

## **BLOOMING ELSWICK**

At last after years of simply making up the numbers Elswick has finally received recognition for the village's efforts in the North West Britain in Bloom competition. The village has been judged third in the large village class (population 1000 to 2500) and was only pipped by Wrea Green and Woolton in Liverpool. The latter is in reality a small town with a population of 14,000 but in accordance with the rules of the competition is allowed to enter just part of the town to qualify for the large village class.

The significance of this result is only apparent when it is realised that the competition encompasses not just Lancashire but the whole of the North West including Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire. To be judged third out of the many hundreds of villages in this area is a major achievement.

Much of the credit for the village's success must go to Andrew Atkinson and his partner and sister, who only took on the planting and maintenance contract at the beginning of June when the previous contractor became bankrupt. At a time when most garden centres were selling out of plants Elswick Parish Council was left with no plants and no contractor. In a short period of time Andrew and his team, ably assisted by our lengthsman, Geoff, completely transformed the situation and the village has enjoyed its best floral display ever. Now all we have to do is persuade Andrew to have another go next year, when we hope to win.

**FOOTNOTE:** The village's success this year was achieved despite a number of acts of mindless vandalism, many of which were apparently committed by drunken youths in the early hours of the morning. The Parish Council reported all these crimes to the police and wishes it to be known that the Council will take action in all cases against anyone found to be committing such acts and will pursue such action through both the criminal and civil courts.

## **Best Kept Garden and Hanging Basket Competitions – Results 2006**

### Gardens Front & Side, Visible from The Road

- |                                     |                        |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1st.                                | Mrs Holding            | Forest Farmhouse, High Street.   |
| 2nd.                                | Mr & Mrs J D Sanderson | 6 Roseacre Road.                 |
| 3rd.                                | Mrs Patricia Eastham   | Lonsdale Cottage, Roseacre Road. |
| Highly Commended: Mr & Mrs Marsden, |                        | 20 Leys Close.                   |

### Hanging Basket / Wall Basket & Window boxes visible from the road

- |      |                   |                           |
|------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1st. | Mr Vinny Taylor   | 1 West View, Grange Road. |
| 2nd. | Tiggywinkles      | High Street.              |
| 3rd. | Mr & Mrs A Steele | 38 Leys Close.            |

Thanks to all who made the effort to enter this annual competition and help make the village look so picturesque for 2006.

Also thanks to this year's Judges, Mr & Mrs Ian Steele. Winners of the Best Hanging Basket 2004 & 2005.

### **Winter Sports Facilities**

Now that the tennis season is over, the Multi Sports Area is available for football and netball only. Prices for hire are as follows:

#### Multi sports area (Hired by the Hour)

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Adults             | £8  |
| Juniors            | £4  |
| Floodlight Adults  | £10 |
| Floodlight Juniors | £6  |

#### Football Pitch

|                           |      |           |
|---------------------------|------|-----------|
| Adults (2 Hours)          | £30  | Per Group |
| Juniors (2 Hours)         | £20  | Per Group |
| Full Winter Season Adult  | £200 | Per Team  |
| Full Winter Season Junior | £150 | Per Team  |

#### Number 76 Bus Service

At the end of October, after more than 80 years, Elswick lost its direct bus service to Blackpool when Lancashire County Council decided to terminate the 76 service at Great Eccleston. This was done without adequate prior warning or any consultation.

The County's argument is that passengers from Elswick are still able to get to Blackpool by taking the 76 service to Great Eccleston and transferring to the 42. To facilitate this the County has arranged for the two services to connect at Great Eccleston and for passengers to book through tickets.

The new service has only been operating for a few weeks but already there have been major problems with the two services failing to connect at Great Eccleston, Blackpool Sixth Form students being late for classes and disabled people finding that they are unable to access the buses on the new route due to a lack of disabled facilities.

The Parish Council is trying to get the direct Blackpool service reinstated and has arranged for a representative from the County Council Public Transport Policy Division to attend a meeting in the village next Tuesday evening – 28th November 2006. The meeting will be held in the village Hall and will commence at 19:00. If you are affected by the changes it is vital that you attend as the County Council will only make improvements if they are convinced that real hardship has been created by the changes.

