

ASKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Plan 2010

THE PARISH PLAN

APRIL 2010



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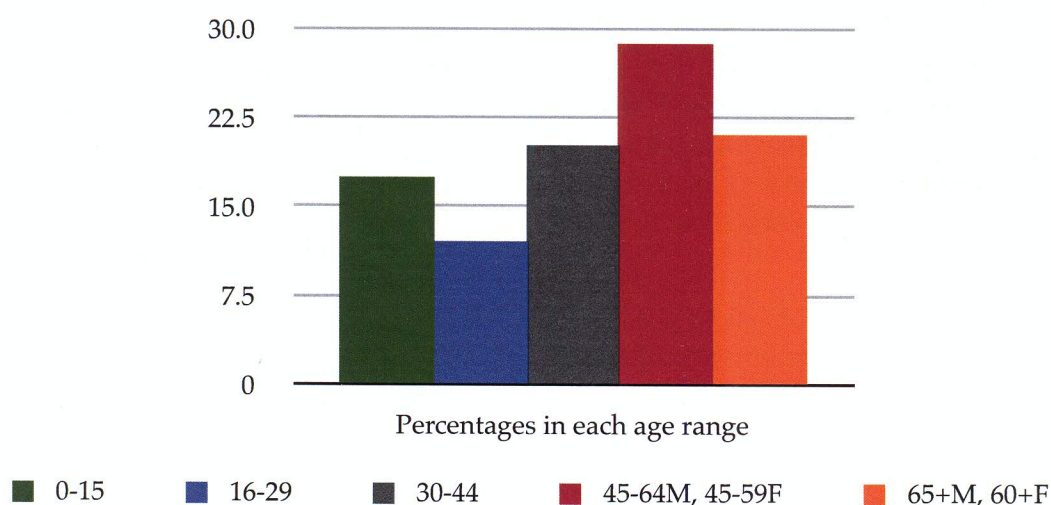
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The Future



Age profile of the population:



Population = 1,472

Life expectancy is 83.2 years (compared with 78.4 for Cumbria as a whole, and 78.3 nationally).

Housing

Mean house price is £283,672 and the mean household income is £34,486, giving a mean housing affordability ratio (price/income) of 8.2 (compared with 6 for Cumbria as a whole, and 7.1 nationally).

Disadvantages

The Cumbria Intelligence Observatory analysis suggests that the ward is significantly disadvantaged with regard to 'Barriers to housing and services', in particular both geographical barriers (eg distance to services) and wider barriers (eg difficulty of access to owner-occupation). See www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/ for detailed analysis.

Priorities

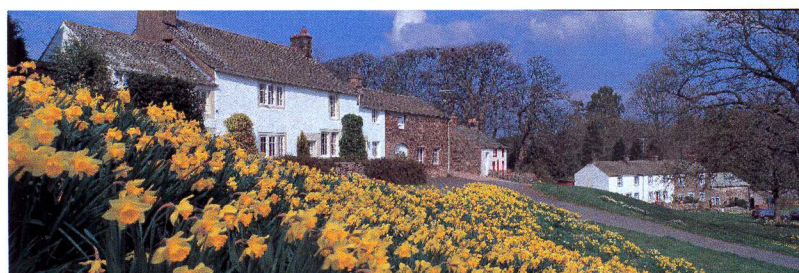
According to their surveys, the priorities for people in the ward are: Decent affordable housing (46.8%), Public transport (44.7%), and Road and pavement repairs (36.2%). These are themes reflected in our own survey and analysis which follow.



5. Some Basic Responsibilities

Most of this Plan, and the process that underpinned it, is about what Askham and Helton's communities think should be the Parish Council's priorities for the next three years. There are, however, some activities which have to be undertaken as part of good stewardship. For example, the Council's assets have to be looked after and it has to make sure that it fulfils the duties and requirements placed upon it by legislation. Part of the Action Plan therefore needs to focus on these issues. Set out below is a list of responsibilities and the Parish Council's plans for the coming period.

