

Over Kellet Parish Plan 2019 - Consultation Draft

Introduction

Over Kellet is an ancient village, there having been a settlement here for well over a thousand years, with the probability of a Church by the C10th. From the C13th it was very much a farming community and until comparatively recently there were still six working farms within the village itself, although this has now dwindled to just two. It is now a combination of retirement and commuter dwellings with very little employment within the Parish. There are a number of listed buildings dating back to the C17th. The last full Parish Appraisal was produced in 1996 when 64% out of those who responded had lived in the village for over 10 years; out of those who responded to the 2018 questionnaire this figure has increased to 75%. This would indicate a reasonably stable population, indeed since 1970 the population of the parish has remained fairly stable at between 850 to 900 and, apart from small infill developments, so has the number of houses. However, all this is about to change! The recent Government drive to increase the country's housing stock, coupled with a relaxation of the planning regulations, means the character of rural villages is potentially under threat and the purpose of this plan is to try and establish how current residents would like to see the development of the village over the next five years.

Preparing the Parish Plan

The 2011 Localism Act introduced the idea of Neighbourhood Planning whereby communities produced a planning framework for guiding future development, regeneration and conservation and set out the community's visions, aims, proposals for improvement and provision of new facilities, allocation of key sites for development (if any), green spaces, transport etc. Once adopted it would become part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area and Planning Authorities must base decisions on it. At public meetings held in November 2016 and February 2017 it was agreed that given the onerous nature of producing a Neighbourhood Plan, and the lack of volunteers willing to assist with this, the immediate task should be to produce an updated Parish Plan, which although not having any legal standing would at least establish the aspirations of current residents for the development of the village over the next 5 years and help guide the parish council in its deliberations. Following completion of this, thought would be given as to whether or not further work should be undertaken to expand this into a full Neighbourhood Plan.

A small working party of volunteers was established, comprising a mix of parish councillors and other residents, and a questionnaire devised and circulated to all residents during June 2018. This has been used to inform the content of this Plan. A summary of the responses to the questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

Over Kellet Today

The parish of Over Kellet has some 350 dwellings, the majority of which are contained within the main village but with other small clusters in Swarthdale and Capernwray. There is a church, a thriving primary school, public house, small gift shop and village general store with post office. These are all greatly appreciated by residents who recognise the importance of the need for

these to be patronised if they are to survive. Some concerns were expressed at parking problems caused by the number of families from outside the village using the school and it was hoped this would not increase further.

Residents feel the village is generally a safe place in which to live although are concerned at the safety issues posed by the size and speed of traffic through the village and the inconsiderate parking of cars, which in places restrict the safe passage of pedestrians, particularly those with pushchairs or wheelchairs, or access for emergency services. They enjoy its rural character and open views and there is a strong feeling that large scale developments will not only detract from this, but exacerbate these safety issues, and only small infill ones, reflecting local needs, should be supported.

The open spaces provided by the three greens are important, as is the network of footpaths around the village. Concern was expressed at the uncared-for state of the village pond on Greenways (the 'Dub') and the need for footpaths to be properly maintained, in particular ensuring bordering hedges are kept trimmed.

Numbers of residents are concerned at the reduction of bus services, particularly in an evening and at weekends, which, amongst other things, creates difficulties in accessing healthcare in Carnforth for those without their own transport. Many thought the new shelter on the village green was a great improvement and some would like to see another one for those travelling towards Carnforth.

Many of the properties in the village were built before the advent of cars and so parking has become an issue, whether this be by residents parking on pavements, inconsiderate parking by visitors to the school and village hall, or cars left all day on the roads bordering the main green. The size and speed of vehicles passing through the village is also a major concern for the safety of pedestrians.

Something else which has not kept up with expansion of the village over the last 50 years is the drainage system for both surface and foul water. This is particularly apparent on the Kirkby Lonsdale Road and Church Bank and there are major concerns that if the present system is not coping with current demand the problem will be exacerbated by new developments.

There are mixed views as to whether or not there is a real spirit of community in the village. Supporters pointed to the positive reaction to helping others in the wake of emergencies (e.g. Storm Desmond), the highly successful B4RN community broadband project, Carol Singing and Remembrance Sunday on the main green, Ceilidhs, Village Gala and the programme of regular activities in the village hall; others point to the demise of the Annual Horticultural Show and how some events are poorly supported.

The Over Kellet View is greatly appreciated as a means of communication as are the New Residents packs for those moving into the village. The introduction of hyperfast broadband via the B4RN network is seen as a major improvement to internet access.

