

Castor & Ailsworth Joint Community Action Plan Two Parishes - One Community

Introduction

December 2017 saw the formal adoption by Peterborough City Council (PCC) of a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for each of Castor & Ailsworth parishes following detailed consultation by the Parish Councils with residents and statutory consultees. The NPs complement and support each other, recognising the parishes' shared heritage and the maxim 'two parishes - one community' which became very apparent during the course of consultations with residents. The two NPs cover matters relating to land use in the parishes. Other matters important to residents also emerged during the course of consultations and this **Joint Community Action Plan (JCAP)** outlines priorities jointly agreed by the Parish Councils, which will be supported and/or taken forward by the Parish Councils on behalf of the community.

The JCAP is a living document and will be updated periodically and as new initiatives arise.

1. A vital place to Live

Item ref.	Activity/Project	Current Position
JCAP 1.1	Ensure planning proposals meet NP provisions and represent any concerns to PCC Planning Officers. (Supports all NP policies, in particular CH1/CH2 & AH1/AH2.)	Ongoing evaluation of all planning applications by PCs against the relevant NP requirements. The PCs challenge Peterborough City Council (PCC) on planning applications which have not fully considered the Castor and Ailsworth NPs. CPC is a member of the PCC Parish Liaison Working Group and, through meetings with other parish councils, has agreed a Parish Conference dedicated to the issue of planning.
JCAP 1.2	Ensure that planning proposals which exceed anticipated growth levels in the NPs are supported by evidence of clear community support through appropriate pre-application consultation. (Supports NP policies CH2/AH2.)	Ongoing evaluation of planning proposals by PCs against the NP CH2/AH2 requirements.
JCAP 1.3	Woodlands - consult with site owners to ensure acceptable re-development of the existing Woodlands buildings and related land; also, to retain a continued community sports facility with appropriate facilities (see also JCAP 3.2 & 4.3) and the possibility of a permanent site for the pre-school. (Supports NP policy CRV1.)	Planning approved for a care home and assisted living apartments on part of the site; construction of the care home is underway. Contact with Nene Park Trust (NPT) and the developers continues to ensure parish views are taken into account as development proceeds. CPC will continue to support the suggestion of a pedestrian access from the care home to the centre of the village if it can be arranged. See also JCAP 4.3.

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JCAP 1.4	Explore the feasibility of establishing a village housing trust (akin the existing almshouses in Castor).	PCs to consider forming a group to explore developing this initiative, e.g. with the Hastoe Housing Association (www.hastoe.com). This will be linked with consideration of housing site proposals under the Neighbourhood Plans and the PCs will explore the implications with the administrators of the existing almshouses.
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2. An ancient & fragile landscape

Item ref.	Activity/Project	Current Position
JCAP 2.1	Support initiatives for preservation, restoration and interpretation of historical features in and around the parishes.	Funding and restoration of the Robin Hood and Little John standing stones arranged and completed by CPC. CPC also arranged reinstatement of the milestone on Love's Hill following a traffic accident. The PCs have jointly commissioned and installed a replacement village sign.
JCAP 2.2	The St Kyneburgha Building Preservation Trust will continue walks, talks and guides to interpret the building and its situation.	The Church guide currently available is being republished.
JCAP 2.3	Seek opportunities to enhance and protect the natural environment within Castor & Ailsworth parishes. For example through engagement with the Langdyke Countryside Trust and key partner organisations and support them in developing and achieving their John Clare Countryside Vision.	The PCs have agreed to develop Parish nature recovery plans. Members of PCs are currently scoping areas for improvement in the parishes in liaison with Langdyke and others in the village community. Elements of the parish plans will contribute to the John Clare Countryside vision. A phased approach to both development and delivery is anticipated.

3. A thriving community

Item ref.	Activity/Project	Current Position
JCAP 3.1	Support the development of a suitable surgery/other primary health facility within or immediately adjacent to the villages to overcome existing traffic and parking difficulties in Main Street. (Supports NP policies CSE4/ASE3.)	Longer term objective is to encourage existing surgery to relocate to a new site within these parameters.

