



NEW ASSISTANT LENGTHSMAN APPOINTED

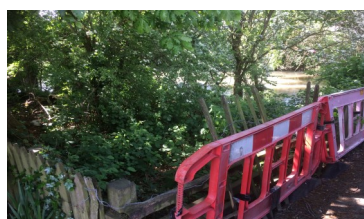


Bill Cadwallader has been appointed as our second assistant lengthsmen. He joins our existing team of Peter and Colin, and as a qualified joiner he brings additional skills to our open space maintenance team. These additional hours of resource will be invaluable as we start to tackle areas of the Parish which are badly in need of maintenance and repair.

They will also embark on some project work to enhance existing facilities and the appearance of

our neighbourhood. Work has already been undertaken on the pond areas opposite to the Ancient Oak and now that the barriers have been repainted the area looks much better. We see the team here working on edging another pathed area at the far end of Cottam Green and to the side the results of their work. At the meeting of the Council in May 2018 it was agreed that

improvement works should be undertaken around the pond area on Jubilee Avenue. The various types of fencing, much of which is damaged, will be replaced by a new bespoke wooden fence which



will be stained. Overgrown bushes and trees are to be cut back to open up the view of the pond and help provide sunlight which will help

reduce unsightly algae growth. Litter and other deposited material in the pond will be removed.

The area fronting Jubilee Avenue which is currently full of dead and dying overgrown bushes is to be redone. The existing bushes will be removed and the soil area rotavated before bulbs are planted and the area grassed over, probably later in the year. Consideration will then be given to the installation of a bench seat.



MORE HOUSING FOR THE PARISH?

On the 26th April 2018 an exhibition was put on at Ashton and Lea Golf Club outlining proposals for further housing in the area. The site is adjacent to the existing Dodney Drive housing. At the exhibition there was an opportunity for local residents to put forward their comments before the submission of a formal planning application which is expected later this year.



The land was originally identified by Preston City Council as a potential housing site several years ago but was at that time removed from the Preston Local Plan following local objections to the proposed access through the Dodney drive estate. Since that time further discussions have taken place and with the future creation of the Preston West Distributer Road the developers believe that there is now an opportunity to create an access onto Riversway and the new road. The proposals involve the provision of up to 250 dwellings which include 75 affordable dwellings and open market housing ranging from 1 to 5 bedroomed homes, public open space and associated landscaping. Following a meeting with the City Council's development team in June 2017, Council officers indicated that the site was one which *'the Council considers that it could now support given the progress made relating to the PWDR'* Once the comments from the exhibition have been analysed the proposals will be finalised and the formal application submitted. The Parish Council and residents will then have a further opportunity to comment on the proposals before PCC make any final decision.

UPDATES ON OTHER ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

MILLER GREEN: We are expecting the work to commence very shortly, if it has not already happened, to the new path across the Green. The Parish Council have also agreed to the creation of two raised beds to each side of the existing notice board. The areas measuring approximately 8 metres x 6 metres will firstly be dug out so that land drainage can be provided. The raised beds will be constructed of sleepers to match those around the notice board and then filled with new soil before bulb and planting take place. The existing notice board is past its 'sell by date' so this will be replaced. The Council are currently looking at appropriate options, the final style will hopefully be agreed at their next meeting.

OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE: We reported in earlier editions of our newsletter that a request had been made that the Parish Council should contribute monies towards the maintenance of open space in its area. This triggered a question regarding funding supplied by the Homes and Communities Agency to Preston City Council which was provided ostensibly to cover the maintenance of open space areas in Cottam in perpetuity. This Council obtained a copy of the 'agreement' which was signed at the time and seemed to confirm that this was the case. Enquiries then revealed that PCC had spent some of these funds on other things not related to open space. We contacted both HCA and PCC who both stated that the funds had not been specifically earmarked for maintenance and that therefore they could be used for other things. We even contacted our MP who also wrote to HCA, who gave him the same response.

The Parish Council were not happy that 'what appeared to be a clear intent' had not been adhered to and they decided to obtain a 'legal opinion' as to whether PCC had breached the terms of the agreement and whether this Council could take any action should such a breach have occurred. This Council engaged a solicitor who then instructed a Barrister to review the agreement and provide an opinion as to whether any claim could be made by the Parish Council.

We have now received this opinion and whilst our Barrister has some sympathy at what we believe to be an injustice, nonetheless he has not found anything that would realistically give this Council any hope of being successful should it decide to pursue a legal remedy. His view is that there is a strong argument that the funds should have been used for the purpose to which they were intended.

The opinion however concludes that there is no realistic prospect of the Parish Council being able to enforce the terms of the contractual agreement between HCA and Preston City Council. It goes further to consider whether the funds were transferred 'in trust' and therefore should have been earmarked. Here again his view is that this point is arguable but that he would not regard the prospects of such an argument being significant, and certainly no greater than 30%.

At the last meeting of the Parish Council:

'It was resolved that in the light of the 'legal opinion' received from this Council's Barrister that no further action should be taken by this Council concerning the use of the Endowment Funds provided to Preston City Council by HCA ostensibly for the maintenance of open space areas in Preston as outlined in the Transfer Agreement signed by them in 2010'

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

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MEETING DATES FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ARE:

16TH JULY 2018 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE @ 7.30pm
10TH SEPTEMBER 2018 @ COTTAM COMMUNITY CENTRE @ 7.30pm

The Picture below appeared in LEP on the 7th May 2018 as the 'Picture of the Week' - sent in by a local resident who expressed his appreciation of the work that had gone into the creation of the bedded area by the lengthsman of the Parish Council