Over Kellet during the next five years

1. **Preserving the character of the village.** This is seen as of prime importance and although small infill developments should be supported, provided they are situated and of a style compatible with the character of the village, any large scale development on agricultural land should be strongly resisted on the grounds:
 - the rural character of the surrounding countryside should be preserved
 - the current drainage system for both foul and surface water cannot cope with further properties
 - the pavements do not provide safe pedestrian access to the central amenities from the extremities of the village
2. **Traffic.**
 - There is a need to work with the school to try and resolve current problems caused by inconsiderate parking by parents.
 - Work to try and minimise inconsiderate parking by some residents on pavements which creates obstructions for pedestrians, in particular pushchair users
 - Continue to lobby Lancashire County Council for a 20 mph speed limit in the village
 - Consider further traffic calming measures, including an additional speed camera in the village
 - Encourage residents to take part in the Community Speedwatch programme
3. **Footpaths.** Regularly survey footpaths in and around the village to ensure they are kept in a safe condition, in particular with regard to encroaching vegetation
4. **Open Spaces.** Ensure open spaces are maintained in good order and in particular liaise with Lancashire Wildlife Trust with regard to the condition of the Over Kellet pond ('the Dub').
5. **Community Spirit.**
 - Encourage and support the work of the Parish Council, Neighbourhood Watch and the Emergency Plan Committee and consider ways of providing transport for those residents without cars needing to access healthcare facilities in Carnforth
 - Encourage the organisation of and participation in community events, with at least two main events a year.
6. **Leisure Facilities.** Ensure leisure facilities, particularly for children, increase in line with the expansion of the village through new developments.
7. **Tourism.** Although acknowledging the important contribution which the current caravan sites make to the local economy further expansion should not be supported as there is concern this would not be sustainable and could have an adverse effect on the local countryside and road network.

If you would like to comment on the draft Parish Plan, please do so by **7th November 2018** by email to the Parish Clerk, Derek Whiteway at clerk@overkelletpc.org or in writing to the Chair, Nick Ward at Cockle Hill Barn, Kirkby Lonsdale Rd, Over Kellet.

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF PARISH PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

1,2 Refuse collection and litter. Generally happy except a comment about a closed litter bin needed in the school and concern at the litter on Carnforth Road down to the motorway.

3,4,5,6 Open Spaces. These are considered to be very important and generally looked after well but concern expressed at the damage to the main green by the work of Utility companies and lorries cutting the corners and also at the uncared-for condition of the Dub.

7. Footpaths. The network of footpaths around the village are considered to be important and should be properly maintained. Most concern was at bordering hedges not being kept trimmed by landlords making passage difficult, particularly the footpath to Carnforth.

8, 9,10,11. Parking. A number of concerns in particular inconsiderate parking by parents dropping children off, or attending events, at the school; residents parking on pavements creating a hazard for pedestrians & pushchairs; cars being parked all day on roads bordering the village green.

12. Tourism. A good area for tourism, could/should the village do more? Concern however at the continued expansion of caravan sites in the area and in particular its effect on roads.

13. Crime. Generally happy: Over Kellet is a safe place to live.

14. Lighting. Too bright in places causing unnecessary pollution, but not bright enough in others. Is it needed all night?

15,16,17,18. Development. Strong feeling that there are too many large developments planned which will detract from the character of the village and a lack of support of this view from District Council. Any new development should be small scale infill and the need, if any, is for affordable housing.

19. Bus shelters/seats. Village Green shelter an improvement, possibly another for the Carnforth bus? Village Hall shelter needs upgrading.

20. Village Hall. An important asset to the village.

21. Quarry. Mixed views. Some concerns that blasts are damaging houses, others that this is something you have to put up with if you choose to live in a village with two quarries nearby.

22. Drainage. Much concern at inadequate surface water drainage in various parts of the village and general inadequacy of combined foul and surface water system causing escape of effluent in times of heavy rain (e.g. Cockle Hill & Church Bank). If the current system is not coping at the moment the problem will be exacerbated by new developments.

23,30. Community events and community spirit. Community events, such as Ceilidhs, Carol singing on the Green, Remembrance Sunday on the Green, Village Gala are appreciated and enjoyed and some would like to see more but the problem of finding volunteers to organise them is recognised. Loss of Hort. Soc. Annual show is lamented. Some say there is no community spirit (perhaps those that don't join in events?) others point to these events together with B4RN and the Emergency Plan group to say there is, but generally the same people

involved with them. Village Hall and Church also provide centres for community involvement. Need more people to get involved with village events.

24. Public Transport. A better bus service wanted, particularly in an evening and at weekends, but not many people use the services that are currently provided. Should there be a community bus service?

25. Noise and dog fouling. Some traffic noise and still some unsociable dog owners either not picking up or leaving filled bags around, however neither seen as major problems.

26. Health care. Generally thought to be satisfactory although sometimes difficult to get appointments and difficult to access for some people without their own transport.

27. Leisure facilities. Some would like to see more, particularly for children and young people, but most people satisfied or have no view.

28. School. Generally happy with the school except concern at the number of children from outside the village who put pressure on places for village children and class size. Inconsiderate parking by parents causes problems for residents living in roads bordering the school.

29. Pub and shops. Seen as important asset and need to be supported.

31. Church. The importance of having a church in the village is recognised, as well as alternative places to worship in the local area.

32,33 Broadband. The installation of B4RN in the village is seen as a major improvement as a large percentage of residents use the internet on a regular basis.

34. Communication. The majority favour the OK View as a way of learning about events, followed by reading noticeboards.

35,36 Parish Council. The majority are generally satisfied with the work of the Parish Council although few actually attend meetings.

37. Over half those completing the questionnaire have lived in the village for over 20 years with 75% for longer than 10 years.

Main issues to be addressed in Parish Plan?

1. Road safety – speeding traffic and parking
2. Housing development – preserve the character of the village for future generations
3. More community events
4. Community transport?
5. Street lighting survey?
6. Footpath survey?