### **Equitable Taxation**

As mentioned in previous Elswickians, Fylde Borough Council is considering the introduction of a scheme whereby sports and recreational facilities such as parks and gardens are removed from the Borough Council's budget and become the responsibility of Parish Councils. This would have a catastrophic effect on Elswick as it would result in Elswick having the highest Council Tax in Fylde Borough due to the extent of leisure facilities and the low population. Together with our Borough

Councillor, Cllr. Paul Hayhurst, the Parish Council is fighting these proposals. More information will be provided in Cllr. Hayhurst's Christmas/New Year newsletter.

## **Elswick Parish Plan**

The Parish Plan has now been printed and distributed to every household in Elswick. If you would like an additional copy to pass to an ex-resident or perhaps a visitor who has taken a shine to the place, there are a few spare copies available at Bonds for the bargain price of £2.50 each.

A warm thank you goes to those supporters who found it possible to attend the Village Hall on the second Sunday in June to collect their copy of the plan, but more importantly to express an opinion on what can be done to continue the improvements that we all wish for.

It is proposed to keep everyone aware of progress against the action plan and any alterations that may arise by means of The Elswickian. In this issue the Parish Council have included the following articles from the Parish Plan Steering Committee about transport, car parking and an event for all those of you who wanted to form sports clubs, neighbourhood watch schemes and other new village organisations.

## **Transport**

From the beginning of April the Government have delivered on a promise in last year's budget to allow the over sixties and disabled persons to travel within the boundaries of Fylde Borough, free of charge after 9.30am on weekdays and all day at weekends and Bank Holidays. Should the journey cross the Fylde boundary, but remain within Lancashire, then for the over sixties, a single flat fare of 50p will be charged; for disabled persons the existing concessions will continue to apply.

It is proposed to install ticket reading machines on buses that will read NoW cards and calculate the fare. It is also expected that concessionary fares for holders of NoW cards will be extended into the neighbouring areas of Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and both West and North Yorkshire.

A Community Car Scheme operates for the benefit of anyone who cannot use public transport. It also operates for those who can use public transport but who perhaps live too far away from a bus stop or a railway station to be able to use it easily.

Local volunteer drivers use their own vehicles to provide a door to door service up to a 20 mile radius from your home. This is an excellent scheme and costs are similar to ordinary bus fares but of course, to holders of the NoW card - ie. the over sixties and disabled persons - it could be free. Amazingly, at the present time, this scheme does not operate in Elswick, possibly because people who could benefit from it have made alternative arrangements, but, if you know of anyone in the Parish to whom this door to door service would be a boon, please phone Roy Gregory on 07803 739743.

Also, if you feel that you would be prepared to be one of a team of volunteer drivers - you would be paid 40p per mile and the insurance aspect is taken care of - please ring the same number. It should be possible, within a short time of the issue of the Elswickian to determine if the scheme can be - or indeed is required to be - extended to Elswick.

Preston Park and Ride. Don't forget that if you need to visit Preston city centre, it is possible to park your car on one of the two parking areas either side of Strand Road on Port Way or Hartington Road, close to Preston Docks, and then ride in an air conditioned, easy access bus that departs from Port Way at up to 6 minute intervals. The service starts from 7.30am continuing until 6.48pm on Mondays to Saturdays and you will be dropped off at either Fishergate, opposite the railway station or Lune Street.

Boarding for the return journey is at the bus stops in Lune Street or on Fishergate Hill just below the railway station commencing at 7.35am and then every six minutes until 6.53pm.

Two words of caution: if your car gets locked on the car parks, which are shown as closing at 7.00pm Monday to Saturday and 5.30pm on Bank Holidays, there is a call out charge of £40.00; secondly, if you use the Hartington Road car park, you will need to cross Strand Road via the pelican crossing.

For more details ring LCC on 01772 533747 or Preston Bus, who operate the system on behalf of LCC on 01772 253671.

Finally, on the subject of affordable transport, a reminder that the WYLDEFYRE scheme exists for people of all ages who have no alternative means of transport. This operates from Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.00pm and can be booked for appointments at clinics or the doctor's as well as for shopping expeditions or for visiting relatives or attending community groups. Telephone 01253 799115 to book.