Responsibility	Includes	Specific Responsibilities	Specific Objectives For 2009/10
Repair And Maintain Assets	Mower, computer, bus shelter, notice boards, seats on greens, green maintenance	Chair and Clerk	• Replace notice-boards • Repair bus shelter • Repair seat • Review green cutting contract
Liaise With Partners	Lowther Estates, Eden District Council, Cumbria County Council, Lake District National Park Authority, Police, Fire Service, and others	Clerk	
Communicate	With local communities by personal contact, written material, meetings, website and others	Clerk and all parish councillors	• Improve Website • Improve community attendance at Parish Council meetings • At least two social events
Proper Conduct Of Business	Insurance, adherence to legal, financial and governmental requirements	Clerk and Chair	



6. Parish Concerns and Priorities

The residents of the Parish have many concerns and issues which fall far beyond the remit of the Parish Council. However, the Council considers that it should know what these issues are so that if the opportunity arises, or can be made to arise, it will be well placed to make a properly founded contribution to consultations and discussions about the villages' environment and future. The report of the survey we carried out gives a good idea of some of the local issues and people's views on them.

A) Living and working in Askham and Helton

The meetings identified a number of issues concerned with housing and the business life of the community. The survey results were as set out below.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No view either way	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	No Response
More Affordable Housing	8	16	11	1	3	5
Too Many Second Homes	8	17	11	3	0	5
Support For Local Businesses	32	9	2	0	0	1
Keep The Post Office	39	5	0	0	0	0

A clear majority of respondents agreed strongly that there should be support for local businesses (32/44) with the clearest approval coming from Askham (17/19). Nine of the 11 people who did not identify which village they came from also strongly agreed with this proposition. If the number who agree are added to the strongly agree group it can be seen that 93% of respondents were in favour of helping local business.

Even more substantial was the number of people wishing to keep the Post Office, with 39 strongly agreeing that it should stay and the remaining five agreeing that it should. The villages were unanimous on this.

Less clear was the suggestion that there should be more affordable housing. A clear majority of respondents agreed or agreed strongly that there should be (24/44) but a quarter had no view either way. A similarly muted view was expressed about second homes; ten respondents from Askham, eight from Helton and seven from the anonymous group agreed or agreed strongly that there are too many second homes in the villages (ie. 57%).



B) Roads and transport in the villages

The responses to questions about these issues are given in the table.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No View Either Way	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	No Response
Improve Road Maintenance	28	11	3	0	0	2
Not Enough Buses	17	12	12	1	0	2
Repair The Bus Shelter	12	15	10	1	0	6
Replace Ugly Road Signage	7	15	15	2	0	5
Stop Dog Fouling	23	16	3	0	0	2
Stop Churn Of Roadsides On Fells	20	13	7	2	1	1

There was agreement/ strong agreement that road maintenance in the Parish should be improved (39 respondents) with strong support from both villages. There was also extensive support for stopping dog fouling, with 23 agreeing strongly and a further 16 agreeing; 18 of the 19 respondents from Askham thought this, ten of the 14 from Helton and 11 out of 11 of the anonymous group. Thirty three respondents (75% of all respondents) agreed/ agreed strongly that the churn of roadsides on the fells should be stopped. A majority thought that the bus shelter should be repaired.

Only seven people agreed strongly that ugly signage should be replaced.



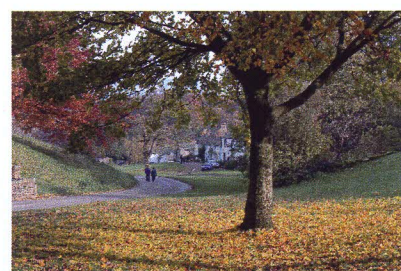
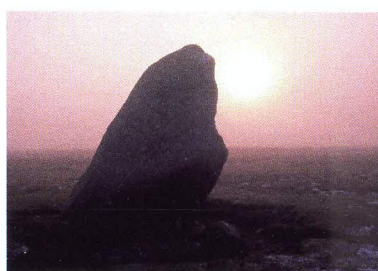
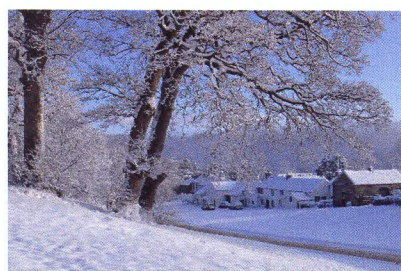
C) Cars and car parking

