

Shoreline Summary

Issue 17 December 2009



It's officially winter – short days and long nights. Recently there have been too many days when it has been difficult to distinguish between day and night, it has been so gloomy. I'm quite sure that the majority of you would give anything to wake up to a bright crisp frosty morning and wouldn't even mind seeing snow, it has to be better than the endless rain we seem to have been blessed with recently.

VILLAGE CENTRE PAVING

The new paving works being carried out in the village centre are an initiative of the West Lancashire Borough Council as part of their "Inspire" scheme that has seen environmental improvements across the District. The new Booths Food store will feature the same quality pavements to give continuity to the scheme and emphasize the village centre as a whole. Further improvements will be seen as the Parish Council also commits support to improving the village centre with upgraded street lighting, seating and planters. Residents will have seen the continuing ground-works taking place on the Booths site and it is expected that work on the actual store will commence early next year with completion due in November 2010. Regrettably, such works do cause inconvenience, especially in such a congested area and we are grateful to the businesses affected for their forbearance.

LINEAR PARK



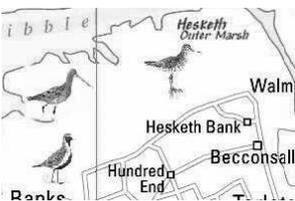
The possibility of a "Linear Park" along the banks of the River Douglas has been talked about for many years now but many have only seen it as a pipe dream. Grasping the nettle, your Parish Council has earmarked funds prompting West Lancs Borough Council and Lancashire County Council to respond to the challenge with a 'Feasibility' or 'Scoping' study now being commissioned. The objects of the study will be amongst other things to improve opportunities for informal leisure and tourism; to enable the creation of sustainable and safe transport routes for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders; to improve access to and alongside the River Douglas; to protect the landscape and natural heritage of the area and to improve public appreciation of the history and heritage of the local area. We will keep you informed of the progress on this exciting project.

'BRIGHTEN UP' IN THE WINTER MONTHS

Cyclists – You may not realise just much danger you are putting yourself in if you cycle on the roads in the dark without lights or reflective clothing. With such long hours of darkness and the lack of lighting in the more rural areas the risks to cyclists who cannot be seen easily are so much worse at this time of the year. If you know anyone who rides a bike without lights, do them a real favour and tell them to **Brighten Up!**



HESKETH OUT MARSH



In 2006 the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), working in partnership with the Environment Agency and with funding from Lancaster City Council, and the Lancashire Rural Recovery Action Plan, purchased 150 hectares of reclaimed land which was being used to grow crops. With climate change and rising sea levels, the RSPB and the Environment Agency recognised that the original outer wall created in 1980 was not going to last forever and there was a need to plan for the future and create stronger sea defences whilst creating a new saltmarsh habitat to replace losses elsewhere at the same time.

The new reserve does both these things by the process known as 'managed realignment' and is one of the largest of its kind in the UK. The seawater has been let back in to flood some of the land, creating saltmarsh which provides more space for nature. At the same time, the new saltmarsh acts like a sponge, soaking up some of the energy of the sea before it reaches the strong, new sea defences. The Hesketh Out Marsh project has greatly improved the local sea defences and created 150 hectares of new saltmarsh, creeks and lagoons.

This new saltmarsh reserve is a great place to admire the gathered pink-footed geese, widgeons, teals and other wildfowl in winter, along with big flocks of wading birds like golden plovers, lapwings and black-tailed godwits. In spring the marshes are alive with the sight and sound of displaying waders. Avocets and redshanks are among the birds that have already nested on the site. Further funding from Biffaward and Natural England has enabled the provision of facilities for visitors and for the cows and sheep that graze the marshes as well as funding research into the many changes that are taking place at this exciting new reserve as it returns to the wild.

continued overleaf

Opening times: From 8 am to 6 pm, or dusk if it's earlier. **Entrance charges:** Free, but a donation to help the work continue would be very welcome. **Information for dog owners:** Dogs are only allowed on public footpaths and bridleways. Please keep them on leads. The Hesketh Out Marsh reserve was formally opened to the public in October 2009 and recently a further 150 hectares of reclaimed land has been purchased with another area currently under negotiation. The expansion will further enhance this valuable resource and sea defences.