### **Car Parking**

One action point that came out of the Parish Plan as part of "Vehicle Related Dangers" was the problem of anti social parking on various roads and footpaths throughout the village. The Crime and Safety Action Group, whose action point this is, would like you to help us resolve this problem. The ways in which you could help us to do this are:

If you are a car owner and have a house with a drive or garage, please put the car on the driveway or in the garage thus leaving the road and pavements unobstructed.

If you do not have a drive or garage, we would ask you to park sensibly and considerately by keeping the footpaths clear and away from road junctions. If you do have to park on the road, would it be possible to arrange with neighbours to park on one side only, thus avoiding the chicane effect, which can impede passage along the road?

Where at all possible, we would encourage residents not to park on footpaths. This would greatly improve road safety for pedestrians especially parents with young children when walking around the village or making their way to the park or school. Please bear in mind the emergency services may find access difficult to some streets if residents do not park sensibly.

There are 2 major hazardous areas in the village where we ask you to avoid parking too close to the road junctions. These are:

The crossroads junction at High St, Lodge Lane, Ash Rd and Roseacre Rd. This junction is hazardous at the best of times without unnecessary obstructions to the line of sight.

The junction of Beech Rd, Copp Lane and Bonds Lane. This is a busy junction especially at school times and in the summer. We would ask you to avoid parking around these junctions. In both these areas we would draw residents attention to the fact that there are parking restrictions in force.

We remind residents that these actions are in response to the concerns highlighted by you in the village questionnaire.

As a committee we have no authority to enforce any parking restrictions, however your cooperation in complying with these would greatly assist road safety within the village.

### **New Village Organisations**

A large number of respondents to the Parish Plan survey expressed interest in either organising or taking part in various new groups and clubs. In order to facilitate the formation of these the Parish Council is hosting a kick-off event at the Village Hall upstairs room at 20:00 on Tuesday the 28th of November 2006. The purpose of this event is to get all the people with a common interest together so that they can exchange contact details, begin to form their own committees and agree how to proceed.

The various activities suggested in the survey responses are listed below. This list is not exclusive and if you have an interest that is not already catered for and is not included here please come along and put your suggestions forward.

| Sports               | Social                     | Community              |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Cycle Maintenance    | Art Club                   | Adult Education        |
| Fencing              | Band                       | After School Club      |
| Fishing              | Creative arts for children | Neighbourhood Watch    |
| Five-a-side football | Drama                      | Senior Citizen's Group |
| Judo                 | Gardening Club             | Summer Play Scheme     |
| Junior football team | Girl guides                | Village Gala           |
| Keep Fit             | Music Society              | Youth Club             |
| Netball              | Rambling Club              |                        |
| Pool & snooker       | Whist Drive                |                        |
| Senior football team | Young people's drama       |                        |
| Tennis               |                            |                        |
| Yoga                 |                            |                        |
| Youth Bowls          |                            |                        |

## **Playground Equipment**

Following the removal of several items of playground equipment at the Village Hall site, Fylde Borough Council has advised the Parish Council that it will provide funding for two new items of equipment. If your children use the playground the Parish Council would be interested to hear what type of equipment they would like to see. Details should be forwarded to the Clerk of the Council no later than 7th December 2006.

## **Christmas Tree**

Once again the Parish Council has taken up Fylde borough Council's offer of partial funding for a village Christmas tree, which will be erected, as in previous years, on the High Street near to Stafford Close. Switch on is hoped to be on 1st December.

Parish Council Website

Elswick Parish Council is currently developing a website on which Parish Council news and information will be available. So far we have loaded meeting minutes & agendas. More will be added over the coming weeks.

<http://www.thelocalchannel.co.uk/Tlc/Jsp/Home.jsp?name=Elswick>

## **Parish Council Meeting Dates**

Here are the Parish Council Meeting dates for the next six months. All regular scheduled meetings take place in the Village Hall committee room at 19:45 and members of the public are welcome to attend.

23 November

December – no meeting

25 January

22 February

22 March

26 April

Communications with the Parish Council should be directed via the Clerk, Mr Roger Eckton, on 01772 686462.