A number of different issues relating to cars and parking were identified at the parish meetings. The survey revealed the views shown below.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No View Either Way	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	No Response
Too Few Parking Spaces	7	19	8	4	1	5
Inconsiderate Parking	15	15	8	1	0	5
Stop Speeding	27	12	4	0	0	1
Car Park For Church Needed	9	10	17	3	1	4
Too Much Parking On Fells	6	10	16	6	0	6

Speeding is the issue that most respondents feel strongly about; 39 out of 44 said they agreed/strongly agreed that speeding should be stopped. Also strongly felt was inconsiderate parking with 68% of respondents agreeing/agreeing strongly. That there are too few parking spaces was endorsed by eight of 14 respondents in Helton, ten of 19 in Askham, and eight of 11 in the anonymous group.

A car park for the Church and parking on the fells were not issues that attracted widespread agreement; both attracted some disagreement.



D) Recreation, tourism and visitors

At the Parish Plan meeting people said that the following were issues to do with recreation, tourism and visitors in Askham and Helton.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No View Either Way	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	No Response
Play Facilities Needed	19	16	4	2	0	3
Pub In Helton Needed	9	10	17	5	0	3
Settle Swimming Pool's Future	26	15	1	1	0	1
More Social Events Needed	14	15	8	2	0	5
Mini Tourist Centre Needed	4	7	9	13	5	6
Public Lavatories Needed	4	11	9	7	5	8
Farmers' Market Every Quarter	11	16	9	4	0	4

In this section the need to settle the future of the swimming pool was strongly agreed with by 26 people and agreed with by a further 15 respondents, 93% of all respondents. Play facilities also received substantial support with 35 people responding positively.

There was a measure of support for more social events, a majority agreeing positively, and a majority also supported a farmers market every quarter.

A tourist centre was opposed by 18 respondents, the highest number of negative responses in the entire survey and there was little strong agreement to public lavatories.



E) Environment

Local issues to do with environmental matters were explored in this part of the survey.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No View Either Way	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	No Response
Encourage Sustainable Energy	17	15	3	4	0	5
Introduce Local Recycling	24	14	2	1	2	1
Repair/replace Notice Boards	17	15	6	3	0	3

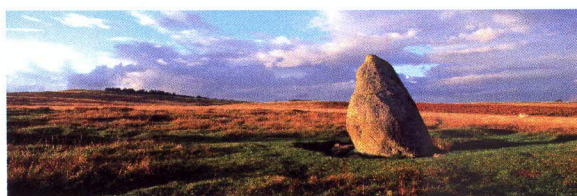
There was substantial agreement/strong agreement that local recycling should be introduced with 38 of 44 respondents in these categories; two respondents disagreed strongly. There was also substantial agreement that sustainable energy should be encouraged. A clear majority of respondents, 73%, thought that notice boards should be repaired or replaced.

F) Askham specific issues

These results relate to all respondents and not just those living in Askham.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No View Either Way	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	No Response
Make Daisy Cottage Safe	7	12	7	1	0	17
No Building Behind Toy Works	14	7	10	1	1	11
Integrated Plan For Castle	10	10	10	0	1	13

As might be expected Askham respondents answered the questions whilst the Helton residents and the anonymous groups by and large did not. Overall 21 residents were in agreement/strong agreement that there should be no building behind the Toy Works, and 20 thought there should be an integrated plan for the Castle. Nineteen residents agreed that Daisy Cottage should be made safe.



