

CRANAGE PARISH COUNCIL

www.cranage-cheshire.org.uk

Spring Newsletter

During 2003 a Vital Villages Project/Parish Plan was undertaken by Cranage Parish Council supported by The Countryside Agency and the then Cheshire Community Council. The outcome of consultation with the people who resided, worked or visited the parish of Cranage was detailed in a brochure published in October of that year. We believed it to be a reflection of the needs and aspirations which the community considered to be most important.

After the publication of the brochure, an action plan was produced as the starting point for anyone in the community who wanted to help or get involved in one or more of the actions suggested. The successful implementation of this plan was very much dependent on the active participation of residents. It highlighted five areas where it was felt residents had shown a preference for action to be taken to address various issues within Cranage parish.

There have been considerable changes since the production of this Parish Plan, not least the changeover from Cheshire County Council and Congleton Borough Council to a newly formed Cheshire East Borough Council. In the last few years, there has been a considerable number of changes in councillors, council officers, and administration in general, too many to list and still on-going, many of these changes of course affected by the present economic climate. Also, the group of residents who formed the steering group has diminished in number, mainly through moving away from the area because of employment changes, family changes or other circumstances.

The five areas in the plan are listed below with sub-sections comprising the more significant requested actions, the actions taken and the actions in progress.

Transport and Highways:

Actions requested

Improve the lack of information about public transport
Examine the extent of reliance on public transport for those without access to a car
Examine the lack of transport which limits access to employment
Improve the limited access to transport for the disabled.
Seek increased lighting and better maintenance on parish footpaths and highways.

Actions taken

The Parish Council has frequent meetings and correspondence with the CEC highways department. The following work has been done since 2003.
Improvements to Northwich Road, Middlewich Road, Hall Farm Drive and Carver Avenue.
Speeding on Northwich Road has been raised with the highways department and attempts have been made to persuade it to change the speed limit.
Replacement of some Cheshire railings.

Actions on-going

Damaged and loose manholes on the A50 and other roads will be repaired.
There is increasing concern over the number and severity of potholes in the roads around the parish. Please pass on information to the Parish Clerk who will liaise with the CEC highways department to initiate repairs.
Further correspondence and meetings with the highways department will take place in response to on-going problems.

Security and Safety

Actions requested

To make every day safe for people in the community
To lower the incidence of crime, as well as the perception and fear of crime

Actions taken

United Utilities has been asked to address stench on A50.
A kissing gate has been installed on the footpath between Glebe Farm and Manor Farm
Byley Lane landlords have agreed to enter permissive path agreements in order to give foot access between Carver Avenue and Byley Lane.
Possible route of a new footpath connecting Needham Drive estate to the Village Hall has been discussed with parish council and village hall committee members.
Speed limits have been requested on both the major roads and the country lanes
Plans have been prepared for a bridge over the River Dane thus by avoiding the A50, to ensure the safety of cyclists

and pedestrians during journeys to and from Holmes Chapel,
Meetings held with CEC regarding the repositioning of school bus stops

Actions on-going

Replacement of manholes and covers. .

Footpaths alongside the A50 to and from Holmes Chapel are being cut back to improve walking safety.

Regular contact is made with the Police through meetings and reports. Police also advise on safety and security measures, which are passed on to residents. The local PCSO has attended a council meeting and has organised a police surgery in Cranage or Holmes Chapel as appropriate.

Future Development

Actions requested

Extent of existing housing compared to future needs

Consider the provision of a shop/post office

Examine the need for the reinstatement of a primary school

Consider a central drop off point for local deliveries

Consider the provision of a “cyber café”

Consider the provision of a park and ride or car sharing scheme.

Actions taken

The Parish Council has obtained planning consent for 10 “affordable” houses on the village owned paddock at the north-west corner of the junction of the A50 and Middlewich road.

Additionally ten “affordable” houses have been built at Bigstone just a few metres north of the same junction.

The Parish Council has discussed the other requested actions informally with residents and has found negligible enthusiasm for further action.

Actions on-going

Since the publication of the Parish Plan, CEC are now keen for Parish Councils to take on other responsibilities under the Transfer of Assets scheme. One project we have been asked to consider is the transfer of the bowling green and clubhouse and progress is being made. The Parish Council has also been asked to consider adopting the small play area and car parking adjacent to the bowling club, discussions are underway with regard to this transfer.

In considering all transfers offered, the Parish Council is looking closely at costs involved in the transfer and any on-going costs that Cranage residents will have to bear in the future. Those costs will be balanced against the loss of benefit to residents if the amenities were to close.

Communication

Actions requested

Provision of a Parish newsletter

Inclusion in Congleton Borough Council’s Links newsletter

Provision of notice boards

Compilation of a Cranage booklet and approach newspapers for a “Cranage” page.

Set up a website and email address book

Actions taken

A parish newsletter is produced regularly and displayed on the notice boards and on the website. Once each year a paper copy is delivered to every house in Cranage.

The number of notice boards has been increased from three to four and a further one is planned.

A website is operational www.cranage-cheshire.org.uk Residents are invited to register to receive news by email alerts.

Actions on-going

A new notice board is planned to be installed close to the Middlewich Road and A50 junction

Improving the Community

Actions requested

Improved communication within the village

Collate information on existing groups
Invite residents to “workshops”
Development of helper groups
Investigate barter schemes
Investigate initiative funding

Actions taken

A website has been introduced and further notice board availability as mentioned above.

Existing groups (art, whist, bridge, preschool etc.) regularly arrange activities at the Village Hall. Also, one off events such as a quiz night, gourmet pie night etc. are arranged throughout the year.

The Parish Council has discussed the other points informally with residents and has found little enthusiasm for further requested action.

Actions on-going

The Parish Council is in the process of acquiring a defibrillator and arranging for training. The machine will be housed at the Hayley Conference Centre, which has a reception open 24/7 and all emergency services will be advised.

The Parish Council has appointed new footpath and tree representatives who report on any changes affecting parish trees, hedgerows or public footpaths, so that these can be dealt appropriately. A working party comprising parish councillors and residents planted hedging at the entrance to Needham Drive using plants provided free of charge by the Hedgerow Society.

Recently a working party of Parish Councillors planted some fruit trees on public land near Carver Avenue, but unfortunately they were stolen within two days.

The Parish Council is committed to retain Cranage as a very nice place to live and ideas are always welcome.

The only meeting point for the community is the Village Hall, a lovely old building and a very popular venue for many activities. However it has to be self-supporting financially and the management committee is always looking for new ideas for events to generate income. There are vacancies on the committee, so if you would like to play a part in preserving the village hall and the community spirit, please contact John Halstead on 01477 534822 for a no-obligation description of what's involved.

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