

Casterton Parish Plan 2013

Introduction

The purpose of this Parish Plan is to identify and implement changes that residents believe will make the village a better place.

The last Parish Plan was prepared in 2002 and many of its actions are complete, so the Parish Council decided early in 2012 that it was time to update it.

A strategy was drawn up with advice from ACT (Action with Communities in Cumbria), which had as its starting point a questionnaire to elicit the views of residents on a wide range of issues.

A sub-committee of the parish council was set up comprising five Councillors and three other residents which designed two questionnaires, one for adults and a shorter one for children.

These were hand delivered to every property, with a copy for each person resident at that address, reaching a total of 188 adults and 56 children. The responses were hand collected (a few residents preferred to post their replies to the parish clerk), and the whole process was carried out in such a way that all responses were confidential unless the resident decided otherwise. The 2002 survey sent a single adult questionnaire to each address.

A total of 120 completed adult's questionnaires was collected, a response rate of 64% which is more than 50% higher than in 2002. Only 13 children's questionnaires were collected, a response rate of 23%, but there was no equivalent in the previous survey.

Members of the sub-committee extracted the data from the questionnaire responses, and some tentative conclusions were presented to a public meeting in the village hall at the end of August. This produced a number of useful suggestions and the overall response to the plan was very positive.

In early October the sub-committee reviewed the plan with representatives from Cumbria County Council, ACT and two of our District Councillors, and finally the sub-committee prepared this document to disseminate the findings to the village.

All of the raw data from the adult survey, and a summary of the narrative responses from both the adult's and children's responses can be found at www.castertonvillage.org.

Casterton Parish Survey 2012 – Summary of Results

Note: Where percentage figures are quoted, they relate to the number of responses received. It has been assumed throughout that those responding are representative of the village population as a whole.

The following Survey results are given under the same broad headings, and in the same sequence, as in the questionnaire. Numbered 'Actions' are listed along side the results and the detail of these is given on the final page.

Results from the Survey

Population

- Most adult residents are in the age range 41-80 years with only 17% below 40.
- Almost a quarter of the residents have lived here for 5 years or less and 10% for over 40 years with an even spread between them.
- Just over half of all residents are in employment, 39 % retired, and none unemployed.
- Nearly one third of those in work do so in Casterton, and a further 20 % in Kirkby Lonsdale. More than half work elsewhere, as far afield as London, Bradford and Sheffield.

Local Activities and Services

- 87 % have access to broadband at home, and 60 % are dissatisfied by the speed of their connection. Nearly half would pay £100 for faster broadband, and 10 % would pay £250. **Action 1**
- More than half of all residents take part in village events, with the largest proportion, 53 %, taking part in village hall activities. Public events at the school and concerts in the church seem well supported.
- There was a call for other village hall activities especially for social evenings and for evening or daytime classes including exercise classes. **Action2**
- Many people wished to volunteer to help with village activities with litter picking (36%) and village hall support (32%) the most popular. **Action 2**
- Two thirds of respondents said that the age of the village hall and its lack of a car park were not major deterrents to supporting village hall events.
- More than three quarters of residents relied on Village notice boards and AKL to find out about events in the village. There was little awareness of local websites. **Action 3**
- More than half of residents were aware of events at the school, and a similar proportion had attended them.
- Nearly half of the population would use the school swimming pool if it was available, and about one quarter would use a playground. **Action 4**
- More than half the people are aware of the mobile library, but nobody uses it. Slightly less than half use Kirkby Lonsdale library.
- More than 80% of respondents are satisfied with bin collections, but almost everyone would welcome a separate collection of plastic and cardboard. **Action 5**
- The great majority of residents have an idea of the Parish Council's role, but only half of those have ever been to a PC meeting. **Action 6**

Transport

- Most found their transport arrangements satisfactory, but wished for a more frequent bus service.

- More than half had not heard of Community Transport, and none had ever used it.

Roads, Paths and the Environment

- Dog fouling was the biggest concern (62 %) **Action 7** followed by litter (46 %) **Action 8** with other concerns in the range 3-15 %
- The biggest factor spoiling the appearance of the village is poorly maintained verges (32 %), with other factors being only in the range 5-10 %. **Action 9**
- Nearly all respondents use rights of way in the village, and most had no general concerns about them. Those that had concerns reported a number of common problems especially in relation to trail bikes on and difficulty of use of Laitha Lane. **Action 9**
- A clear majority was worried about the lack of pavement on the A683, and 83 % supported the creation of a safe footpath from the village to Kirkby Lonsdale. **Action 10**
- Most were satisfied with the speed limits in the village, but 20 % of all residents wanted a 20 mph limit through the village, there were numerous pleas for better policing of speed limit **Action 11**
- Lighting on the A683 was generally felt to be adequate, but opinion was divided on lighting elsewhere in the village.
- There were significant concerns about the roads in the village, with poor maintenance, pot-holes and flooding being common complaints. **Action 12**

Crime

- There has been little crime in the past 5 years, but 25 % had experienced a crime at some time, the great majority being burglary.
- Three quarters of all residents were aware of Neighbourhood Watch, and most wanted no further information.
- The service provided by the police was considered good or bad by roughly equal numbers of respondents. Those who would like to see changes all requested a visible police presence of some kind in the village from time to time.

