the Parish Council will continually strive to make improvements in the future.

5. LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The County Council is still faced with severe reductions in their budget, but the government did grant additional funding for highways, mainly repairing pot holes and road surfaces. LCC is responsible for education, social care and highway matters, to name but a few. More information can be obtained from their website.

Chisnall Colliery Site – LCC is still undertaking work on this site, with planting and woods being created. Volunteers help with the planting and funding has been obtained to carry on with the works.

Highways:

- Pot holes are being targeted by Lancashire Council.

- There are still numerous concerns in regard to the mini-roundabout at the Clancutt Lane junction with Spendmore Lane. LCC is aware of the problems.
- Parking illegally or just irresponsibly is still a concern throughout the village. The Parish Council passes on any concerns to the Police, who have the authority to deal with this problem.

Library and Friends of Coppull Library: The Parish Council donated £100 to the Library to initiate reading sessions with children who are struggling to read, which includes reading to dogs – Pets as Therapy. This encourages the children, as the dogs are of course non-judgemental. The money to be used towards bean bags for the children to sit on.

The Friends of Coppull Library planted two cherry trees on the grassed area at the front of the Library and the next project is a small piece of land at the back of the library, an external reading area with raised beds and a sensory garden.

Public Rights of Way Scheme: The Parish Council continues with this scheme, which pays £250 to the council, who then appoints a contractor to trim the ginnels three times per year.

6. NATURE RESERVES

Blainscough Nature Reserve: This is looked after by Chorley Council on behalf of the Parish Council. A Community Orchard and Edible Hedge was planted up on the site, but unfortunately, many of the plants were stolen that same night, some of which were later found on the reserve and re-planted by volunteers. It is hoped that when the orchard is established it will provide fruit for local residents to enjoy.

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. There are numerous sightings of deer in this area, together with foxes, hares, rabbits, plenty of bird life, fauna and flora.

Yarrow Valley Park Nature Reserve: Chorley Council has control over the park (only part of it is in Coppull) 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, and is extremely busy during the summer months. 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 and is very popular with photographers. An angling club and canoe club also use the lakes.

7. PLANNING

Numerous sites had to be outlined for development as part of the Government's Call for Sites. The Parish Council will fight to keep the green belt around Coppull, but realise that some areas will have to be used for development to meet the Government's targets. All planning applications are looked at in depth by the Parish Council's representative and

are then discussed by the full Parish Council, with comments then made to Chorley Council who make the final decision on whether or not to approve the plans.

8. PLAY AREAS

Byron Crescent Play Area: Continues to be well used by local residents.

Springfield Leisure Park: The park is extremely well used by a varied age group.

Tansley Avenue Play Area: The old equipment is to be painted and the older safety surface has recently been renewed where it was sinking.

All the Parish Council owned play areas in the village are now of a good standard and will continue to be maintained in the future and hopefully built on with future funding.

9. POLICE

The Police Service has also had extreme budget cuts and the local PCSO is finding it increasingly difficult to attend Parish Council meetings. However, statistics are emailed through.

Anti-social behaviour and vandalism have been on the increase in Coppull for some time, mainly by one group of teenagers who are causing mayhem for residents, some of whom feel intimidated by them. The Parish Council to lobby for more of a police presence in the village.

10. SPRINGFIELD PARK LEISURE CENTRE

The Springfield Centre continues its success and is managed by a number of Trustees, staff and volunteers. Activities available are Climbing Wall, Trampolining and Free Running, to name a few. Local groups can hire the meeting room at very reasonable cost and also hire out the hall. Coppull Bouncers hire the hall for use of their trampoline club. TAAG uses it one night per week and a local bowling club hires the hall for a day during the winter months. There is a hoist available for disabled users.

The Café is also doing very well and hosts children's parties with an activity at very reasonable rates, as well as providing drinks and snacks for children and parents throughout the week.

The Centre is open from 4 pm each weekday and on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

The Parish Council continues to work with the Leisure to keep the building maintained. As the building itself is owned by the Parish Council, it is therefore the responsibility of the council to keep it in good order. The Leisure Centre is independent of the Parish Council and is a registered charity.

THE FUTURE (2019/20):

- 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.
- To continue to upkeep the buildings owned by the Parish Council – the Village Hall and Leisure Centre – to a good standard and to support the Trustees of the Leisure Centre as they continue to develop the activities on offer.
- To continue to campaign against litter, fly tipping and dog fouling in the village.
- To build on the Christmas Lighting each year.
- To continue to consult with Chorley Council on the upkeep and maintenance of the Blainscough Wood Nature Reserve and Hic-Bibi Nature Reserve.
- To work with Lancashire County Council on the development of a wood at Chisnall.
- To consider a Neighbourhood Plan for the village
- To continue to liaise with Chorley Council and Lancashire County Council in regard to the proposed footpath at the end of Clancutt Lane/Spendmore Lane junction.
- To continue to lobby Lancashire County Council to get highway improvements throughout the village.
- To implement a rolling plan to install Heritage Signs throughout the village.
- To consult residents (through the newsletter) to ascertain what improvements they would like to see in their village.