ALLOTMENTS: THE PLOT DEVELOPS

Readers of previous issues of Shoreline will be aware that the Parish Council is keen to develop the allotments in Hesketh Bank to allow for greater community use and to respond to the recent upsurge in demand from local residents. With this in mind Councillor Jones, Chairman of the Allotments Committee, outlined the Committee's vision for the future development of our local allotments at the recent Parish Council meeting. Strictly speaking, we currently only have one allotment site at the moment – on what was historically known as the Poor Marsh on Shore Road. However, West Lancashire Borough Council has signalled its agreement to the transfer of ownership of the long disused site in Chapel Road. Obviously this site will take some time to get back into a fit state to use and detailed planning cannot begin until the transfer of ownership is secured. However, moves are already afoot to redevelop the Shore Road site to provide a larger number of smaller more manageable plots and to take advantage of what could prove to be a very exciting development.



The Groundwork Trust, Wigan, is currently conducting a feasibility study to determine whether part of the Shore Road site can be used on which to develop a Permaculture Project. Permaculture is probably a relatively new concept to many people and it is difficult to provide a simple definition. It aims to provide communities with the means to achieving a more sustainable future by providing natural solutions when using scarce resources such as energy and water. An excellent way of understanding it better is to see an example and this is exactly what members of the Allotments Committee did last October when they visited Offshoots, which is a Permaculture Project based at Towneley Hall in Burnley. Apart from the terrible weather, the visit proved to be highly informative and very enjoyable. It is open to the public and a visit is highly recommended.

If the Groundwork team decide that the Shore Road site is feasible for such a project, they will apply for grant funding to develop the site, but there will be a need for local volunteers to help with its ongoing maintenance.



Things are obviously at an early stage and even if the project gets the go ahead, there may be a need to put interim arrangements in place. However, if all goes well the Permaculture project combined with the re-provisioning of the allotments will provide a real asset to the community and one which will offer educational resources and activities. There could be an exciting future in store for the old Poor Marsh.

USE IT OR LOSE IT

One of the many things requested when the Parish Plan was undertaken was a regular direct bus service to Ormskirk. This has been operating for over twelve months; however passenger numbers are such that the service is scheduled to be withdrawn unless the situation greatly improves. **USE IT OR LOSE IT IS THE MESSAGE WE ALL NEED TO GET ACROSS TO THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.**



GOODBYE AND WELCOME

The parish council were saddened by the resignation of Councillor Trevor Roberts and thank him for his time and the contribution he made. Mr Ron Tyson was recently co-opted onto the Parish Council and we welcome him and hope he enjoys his time with us.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Councillors would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and good wishes for 2010

PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr. Iain Ashcroft, 1 Chandlers Croft, Hesketh Bank ~ Cllr. Maureen Baldwin, 5 Rankin Avenue, Hesketh Bank
Cllr. Paul Blane, 92 Station Road, Hesketh Bank ~ Cllr. Norma Goodier, 43A Fermor Road, Tarleton
Cllr. Chris Jones, Primrose Farm, Marsh Road, Hesketh Bank ~ Cllr. Steve Kirby, 50 Shore Road, Hesketh Bank
Cllr. Christine McLeod, Primrose Barn, Marsh Road, Hesketh Bank ~ Cllr. Richard Plant, 12 Granville Avenue, Hesketh Bank
Cllr. Paul Sergeant, 108 Moss Lane, Hesketh Bank
Cllr. Hilary Tompkins, 69 Moss Lane, Hesketh Bank
Cllr. Ron Tyson, Landsdowne, Shore Road, Hesketh Bank



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