Possible Future Changes

- 38 % were in favour of affordable housing in the parish, with less support for infill housing (21 %) or green field developments (12 %).
- 15 % supported the idea of a windfarm on the fells, 22 % were in favour of small scale wind turbines, but there was much greater enthusiasm for water turbines, solar panels, and other forms of renewable energy.

And Finally...

- Nearly 90 % of residents thought Casterton is an excellent (52 %) or good (37 %) place to live, with only a few thinking it adequate (4%) or poor (4%).

Summary of Actions

Some of the actions are relatively simple and straightforward, whilst others are complex and long term. Some of the more critical ones, for example numbers 1 and 8-12 can only be achieved by working through other agencies, since they are not under the direct control of the Parish Council.

Each action is described only briefly so as to give residents a broad picture of what is proposed. If you would like to know more please contact the Parish Council.

1. Monitor BT's proposed Cumbria rollout of high-speed rural broadband and take appropriate actions. If we are likely to be in the disadvantaged 7% of the population, then seek alternative providers through community self-help schemes.
2. Encourage the village hall committee to seek new members and assist them in seeking champions for new activities starting with a golf/tennis tournament and a cycle ride in the spring.
3. Produce a welcome pack for new residents. Promote community activities through the newsletter and website.
4. Explore the use by residents of Casterton School's swimming pool and playground.
5. Follow SLDC's pilot programme for enhanced recycling, and participate in the roll-out if it occurs.
6. Widen the appeal of the Parish Council by having topical items/speakers at alternate meetings and providing refreshments. Communicate activities better through the new website and newsletter.
7. Continue the publicity drive against dog fouling, and get support from SLDC 'Streetclean' initiative. Review after a further 12 months.
8. Organize twice-yearly litter picking in cooperation with the adjoining parishes.
9. Continue to monitor the condition of public rights of way, and ensure CCC carries out remedial work. Draw up specific action plan to improve the condition of Laitha Lane, and seek CCC and/or private funding to improve it.
10. Establish the feasibility of a safe off-road walking route to Kirkby Lonsdale.
11. Seek to implement lower speed limits in the village.
12. Continue to work through our Local Area Partnership to get an improved level of road maintenance. Look at the feasibility of self-help maintenance with adjoining parishes. Encourage more local volunteers.

What happens next?

The Parish Council has prepared more detailed plans for most actions and many are already in progress. We intend to review progress annually and report back to residents. Major successes or setbacks will be reported in the Newsletter.

Prepared by Casterton Parish Council January 2013

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Issue	Action
Broadband speed: 87% have access to broadband at home, and 60% are dissatisfied by the speed of their connection. Nearly half would pay £100 for faster broadband, and 10% would pay £250.	Monitor BT's proposed Cumbria roll-out of high speed rural broadband and take appropriate actions. If we are likely to be in the disadvantaged 7% of the population, then seek alternative providers through community self help schemes.
There was a call for other village hall activities especially for social evenings and for evening or daytime classes including exercise classes.	Encourage the Village Hall committee to seek new members and assist them in seeking champions for new activities starting with golf/tennis tournament and a cycle ride in the spring.
Many people wished to volunteer to help with village activities, with litter picking (36%) and village hall support (32%) the most popular.	Encourage the Village Hall committee to seek new members and assist them in seeking champions for new activities starting with golf/tennis tournament and a cycle ride in the spring.
More than three quarters of residents relied on village notice boards and AKL to find out about events in the village. There was little awareness of local websites.	Produce a welcome pack for new residents. Promote community activities through the newsletter and website.
Nearly half of the population would use the school swimming pool if it was available, and about one quarter would use a playground.	Explore the use by residents of Casterton School's pool and playground.
More than 80% of respondents are satisfied with bin collections, but almost everyone would welcome a separate collection of plastic and cardboard.	Follow SLDC's pilot programme for enhanced recycling, and participate in the roll-out if it occurs.
The great majority of residents have an idea of the Parish Council's role, but only half of those have ever been to a PC meeting.	Widen the appeal of the Parish Council by having topical items/speakers at alternative meetings and providing refreshments. Communicate activities better through the new website and newsletter.

Issue	Action
Dog fouling	Continue the publicity drive against dog fouling, and get support from SLDC 'Streetclean' initiative. Review after a further 12 months.
Litter	Organise twice-yearly litter picking in cooperation with the adjoining parishes.
The biggest factor spoiling the appearance of the village is poorly maintained verges.	Continue to monitor the condition of public rights of way, and ensure CCC carries out remedial work.
Concerns about trail bikes using Laitha Lane, and the difficulty in using it.	Draw up specific action plan to improve the condition of Laitha Lane, and seek CCC and/or private funding to improve it.
A clear majority was worried about the lack of pavement on the A683, and 83% supported the creation of a safe footpath from the village to Kirkby Lonsdale.	Establish the feasibility of a safe off-road walking route to Kirkby Lonsdale.
Most were satisfied with the speed limits in the village, but 20% of all residents wanted a 20mph limit through the village, and there were numerous pleas for better Policing of speed limits.	Seek to implement lower speed limits in the village.
There were significant concerns about the roads in the village, with poor maintenance, potholes and flooding being common complaints.	Continue to work through our Local Area Partnership to get an improved level of road maintenance. Look at the feasibility of self-help maintenance with adjoining parishes. Encourage more local volunteers.