



Hilldale Parish Council Newsletter – September 2025

Chairmans Column

I recently had similar conversations, with two different friends of mine. Both live in two completely different suburbs of Manchester, both have grown up children, who have either flown the nest, or, are likely to do so, in the not-too-distant future.

Coincidentally, both are now engaged in the inevitable debate about whether they should now be looking to move house.

My assumption that downsizing, would be the key issue for both, was dismissed as a minor consideration. The primary reason for both, it turned out, was to find somewhere with a real sense of community, where they could integrate and have a genuine involvement and sense of purpose.

I have to admit, this was a bit of a shock, as both live in the type of trendy cosmopolitan peripherals that boast numerous Coffee Shops, Wine Bars and Restaurants that frequently populate the pages of social media, with a swift rail link to central Manchester, to boot. But both lived on a very busy main road and felt that as the children grew up and finished school, their sense of community evaporated as quickly as the trips to Cubs and Brownies, or the Saturday mornings spent watching Rugby and Hockey.

“Anywhere particular in mind “? I ventured.

Well, ideally, somewhere like Hilldale or Parbold, said both, without hesitation. It’s got everything that we’ve got, but it’s got a genuine sense of community and that’s what we’re missing.

Makes you think, doesn’t it?

Best regards

Gary Ward

Chairman

Grant Success

Picnic Bench

This year’s project was to provide an additional heavy duty accessible picnic bench on the playing field to enhance the area for public use and enjoyment. Our Parish Clerk, Trish applied for funding towards the cost of the bench and we were delighted to receive a grant towards the project from Lancashire County Council’s ‘Champions Fund’. The bespoke oak bench has been ordered and is installed towards the end of the year.

Speed Indicator Device (SpID)

Our second project involving the purchase of a speed indicator device has been ongoing since last year. This has enabled the Parish Council to seek the options of residents via a public consultation exercise. Lancashire County Council provided three possible locations which met with their detailed criteria in order to avoid underground services, avoid obstructing access to properties, and to comply with highway regulations. Following feedback from the consultation there was an overwhelming desire from residents to go ahead with the purchase of a SpID which was felt would potentially slow down traffic by highlighting vehicles speeds to drivers.

The preferred locations were:

1. Chorley Road (outside the village hall). In the footway outside the village hall 1.3m from kerb and 3m south of LC 67.
2. Chorley Road Southbound (near to 70 Chorley Road) in grass verge 1m from kerb and 18.2m from school flasher. (i.e. between Malt Kiln Lane and the Farmers Arms pub).

Lancashire County Council are in the process of erecting posts for the speed indicator device to be fitted on. The device will be moved between posts on a regular basis.

The cost of the SpID was partly funded via West Lancashire Council following the successful grant application made by our Parish Clerk.

A total of £1,500 grant funding was received with the Parish Council contributing the remainder of the cost.

Village Hall

As many residents will be aware the hall is hired by a variety of groups, from yoga and pilates to morris dancing and HCA coffee mornings. We are delighted to welcome some new regular bookings to the hall; baby ballet; baby and parent dance class and 'sound journey' sessions which are due to start in the coming weeks. Please see the new timetable on village noticeboard outside the hall for further details.

Village Hall Bookings - If you would like to book the hall, please contact the Clerk who will be happy to provide you with availability and further details. The hall is an excellent venue for all types of functions and offers an excellent kitchen facility ideal for preparing buffets and hot drinks.

Heritage Fruit Tree Orchard

The heritage fruit tree orchard was planted 18 months ago and is already starting to produce a good crop of fruit – particularly the damson tree! We would love to hear from any experts in the community who can provide advice on fruit tree pruning – the apple tree on the border of the car park could do with some attention to bring it back to its former glory.

This photograph shows the trees before the area was strimmed in early August.

We intend to hold a couple of hours weeding and adding some mulch to the fruit trees and previously planted walnut and sweet chestnuts. This will take place on Saturday 27th September 9.30 to 10.30am and should be grateful of any volunteers to help with this task. Please contact the Parish Clerk if you can help via email or pop a note through the post box at the village hall.



Fence Maintenance

You may have noticed the fence over the bridge has been refreshed with a new coat of paint which we are sure you will agree is much improved.

Before



After



Playing Field

As you may know the Parish Council has an ongoing ground maintenance regime to ensure the field, path and hedgerows are maintained to a high standard. Recently, due to storm damage we had to fell one of the trees which had become unsafe with a large branch falling onto the footpath.

We would like to thank Laurence Davis and his team for his speedy removal of the tree.



The established hazel shrubs at the far end of the playing field have a scheduled rota for coppicing which rejuvenates the plant.

This year we offered the hazel posts to residents and were pleased that a number were re-purposed to provide vegetable supports.



Hilldale Village Hall sign

We recently came across a lovely old sign that was originally displayed outside of the village hall. We would love to hear from any resident who has knowledge of how to clean and treat the sign. We wish to preserve it – it's a great piece of history: do you remember it? Once revamped we wish to display it inside the hall for everyone to enjoy.



Public consultation on accident and emergency services across Southport, Formby and West Lancashire

We recently received correspondence from the NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board regarding a public consultation launched on where the A&E services for Southport, Formby and West Lancashire should be located in the future. This is asking the people who live and work across these localities for their views on the two specific options i.e. Southport or Ormskirk, proposed by the local NHS. The public consultation is open until 3 October further details are available via the following links or contact the Clerk for a hard copy which are available in the village hall. Summary consultation document:

<https://yoursayshapingcaretogether.co.uk/30670/widgets/128132/documents/86936>

Survey: [Survey on proposals for urgent and emergency care services | Your Say Shaping Care Together](#)



Lancashire's councils are calling on residents, businesses and community organisations to have their say to help shape the future of local government in the county.

Currently, Lancashire County Council provides services such as social care, education, roads, and libraries, while district and borough councils manage services like bin collections, planning, housing, and leisure. Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen operate as unitary councils, which deliver all of the above services.

The Government has set out its ambition to dissolve these councils and instead create a number of new unitary councils to deliver all local services through single authorities.

Questions include how important services currently provided are, what people's experience of services has been and what they think about the creation of new unitary authorities.

The answers will help the councils shape their proposals for Lancashire's future

New elections for the shadow authorities could then take place in May 2027 with the new councils taking over all services on April 1 2028. To take part in the survey visit

www.givemyview.com/lancashirelgr paper copies are available by contacting lgr@lancashire.gov.uk or calling 0300 1236701, or pick one up from the village hall.

All Council correspondence should be sent to Trish Grimshaw, Parish Clerk/RFO via the letter box at the Village Hall or e mailed to clerk@hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk. Website is

www.hilldaleparishcouncil.gov.uk

Council Meetings - meetings are usually held on Thursday evenings; please see noticeboards or website for details. Members of the public are very welcome to attend the meetings.