



# **WHITTINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Draft Parish Plan 2022 – 2025**

The Parish Council is preparing a new Parish Plan to guide its activities over the next few years.

This document is a first draft for consultation purposes.

Date: June 2022

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of a Parish Plan is to set out the aims and aspirations of the local community to guide the work and decision making of the Parish Council.

Whilst the plan has limited statutory power, it can be taken into account when other statutory bodies are making their decisions and it can contribute to the way in which local services are delivered and managed.

It is also a starting point for the Parish to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. When approved, this would give the Whittingham community direct powers to:

- shape the development and growth of the local area,
- have a direct say on what infrastructure should be provided,
- plan for the type of development it wants to see in the area,
- grant planning permission for new buildings.

Developing a Neighbourhood Plan requires significant time and effort but this Parish Plan is an important first step.

If you are interested in the way the village and the broader Parish moves forward, please take a few minutes to read this plan, and then give us your thoughts.

You can comment on the plan using the survey provided. You can also access this by clicking on the link below or using the scanner on a smartphone to follow the link. You can also send comments to the Parish Clerk or any of the parish councillors.

- <https://forms.office.com/r/N5a38GksSL>



After the consultation period has finished on 14 July 2022, we will prepare a final version of the plan. You can register for a copy at the end of the online consultation process or by contacting our Parish Clerk at [wparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:wparishclerk@gmail.com).

Thank you for your time. We look forward to hearing from you.

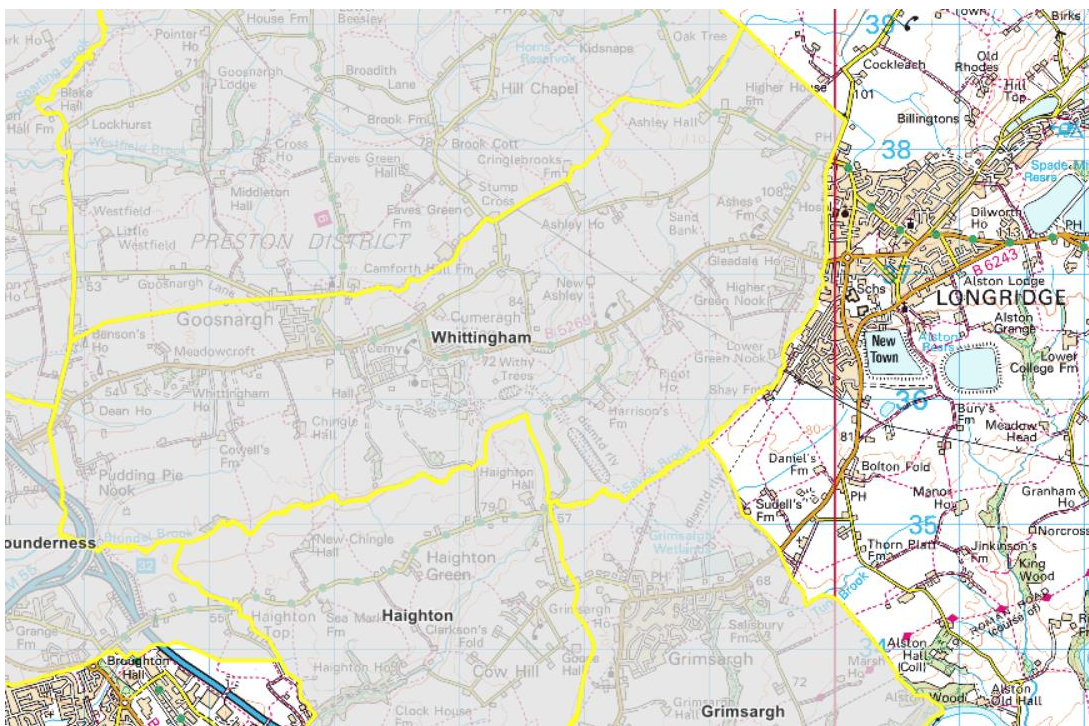
Whittingham Parish Council

## About the Parish

Whittingham Parish has a long history. It was mentioned in the Domesday Book published in 1086 and its name is believed to have derived from 'Hwita', the leader of an Angle tribe, 'Ingas', the name of the tribe, and 'ham', meaning the home of the tribe.

