

To;

Debbie Storr
Director of Policy and Resources
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From;

Steve Paton - Chair
Oxenholme Village Residents Group
67 Helmside Road
Oxenholme LA9 7HA

21th October 2018

Dear Sirs,

Subject: - Community Governance Review

Please accept this submission from the Oxenholme Village Residents Group (OVRG) for inclusion in the Community Governance Review.

Executive Summary

Having studied the CRG terms of reference, the existing community arrangements, and the size of the electorate in the Oxenholme Ward. It is our wish that Oxenholme has its own Parish Council.

In Summary we feel that the Residents of Oxenholme would be far better served through the establishment of our own Parish Council, through which we will have greater autonomy, direct control and accountability, to help deliver on the prioritised needs of our community.

Whilst it will be our intention to widely canvas residents to gauge strength of opinion, identify suitable candidates, to sit on, and take up roles on the PC, given the published timetable for the CGR we believe it to be crucial to have our views considered at the earliest stage of the review

A key theme in conversations with residents is that “Safety is Key”,

And they want the issues raised to be addressed so they can go about their everyday business feeling safe within the Village environment.

Historical Context

Oxenholme has been represented via the Kendal Town Council organisation, and there is a really strong feeling amongst residents that for many years we have been significantly under represented and under funded.

For years we have tried through engagement with our representatives at District, Town and County Council, to improve matters for residents and to seek appropriate funding to improve the roads, pavements, signage.

All existing arrangements have failed on every level to improve matters for our residents.

Establishment of Residents Group.

Although the Oxenholme Village Residents Group (OVRG) has only been formally operating since August 2018, we already have a structure in place to enable us to take forward the expectations and issues raised throughout our community. There has been an open residents meeting, establishment of a formal committee, with relevant Terms of Reference (ToR), a communications plan, monthly committee meetings, engagement with residents, and Town Councillors.

Formal minutes are available and displayed via a number of media options, such as the new notice board outside the village shop, a dedicated Facebook site. These will shortly be supplemented by a website and Twitter feed.

The Issues identified

Even at this early stage we have identified a range of key issues that should be addressed. These include, the impact of railway commuters parking throughout the village, speeding through the village, poor signage and road markings, damaged and uneven pavements, drainage issues, and poor quality amenities, including two pieces of neglected land.

The OVRG committee consisting of 7 residents, are now taking forward these issues, and we have enrolled in the Community Speed Watch programme, to demonstrate our commitment to educating and deterring speeding motorists through our village. Additionally we have commenced a formal statistics gathering process, to confirm what we firmly believe is the inadequate parking arrangements we have for our residents. This to be followed up by resident interviews to get a more detailed and full picture of the difficulties faced.

Following closure of the Auction Mart in Kendal there is also some evidence of farm vehicles now using Oxenholme to travel to the Mart at Junction 36. In addition to HGVs, Buses, and Rail replacement Buses, most of the Learner Drivers, and numerous travellers cutting through the village via Helmside Road to the Motorways. Only last month warning letters were issued by the Police to several motorists exceeding 40mph (within the 30mph limit).

We have a great community spirit demonstrated by several residents who recently pulled together, to clean off large scale graffiti in our play area, bus stops and BT boxes, all done at no budget / cost, or time, to the authorities. Several residents also undertook to improve an unused, but somewhat derelict piece of land that has been untouched by the authorities for many years.

Boundary

We have a clear concept of the boundary we would desire for our Parish Ward and this would be defined by the following roads and areas:-

The area east of the railway line up to the Station Inn, Park Farm and the following roads within the village - Helmside Road, Bleaswood Road, Scar View, Bolefoot, Helm Court, Hill Place, Helmside Gardens, Fell Foot, the new Oakmere development of Helm View on the A65, High Park and the caravan site.

Community Fund Raising

We have now embarked on a range of fund raising initiatives which includes, cake and bake sales, raffles, book and CD sales, applications for Community linked funds, to be supplemented by a Crowd Funding Appeal, Village Fete and other activities.

Our intention is to deliver 2 Speed Indicator Devices, (SIDs) to help tackle the speeding problem (confirmed through our community speed watch initiative, despite, a one off “Data Collection” gathering exercises undertaken for a very short period in 2017 by the Highways Authority suggesting there was no issue).

In Summary we feel that the Residents of Oxenholme would be far better served through the establishment of our own Parish Council, through which we will have greater autonomy, direct control and accountability, to help deliver on the prioritised needs of our community.

Yours sincerely

Steve Paton
Chair Oxenholme Village Residents Group
On behalf of Residents of Oxenholme