

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.)	Public meetings were held in November 2021 and February 2022 for CPC to hear residents' views on developing proposals and CPC maintained regular contact with both Nene Park Trust (NPT) and the developers to ensure that parish views are understood. CPC will continue to support the suggestion of a pedestrian access from the care home to the centre of the village if feasible. Redevelopment of the current building into eldercare flats is expected to entail demolition and rebuild and it is anticipated that a planning application would be made soon. If necessary extraordinary meetings of the two PCs would be held to consider it if necessary.

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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.
JCAP 1.5	The Castor & Ailsworth Climate Action Group has been formed to develop ideas on how people in the parishes might help to mitigate the effects of climate change; how the villages might become carbon neutral and the impact both individuals and families might have.	Representatives of the Climate Action Group have met with PC members informally and also attended formal PC meetings to explain their purpose. Both PCs have provided support. The two PCs have liaised and intend to develop consistent climate change declarations/policies; they will continue to liaise with the Action Group in order to finalize these. Any guidance which becomes available from the PCC will also be incorporated where appropriate.

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 were arranging clearance of shrubbery to make the stones more visible and an appropriate information board. 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 has been 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 continue to develop nature recovery plans in liaison with Langdyke and others in the village community. A phased approach is anticipated. As a first step Castor have installed some bird and bat boxes. Some tree and hedgerow planting is planned for the autumn. A wildlife pond has been created in the Coppice in Castor, some seating and an observation hut installed and an open day for villagers held. Rewilding of a third of the Ailsworth recreation ground includes a story telling circle of tree stumps and wild flower seeds and trees have been planted.

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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.
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 new 20 mph speed monitoring camera has been installed in Castor, with the old one relocated to the 30 mph zone at the top of Love's Hill. The 20 mph zone has also been extended to the top of Love's Hill although roundels have not yet been added to the road surface. A new 20 mph speed monitoring camera has also been installed in Helpston Road. The intention to start Speedwatch activity currently lacked sufficient volunteers to be viable and the position would be reviewed if more individuals came forward following the 2022 fete.
JCAP 3.4	Support and encourage improvements to maintain and develop the village shop and a positive environment for village business amenities.	Both PCs will continue to support the shop where feasible to ensure its continued presence within the community and APC are in the process of declaring it a Community Asset. Time limited temporary change of use of the house next door to the shop has been granted and building work commenced. The PCs will continue to liaise jointly with the shop owner.
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 launched on 3 November 2020 and was publicised to parish residents, with a flyer distributed to all households. It has charitable status, with appointed trustees and employs a scheme co-ordinator and continues to offer support to residents in need. It will also provide Covid recovery support and has also become the Mayor's Charity for 2022.

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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 and both PCs provided funding in support of the scheme. The planning application for the proposals lodged by Cycle West was rejected by the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee on 29 June 2021 and an appeal has since been lodged by Cycle West.
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. Proposals for a new sports pavilion together with a multi-use community building and new tennis, paddle and pickleball courts have been outlined by NPT. 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 pick events will be recommenced following the lull due to the impact of Covid on PCC capacity to collect the waste. It is anticipated that one will take place in September 2022. CPC had taken up the need for litter picking along the Ferrybridge access road with PCC and they had recently successfully prosecuted a fly tipper following use of a covert CCTV camera..
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.