Originally a small, rural parish, the area was transformed in 1873 by the opening of a large psychiatric hospital which had over 3,000 patients at its peak. The hospital area housed staff as well as patients, had its own workshops, and became to a large extent, a self-contained community.

The present day parish is nearly 130 years old. It sits about seven miles north of Preston city centre and runs largely east-west from the M6 motorway to the Longridge boundary. It adjoins Goosnargh Parish to the north and Haighton and Grimsargh parishes to the south.



The heart of the parish is the village green, hall, pub, school and church which sit at the centre of the area. Although technically parts of the area are in Whittingham Parish, the area is generally referred to by residents as Goosnargh and we have maintained this usage.

The parish, together with neighbouring parishes, has seen significant residential growth in recent years with the development of many new properties. This has been driven largely by speculative developers and many residents believe the scale of building has now becoming excessive and unsustainable, with little evidence for local demand on this scale.

There is a strong wish that, as far as possible, the parish with the village at its heart, should be protected to ensure that it maintains its rural village feel. This, in its broadest sense, forms a major theme of this plan.

## **An Early Caveat**

This plan sets out a draft vision and plans for the future of the area.

The plans are ambitious and we make no apologies for that but we would caveat them with the realism that the Parish Council is a small body of just seven volunteer councillors and a supporting Parish Clerk.

We will do what we can but we also take the view that the primary role of the parish council is to act as a catalyst for the activities and work that will be needed to deliver the parish and village we all want to see.

Successfully delivering the plan in its final form will be determined to a large degree by the support, involvement and enthusiasm of those who live, work and have a legitimate interest in the area.

We hope that includes you.

## **The Vision**

The overall vision for the parish is:

- We want the parish to feel like one community, regardless of where people live.
- Where people naturally look to neighbouring areas because of where they live, we still want them to feel part of the Whittingham parish and hopefully feel fondly towards it.
- We want it to feel inclusive for everyone, and for it to be easy for everyone to become involved.
  
- We want the parish to be an attractive place, somewhere we can all be proud of and enjoy.
- We want to make the village the beating heart of the parish, vibrant and active, and a place that nurtures the spirit.
- Across the parish we want to limit development to local need as far as we can, minimise traffic growth and speed, prevent the loss of green space, and minimise noise and dust.
- In short, we want to keep the parish and the village a nice place to live.
  
- We recognise the need for supporting infrastructure to support current and recently approved development plans.
- We want to make sure this is delivered as promised and in a timely fashion and we want to make sure that this does not then drive further unwanted development.
  
- We want the people of the parish to feel informed about what is going on and to be able to properly influence and shape the future of the area.
- And we want people to stand up and be counted, to get involved and to help deliver this overall vision.

## **Environment**

The physical environment is an important part of the identity and feel of the parish and we want to maintain and enhance this where we can.

### ***Physical Environment***

- We want to make the parish a nice place to get outdoors.
- We will encourage walking and physical exercise by developing and maintaining the parish walks, making them wheelchair friendly where we can and by installing benches for those less mobile.
- We will support initiatives to get people out and about and meet each other, including the annual village festival, picnics on the green and picnic areas at the old hospital site.
- We will seek to maintain and enhance the orchard site at the old hospital as a public space.
- We will support and encourage open space where we can. This includes appointing a Lengthsman to maintain these areas, planting cherry trees and other plants and developing the village area to be a viable contender in the Lancashire Best Kept Village competition.
- We will look to create a 'Friends of Goosnargh Village Green' group to complement the work of the Village Hall group.
- We will encourage and support the litter picking group and ensure that dog and waste bins are appropriately installed and regularly emptied.

