



MILLER GREEN



At the beginning of April the restriction on access to Miller Green by dog walkers was lifted as explained in our Spring newsletter. Despite the wet weather conditions that prevailed in early April the facilities have been well used and many residents have expressed their appreciation that they now have a local area where they can exercise their dogs. In order to assist dog owners in removing dog faeces and to alleviate any concerns in this respect three new litter/dog bins have been installed at strategic points on the green. An existing stile has been removed and replaced with a new wooden kissing gate to aid access. The litter bins will be emptied as part of our Lengthsman's duties on a weekly basis. He will also periodically undertake a general inspection of the green. There have been a small number of incidents where dog faeces have not been removed. It has been confirmed that the land does fall under PCC's Dog Control Orders that means offenders may receive fines for not removing their dog's faeces and appropriate signage may still be required to remind users of that fact.

Dog owners using Miller Green will be expected to act responsibly and remove their dog's faeces - failure to do so will result in possible fines, the future removal of the facilities and the reinstatement of the previous restriction - it is up to you to protect the new arrangements.

The working group are looking at the potential for further enhancements to encourage use of the green by residents in the area. Some of the suggestions put forward so far include:

A central closely mown grassed area which might be used by children to play ball games and so forth.

The creation of a diagonal pathway across the green to enable easier access from one corner to the other.

The creation of additional garden / planted areas which will enhance the appearance of the green itself.

OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE

As reported in our last newsletter all local parish councils within Preston were invited to a meeting to discuss a proposal that each parish council should contribute in some way to the maintenance costs of their open space and playgrounds. It was suggested that this could be done, either by direct monetary contribution from the parishes or, by parishes taking over the management / maintenance of specific areas possibly with the transfer of legal ownership of any land concerned.

The reason for this approach is to reduce the maintenance costs of Preston City Council since these are under severe pressure from the reduced funding that is currently available to it. In reality, this would transfer costs from Preston City Council and load them onto local parishes. We were told that unless PCC can find ways to reduce its maintenance costs it might need to reduce its level of service to the minimum required to satisfy Health & Safety requirements. This may mean that grassed areas would only be cut three times a year and, that some playgrounds might be in danger of being closed.

Lea and Cottam Parish Council discussed these proposals at recent meetings and has now established that it is not the intention of Preston CC to reduce maintenance in non parished areas. This means that parished areas, such as Lea and Cottam, are being discriminated against simply because they have the ability to raise a Precept themselves or have, in some cases, income due from the building developments in their area. So, if these proposals go ahead and parishes decide to contribute, their residents will pay extra for the same service delivered in non parished areas.

The Parish Council understood that some years ago a fund was given to Preston CC to maintain the open space areas of Cottam. It now appears that these funds were absorbed into Preston CC budgets and used to cover other expenditure rather than being ringed fenced to sustain the maintenance of local open space. The Parish Council, along with your local ward Councillors have asked for a copy of the agreement made at the time of the funding transfer.

The Parish Council have also asked what sum of money would be required to maintain the existing level of service. Responses to our questions are awaited.

At the end of the day however, unless PCC change their mind, your local Council will need to decide whether it wishes to contribute to maintenance costs or accept a reduction in service levels which would be detrimental to the area as a whole.

The Parish Council would be interested to have your views. We know that the proposals are grossly unfair on parished areas. Should the proposals go ahead we would like to know whether you, the tax payer, would wish us to make a contribution in order to maintain existing standards.

Please let us have your views by contacting the Clerk or one of your local Parish Councillors.

COUNCIL FINANCES 2016/2017

At the Annual Parish Council meeting in May the Responsible Financial Officer was once again pleased to be able to report that the Council's financial position remained sound. Income during the year was higher than expected due to small grants having been obtained to cover the cost of the Miller Green garden refurbishment and developer contributions arising from housing developments in the parish.

Expenditure was detailed in the Financial Statement which had been circulated before the meeting. The majority of costs were maintained within the budget.

The council currently holds just over £11K which has been received from legislative developer contributions and further monies are due shortly. These funds, known as the Community Infrastructure Levy, may be used by the Parish Council in line with government guidelines. This means that they cannot be used for day to day expenditure, but can be used for infrastructure improvements and maintenance such as the improvements to open space areas like Miller Green.

The Parish Council have set the Precept for 2017/2018 at the same figure. This means a continuation of lengthsman and assistant lengthsman's contracts which have seen enhanced works done in the area to help maintain a clean and tidy environment for residents. Once again we will renew the summer hanging baskets in Lea Town and replant our small garden areas and planters around the parish. Our three Christmas trees will once again be erected in December with new lighting, now that we have moved over to the smaller, brighter led type bulbs.

The Council remains keen to maintain local standards wherever possible and would like you, as residents, to let us know of any areas that become untidy or are in need of attention so that we can direct our resources to improve the appearance of our area.

This picture to the right shows a grass area which was badly overgrown until a local resident reported the issue to the Parish Council. Situated on Blackpool Road in front of Lea Club our lengthsman have cut the grass, removed undergrowth from the footpath and restored the access path back to its original width. This is just one example of how our lengthsman can undertake enhancement works above and beyond the level of services delivered by the Principle Authorities. The resident concerned is extremely pleased with the end results.



YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Ken Brizland 13 Greenside Cottam Preston PR4 0WA Tel 01772 739196
Alex Butler 11 Parkfield Drive Lea Preston PR2 1QY Tel 01772 727980
John Coward 56 The Gables Cottam Preston PR4 0LG Tel 01772 727574
Christian Fleming 18 Parkfield Crescent Lea Preston PR2 1QU Tel 728658
Ron Fleming 2 Campion Drive Lea Preston PR2 1QG Tel 01772 469296
Philip Helvin 3 Darkinson Lane Lea Town Preston PR4 0RJ Tel 01772 734578
Dave Lambert 867 Blackpool Road Lea Preston PR2 1QS Tel 01772 499798
Judith Parker 116 Hoyles Lane Cottam Preston PR4 0NB Tel 01772 769812
Avril Roulston 42 Miller Lane Cottam Preston PR4 0ND Tel 01772 728493

CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

W V MCENNERNEY-WHITTLE
7 BILSBOROUGH MEADOW
PRESTON PR2 1YY
TEL 01772 733829
E-MAIL: leaparishcouncil@hotmail.com
WEB SITE: <http://www.leacottam-pc.gov.uk>

GRANT FUNDING

The Parish Council continue to maintain a small budget to assist, by way of grant, 'not for profit' groups within the community. These grants that are generally restricted to amounts up to £200 must be used for a specific purpose which is clearly identifiable. If your group is wishing to undertake a project and might need assistance please contact the Clerk to the Council who can give guidance on how to apply and, let you have a copy of the Council's Grant awarding policy that will help you put forward your application

MEETING DATES FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ARE:

10TH JULY 2017 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE
11TH SEPTEMBER 2017 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE
30TH OCTOBER 2017 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE

ALL MEETINGS COMMENCE AT 7.30PM