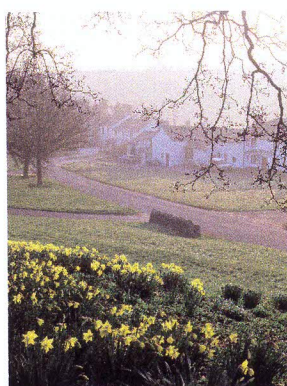
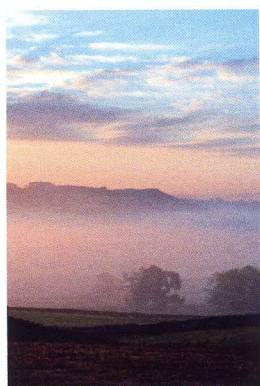
G) Helton specific issues

The results presented below are for all respondents, not just those that live in Helton.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No View Either Way	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	No Response
Repair The Old School (Monty)	12	7	6	2	0	17
Pub Wanted	5	9	7	4	0	19
Place For Helton People To Meet	6	7	8	3	1	19
Cattle Grid Full Of Water And Silt	10	11	6	0	1	16
Improve Drainage On Helton Hill	7	10	8	1	1	17
Maintenance Of Green Costly	3	11	8	0	1	21
Explore Alternative Maintenance Of Green	6	11	4	1	6	16

Twenty one of the 44 respondents agreed/ strongly agreed that the cattle grid was a problem; 19 agreed/ strongly agreed that the Monty should be repaired. Both these findings were particularly prevalent amongst Helton residents with ten out of 14 citing the cattle grid and ten the Monty. Improved drainage on Helton Hill also received support from Helton residents (11) but others too (6).

Seventeen respondents agreed/ strongly agreed that alternative ways of maintaining the green (eg goats, wild flowers etc) should be explored but six respondents disagreed/ strongly disagreed.

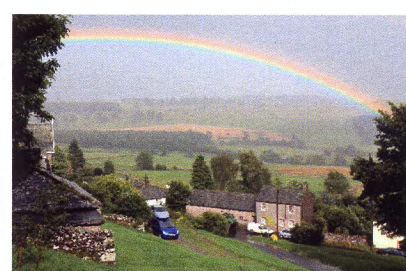
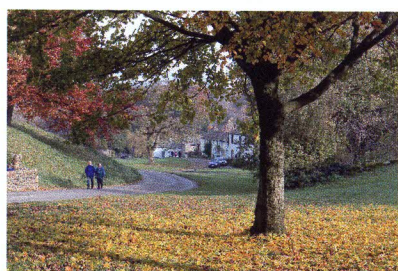


H) Priorities

Respondents were asked to choose their top three priorities for action. These did not have to be issues already asked about in the questionnaire. The results are below.

Rank	Issue	Priority 1 (no. of Respondents)	Priority 2 (no. of Respondents)	Priority 3 (no. of Respondents)	Priority 4 (no. of Respondents)
1	Keep the Post Office	9	2	3	14
2	Improve Road Maintenance	4	5	2	11
3	Play Facilities	2	5	3	10
4	Local Recycling	4	3	1	8
5=	More Buses	3	2	1	6
5=	Parking Issues	2	4	0	6
5=	Settle The Pool Issue	2	2	2	6
5=	Repair The Monty	0	0	6	6
9=	Stop Speeding	0	3	2	5
9=	Support Local Businesses	0	2	3	5

The numbers are very small but taken with other indices they do suggest a set of priorities. For example, the 'strongly agree' answers can be categorised as follows (the issues that attracted a half or more such responses).