### ***Water and Sewage Services***

- We want to ensure the parish water and sewage services are fit and sustainable for the future. This is especially true at the Longridge end of the parish.
- We will look to maintain green soak-away areas to avoid future problems.
- We will push the water companies to carry out their statutory duties to comment on water and sewage provision before planning applications are determined.

### ***Energy Consumption***

- We will support initiatives to reduce energy consumption.
- This includes better house insulation and the increased use of solar power and similar initiatives.
- It also means pressing the planning authorities to require developers to build to the highest building standard codes that apply when building takes place, rather than when approval is given.

### ***Public Toilets***

- There is no public toilet provision in the parish at the moment.
- As part of the consultation process we will see whether there is any demand for this, and if so, whether we can partner with commercial premises to make their facilities generally available.

## **Recreation, Sport and Leisure**

### ***Facilities***

- We will look at developing the play facilities on the village green for under 5s, including play equipment.
- We will support youth activities, including a new building or site for the scouts and other youth organisations.

### ***Groups***

- We will support the WI and the Heritage Group.
- We will look to extend the provision of leisure activities in the area, including exploring U3A (University of the Third Age).
- We will continue to support the Bowling Club, the Cricket Club, the Tennis Club and other similar groups where they are able to demonstrate an open, welcoming and inclusive approach to new participants. This will include looking again at lighting for the tennis club in a way that is acceptable to local residents.
- We will aim to revitalise sport and leisure activities generally, including exploring the potential for inter-village activities and competitions.

### **Allotments and Gardening**

- We will explore the provision of allotments and re-wilding in the area

## **Culture, Community and Services**

### ***St John's Church***

- St John's Church on the old hospital site is now dilapidated but offers the potential to be a vibrant social hub for the parish if the money can be found to restore and operate it.
- The site is currently the responsibility of Homes England and we will look at how we can work with them and others to restore the site as a community asset.
- Potential uses for the site suggested so far include a scout hut, youth centre, heritage site, hospital museum, cultural centre, budding artists centre and workshops and café.

### ***Digital Inclusion***

- More and more services are being provided exclusively on-line these days. We want to ensure everyone in the parish is able to engage in this.
- As part of the consultation process we will ensure that people are able to comment via non-digital means such as post or face to face interviews.
- We will also seek out views on whether there is a local need for access to equipment, better broadband provision, and volunteers provided technical support and training.

### ***Information Provision***

- Even in this day and age, it can be difficult to know what is going on in the area.
- As part of our aim to enable inclusivity, and as part of our continuing support for other organisations in the area, we will look to improve the provision of information about what is going on in the area.

### ***Health and Welfare***

- We will ensure that, as far as possible, the parish is a safe place for people to live.
- We will ensure the provision of information and support services for people struggling with domestic violence, safe-guarding issues, drug and alcohol misuse, and crime and disorder.
- We will test out the level of demand for such services as part of our consultation process.
- We will also explore the need and potential for outreach health and social care provision in the area, including both council and health services such as Social Prescribing and Mental Health support.

### ***Police***

- The Police have a Community Police Support Officer allocated to the parish. The officer, Julie, is limited by transport considerations as to when she can visit and we will work with the police and other parishes to see if this can be addressed.
- Where possible, we will try and ensure that Julie visits the Parish on a regular basis and provide information on when and how she can be reached.

### ***Mobile Library***

- A mobile library visits the parish every three weeks. As part of the consultation process we will explore the demand for this in different areas. We will also ensure that details of the service are included in our information provision.

## **Education, Training and Employment**

### ***Schools***

- There are two primary schools in the area that serve the parish. Both have strong reputations and are therefore in high demand. We will see what can be done to favour access to local schools for local children.
- We will explore what commitments were made as part of previous and current planning applications to provide an additional school for the hospital site. If still appropriate, we will do our best to make sure that these are honoured.
- We will support after-school activities and do our best to ensure these are safe and sustainable.