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JCAP 3.2	Support proposals which will ensure continued development of the school and provision of a permanent location for the pre-school. (Supports NP policy CSE3.)	See item 1.3 re-the pre-school. Donations made by each PC to the Friends of Castor School to support the school shop/bank initiative. CPC has agreed to the school's temporary class base remaining for another three years on the condition that this should be the final time that planning permission is sought for a temporary building and a more permanent building should be erected longer term. The PC has also requested that a new, robust travel plan be completed as part of the planning permission.
JCAP 3.3	Explore how to overcome difficulties with speeding traffic through the villages, notably in the Peterborough and Helpston Roads, such as 20 mph limits, 'gates' at village entrances.	The 20 mph speed limit signage has been largely installed and the PCs will liaise with PCC as necessary to ensure the installations are fully completed. A joint Speedwatch initiative is being developed; volunteer interest had been established and a working group will be formed by the PCs to take things forward.
JCAP 3.4	Support and encourage improvements to maintain and develop the village shop and a positive environment for village business amenities.	A planning application for the shop has been supported and subsequently approved. Both PCs will seek to support the shop where feasible during its refurbishment to help ensure its continued presence within the community.
JCAP 3.5	Support and promote Good Neighbours - Rural Peterborough (which developed from the scheme launched by St Kyneburgha Parochial Church Council with APC & CPC support).	The scheme continues to grow and attract interest from other local parishes and has the support and funding from PCC. Trustees for the scheme have been appointed; charitable status has been granted and a bank account and website established. A scheme co-ordinator has been appointed. The scheme officially launched on 3 November and publicised to residents with a flyer distributed to all households.

4. A space for Peterborough to breathe

Item ref.	Activity/Project	Current Position
JCAP 4.1	Encourage the initiative to improve cycleway facilities to the West of the parishes. (Supports NP policies CRV1 and ARV1.) This leisure route is seen as complementary to any cycleway proposals which may emerge in dualling the A47 to Wansford.	Led by the Cycle West Project who have discussed design proposals with land owners and a redesign of the final section is in hand. Both PCs have provided funding in support of the scheme. The planning application for the proposals was lodged by Cycle West on 28 August 2020.

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JCAP 4.2	Encourage visitor information regarding historical links and ecological interests in the parishes. (Supports NP policies CRV3/ARV3.)	Route guides published by residents' visitor group providing visitor information for 'John Clare's footsteps through Castor Hanglands' and 'Roman Castor - Normangate Field'. Further publications are proposed.
JCAP 4.3	Woodlands - consult with site owners to ensure acceptable re-development of the Woodlands site to retain a continued community sports facility with appropriate facilities. (See also JCAP 1.3) (Supports NP policy CRV1.)	Sports facilities are back in use and continue to develop, with temporary accommodation as changing facilities. NPT proposals for a new pavilion are taking shape. Tennis Club discussions with NPT regarding provision of new tennis courts are at an advanced stage. See also item 1.3.
JCAP 4.4	Monitor existing network of footpaths and bridleways to ensure they are adequately maintained. Continue to seek improvements to promote access and safety. (Supports NP policies CRV2/ARV2.)	The Nene Park Trust 'Walking back in time' project will include a heritage trail and improved riverside walking routes. Arrangements agreed with PCC to replace two stiles with kissing gates to improve access. The two PCs will seek to involve residents in monitoring and enhancing the existing network of footpaths and bridleways within the parishes. Residents and visitors will be invited to join councillors on their parish land walks.
JCAP 4.5	Organise periodic community 'litter pick' exercises to enhance the public areas in the parishes.	Litter picks are regular events supported by both PCs although these have been put on hold due to Covid 19. The loan of equipment to individuals as an alternative has had limited benefit but a number of individuals have helped to clear rubbish from various 'hot spots' during the summer.
JCAP 4.6	Landscape and environmental improvement initiatives as outlined against JCAP 2.3 to achieve the John Clare Countryside Vision and enhance the countryside on the doorstep of Peterborough as a whole.	See JCAP 2.3.

FOOTNOTE: From time to time the PCs are made aware of potential funding opportunities for community projects. For sources of information on such opportunities contact either Ailsworth or Castor Parish Clerk.