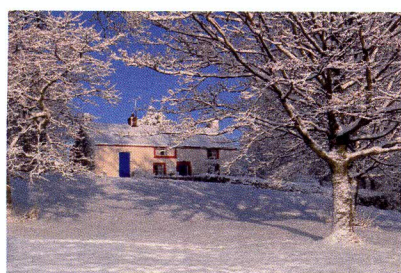
Rank	Issue	No. Of Respondents (of 44)
1	Keep The Post Office	39
2	Support Local Businesses	32
3	Improve Road Maintenance	28
4	Stop Speeding	27
5	Settle The Pool Issue	26
6	Local Recycling	24
7	Stop Dog Fouling	23
8	Improve Parking	22

And for Helton residents the 'strongly agree' category suggest improvements to the drainage on Helton Hill and better maintenance of the cattle grid; for Askham residents, the strongest agreement is directed at having no building behind the Toy Works.

A composite list of the top issues would be (not in strict order of priority):

- Keep the Post Office
- Improve road maintenance
- Support local businesses
- Settle the issue of the swimming pool
- Repair the Monty
- Play facilities
- Local recycling
- More buses
- Stop speeding
- Improve parking
- Stop dog fouling

The next section, the Action Plan, sets out what can be done about these and other priority issues.



7. Action Plan 2010/2011

It will not be possible to achieve everything in the first year of this Plan but by Easter 2010 the Parish Council should be in a position to set out a detailed timetable for the actions identified below. Set out below are the milestones for the year 2010/11.

Issue	Current Position	Principal Responsibility	Action For Parish Council ¹	Action By When	Intended Result
Keep the Post Office	Under review	Not Parish Council	Monitor (J Ruffley)		Secure provision of Post Office services in village
Improve road maintenance	Cumbria CC Scheme: Parish Council contact identified	Not Parish Council	Notify Cumbria CC as needed (T Lowther)	As notified of need	Prompt repair
Support local businesses	No comprehensive listing or detail of need	Parish Council	Compile list, identify need (A Plasom-Scott)	Spring 2010	Clear plan for support in practical ways
Settle the pool issue	Community Centre Group drawing up business plan and fundraising	Community Centre Committee	Support Community Centre Committee (L Harker)	As required by Community Centre Committee	Swimming pool's future decided
Repair the Monty	Urgent need of repair Unclear legal status	Helton Village Hall Committee (no longer exists)	Clarify legal status Formulate detailed plan for Hall's future Raise funds as appropriate (L Challis)	Legal Status resolved by Spring 2010 Plans for next steps by May 2010	Clear plan for the building
Play facilities	Youth group in Askham; Facilities needed and possible site identified; facilities for younger children needed	Parish Council	Draw up plans with Lowther Estates and others as appropriate; prepare bids (M Krukowski)	Bids prepared by Autumn 2010	Successful location of site and bid for funds

Issue	Current Position	Principal Responsibility	Action For Parish Council ¹	Action By When	Intended Result
Local recycling	No provision	Parish Council	Prepare proposal to EDC (J Ruffley)	1 Jul 2010	Installation of facility
More buses	Minimal service	Not Parish Council	Regularly highlight poor provision (Clerk)	Ongoing	Improvement of provision
Stop speeding	Police unable to identify extent	Not Parish Council	Encourage Police to monitor; remind local community of dangers (E Freeman)	Ongoing	Reduction in speeding
Improve parking	Cumbria extending spaces at Green Croft	Not Parish Council	Monitor (E Freeman)	Ongoing	Improvement of provision
Stop dog fouling	Bins provided	Parish Council	Consider dog fouling bye-law (Clerk)	1 Jul 2010	Reduction in dog fouling

¹ Councillors/Clerk with lead responsibility identified.

8. The Future

Progress on making the Plan happen will be clear through Parish Council meetings, newsletters, and the website. Furthermore, the Plan will be the major item on the agenda for the Parish Meeting held every year in the spring. At that meeting the Parish Council will be able to share progress and discuss issues with local residents so that the Plan is up to date and continues to reflect the wishes of the residents of Askham and Helton.

Thanks

Thanks to all those who completed the survey or spoke to members of the Parish Council about their views.

Particular thanks to Val Corbett of Helton (www.valcorbett.com) for permission to use her copyright photos of the parish (cover and pp. 1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 16)