### ***Adult Education***

- There is very little provision for adult education in the parish but evening classes are available at Preston College and possibly elsewhere. We will include signposting to this provision in the information we make available about the area.

## ***Employment***

- Most residents currently go out of the area to work and there are mixed views on the extent to which the parish might want to encourage further business opportunities in the area because of the potential environmental impact on the area. We will seek views on this in the consultation process.
- With the increasing shift to home working, we will do our best to ensure that the area is well served by the broadband and mobile phone companies.
- We will also explore the potential for St John's church to be used for craft / artisan workshops and activities if it is possible to restore and re-purpose the building.

## **Transport**

### ***Public Transport***

- The parish is currently served by two bus routes running every half hour or so. There seem to be relatively few people using these services other than as part of the school run and we will use the consultation process to see if this is right and why.
- There was supposed to be a new bus service going through the new estate that has not yet happened. We will check if this is going ahead, and when.
- There is currently no bus service going up Halfpenny Lane. We will check the level of demand for such a service here and elsewhere as part of the consultation process.

### ***Preston Community Transport***

- Preston Community Transport provides a voluntary service to hospitals, shops etc for those who need it. The service is run on a shoe string budget by volunteers but can be a lifeline for those with few other transport opportunities.
- We will use the consultation process to explore the level of demand for this in the parish and to see if we can facilitate getting additional volunteers for this.

### ***Roads***

- Speeding is an issue in the Parish with Owens Lane Goosnargh Lane and Whittingham Lane coming into and out of the village being particular problem areas.
- Three vehicles were recently recorded in excess of 100mph in a 30mph zone and regular speeding is not unusual.
- We will seek out the level of support for Gatso speed cameras covering these areas during our consultation and work with the highways authorities to try and get these installed if the level of support is there.
  
- The state of some of the roads around the parish is very poor, in large part as a result of damage caused during the development work that has been going on.
- These problems are exacerbated by the highways team doing quick fixes.
- We will work to make sure people know how to report problems and will also look at whether we can put in place some form of 'right first time' monitoring to improve the quality of repairs.



### ***Site Access***

- Vehicle access to some of the new developments, particular the hospital site and around Halfpenny Lane, is poor. We will contact the County Council for details of what traffic management plans have previously been agreed as part of planning approval processes and seek to ensure these are implemented if still appropriate.
- Parking around the Goosnargh post office area is a problem, despite the single yellow line on the road. This is an issue that keeps cropping up and we will check the extent to which residents think this is a problem through the consultation process.

## **Housing**

### ***Development Planning***

- There is a new Government White Paper on planning due out in the near future. The Parish Council will seek to review and understand the implications of this at the earliest opportunity.
- Development planning is largely the responsibility of Preston Council and they are in the process of updating their Development Plan. The Parish Council will seek to get involved in, and influence this before it is approved, by understanding recent responses to the 'call for sites' and initial thinking about future land allocation in the parish.
- As part of that process, we will seek to ensure that Preston Council makes it very clear and explicit specifically what areas in the parish are being approved, for what number of premises and when.
- In particular, we will seek to know how we can tell when the limit is met and further applications will be automatically rejected.
- We will seek to hold Preston Council to account for not exceeding these limits.
  
- We will seek to ensure that housing approval is limited to local demand as far as possible and we will seek to test out the level of this demand as part of the consultation on this draft Parish Plan.
- To ensure the quality of building, and to help protect the environment, we will seek to ensure that planning permissions are linked to the green agenda and that developers are obliged as a condition of planning approval to build to the latest planning standards that exist when building takes place (rather than when permission is granted).
- We will seek to find ways to prevent developers applying for and obtaining 'change of use' consent after planning permission has been granted.

### ***Infrastructure***

- We will seek to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure necessary to support additional properties is included as a condition of planning applications and approvals.
- We will find ways of ensuring this is then enforced in a timely manner.
- We will seek to ensure that only the necessary level of infrastructure required is approved so that the availability of this does not then become a reason for encouraging and approving unwelcome further development.

### ***Planning Control***

- Planning control used to be the sole responsibility of the local authority. The legislation around this was changed to allow others (including developers) to provide building control services and standards have slipped.
- We will work with the council to find ways to ensure that building standards are enforced properly and in a timely manner and we will explore the possibility of working with other parishes if necessary to resource a dedicated officer to do this.

### ***Water and Sewage Services***

- As previously noted, we want to ensure the parish water and sewage services in the area are fit and sustainable for the future.
- We will push the water companies to carry out their statutory duties to comment on water and sewage provision before planning applications are determined.

### ***Local Control of the Planning Process***

- At the moment, the Parish Council can comment on planning applications and support or oppose them but it has no legal authority to approve or reject applications, or impose and enforce conditions.
- It is not yet known if this will change as a result of the forthcoming White Paper but at the moment, the best way of getting more control at parish level would be to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.
- This is a document which has statutory weight and would provide a significant improvement in the parish's ability to influence and control the planning process.
- It is a lengthy and time consuming process to develop and gain approval for a Neighbourhood Plan but we will seek the level of support for us doing this as part of the consultation process and then seek to progress on the basis of the results of that.

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## KEY OBJECTIVES

(Importance and urgency will be determined following the public consultation process)

### 1. ENVIRONMENT

Topic	Objective	Importance	Urgency	Comment
Physical Environment	Identify all parish walks, review their status and develop a plan for access, benches etc.			
Physical Environment	Support the annual festival by encouraging volunteers for road management and other duties			
Physical Environment	Review and document plans for the orchard at the hospital site.			
Physical Environment	Develop a job description and contract and appoint a Lengthsman.			
Physical Environment	Enter the village area of the parish in the Lancashire Best Kept Village competition.			
	Develop a 'Friends of Village Green' group to complement the work of the Village hall group.			
Physical Environment	Review provision, emptying and maintenance of dog and waste bins across the parish and address as necessary			
Water and sewage	Identify and document green soak-away areas and feed into Preston Council planning process as 'no-build' areas.			
Water and sewage	Review the level and timing of water company responses to planning applications and address any issues of timeliness and quality.			
Energy Consumption	Find an appropriate partner to advise on energy use minimisation initiatives and projects.			
Energy Consumption	Press the planning authorities to adopt as policy: the requirement that all new builds must comply with the highest building standards that exist at the time a property is built (rather than the standards at the time permission was given)..			
Public Toilets	Consult on the level of demand for public toilets and determine next steps based on the result.			

## 2. RECREATION, SPORT AND LEISURE

Topic	Objective	Importance	Urgency	Comment
Facilities	Develop play facilities on the village green for the under 5s, including play equipment..			
Facilities	Support a new building or site for the scouts and other youth organisations.			
Groups	Explore with the WI and the Heritage group what, if any support they need and help promote their activities.			
Groups	Explore with the Bowling Club, Cricket Club, Tennis Club and other similar groups what, if any support they need and help promote their activities.			
Groups	Seek ways to revitalise sport and leisure by promoting inter-village activities and competitions			
Allotments, Gardening and Rewilding	Explore the level of demand for allotments through the consultation process			
Allotments, Gardening and Rewilding	Explore potential re-wilding projects and the level of support that might be needed for these.			

### 3. CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND SERVICES

Topic	Objective	Importance	Urgency	Comment
St John's Church	Identify the potential for restoring and repurposing St John's Church on the hospital site, consult on preferred options and address funding issues.			
Digital Inclusion	Identify the extent which people in the parish may be 'digitally excluded' and the reasons for this.			
Digital Inclusion	Develop and implement appropriate solutions to any areas of digital exclusion with volunteers.			
Information Provision	Develop a clear understanding of what activities are going on in the parish and improve ways of maintaining and communicating this information to promote involvement and participation.			
Health and Welfare	Consult on the demand for support services around usually unspoken issues such as domestic violence, safeguarding, drug and alcohol misuse and crime and disorder .			
Health and Welfare	Consult on the demand for local provision of health and care services in the area including Social Prescribing, Mental Health support and other services.			
Police	Consult with the Police and with other parish councils to enable a regular community police presence in the parish at known dates and times.			
Mobile Library	Consult on the current provision of mobile library services, including any unmet need and explore the results with the County Council.			

#### 4. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

Topic	Objective	Importance	Urgency	Comment
Schools	Explore with the local schools and the education department what can be done to favour local access to local schools and make this information available to people in the parish.			
Schools	Identify existing commitments around a new primary school on the hospital site and ensure these are honoured if appropriate.			
Schools	Explore with the schools what after-school activities are available, what unmet need there may be, and how this can be addressed.			
Adult Education	Identify the current provision of evening classes in the area and include in the information about what is going on in and around the parish			
Employment	Explore the extent to which residents would like the parish council to develop and promote job opportunities in the parish.			
Employment	Consult on public satisfaction with telephone and broadband provision, and in particular its appropriateness for home working.			
Employment	Explore the level of public support for St John's church to be used for craft / artisan activities if it is possible to restore and re-purpose the building.			

## 5. TRANSPORT

Topic	Objective	Importance	Urgency	Comment
Public Transport	Consult on the level of use and satisfaction with the current bus service.			
Public Transport	Check on the intended provision of a bus service through the new estate and determine an appropriate course of action.			
Public Transport	Consult with residents on the level of a demand for a bus service on Halfpenny Lane and other areas of the parish and discuss with the Preston Bus Company.			
Preston Community Transport	Consult on the level of awareness of, and demand for, the community bus service. Seek additional volunteers as part of this process.			
Roads	Consult on the level of support for Gatso speed cameras around the village and other areas. Pursue this with the Highways Team if this is supported by responses.			
Roads	Explore views on the condition of parish roads and discuss areas of concern with the County Highways Team.			
Roads	Promote ways of reporting road problems, including in particular, any quick fix solutions that haven't worked.			
Site Access	Seek clarification from the Council as to what traffic management plans have previously been agreed for the parish that have not yet been implemented and pursue as appropriate.			
Site Access	Consult on perceptions about road and other parking around the Goosnargh Post Office area and discuss with the Highways Department and Police as appropriate.			

## 6. HOUSING

Topic	Objective	Importance	Urgency	Comment
Development Planning	Understand the implications and potential of the new Planning White Paper as soon as it becomes available.			
Development Planning	Contact Preston Council for details of recent responses to 'calls for sites'			
Development Planning	Meet with Preston Council to discuss parish views on housing development levels <u>before</u> the first draft Development Plan is published.			
Development Planning	Ensure that Preston Council's new Development Plan is explicit about the volume, location and intended timescale of new development to be permitted in the Parish (and that details are not lost in generalised statements about major sites or similar language).			
Development Planning	Consult with residents on the perceived level of demand for new residential properties for people with a local connection to the area.			
Development Planning	Seek regular reports and confirmation from Preston Council that agreed development limits are not being exceeded.			
Development Planning	Consult with Preston Council on ways to limit permitted planning development to levels of local demand (i.e. for people with a local connection to the area).			
Development Planning	Seek ways to prevent variations in planning, including change of use, after planning permission has been granted.			
Infrastructure	Determine as a parish council what infrastructure issues we would like to be considered in response to all planning applications in the area.			



Infrastructure	Ensure that comments on infrastructure issues are included in all responses to planning applications			
Planning Control	Work with the council to find ways of ensuring building standards are enforced properly and in a timely fashion.			
Planning Control	If necessary, work with other parish councils to resource a dedicated officer to support Preston Council in properly enforcing planning controls and conditions.			
Local control of planning	Consult on the extent to which residents would like the Parish Council to pursue the development of a Neighbourhood Plan and the willingness of people to be involved in helping with this process.			
Local control of planning	Pursue the development of a Neighbourhood Plan subject to appropriate support for the idea and offers of help from residents.			

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