

## The Preston Trust

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Preston

First apologies to all of you who have wondered why you have not seen a membership pack from The Preston Trust (PT) for some time. My work, health issues and the committee taking time to focus on delivering PT events, services and support in line with the PT's objectives have, once again, had to come first.

The following pages give a summary of the PT objectives and activities. Please read on for a reminder of our work and more recent achievements, or an introduction if you have recently moved to Preston.

I would like to invite you to join The Preston Trust (PT) or, if you are already a member, to renew your membership for January 2024 – December 2024. Thank you to the many of you who have already done so. Your membership and support are greatly appreciated.

To renew your membership or become a member, please complete the enclosed form and return to Rae Reynolds -The PT Treasurer c/o St. Martins Place, Church Lane. You can simply enclose payment with your membership form, make a direct payment or set up a Standing Order to the Trust Bank account, details shown on the form. There is no set subscription fee, but we give some guidance on typical donations on the form.

We would appreciate you filling in this year's membership form, so we can check and update the details we have for members. This includes those of you who pay your subscription donation annually by standing order/direct debit throughout the year.

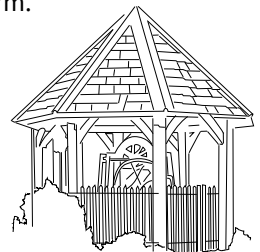
We are looking at online mechanisms for members to securely join, renew and let us know about any changes in membership details, but for now we are still mainly paper based. As long as any member wants there will always be a paper option.

Please, if you are a taxpayer, also complete the Gift Aid Declaration – information, on how and why, is included in the notes on the membership sheet.

Membership of the Preston Trust is open to all those who live or work in Preston, or have sympathies with the aims of the Trust. Only one person needs to join, to cover membership for an entire family/household, but individuals are more than welcome to list their own details, enabling them to have their own communication with the PT committee -Please complete the section on the membership form.

The Preston Trust committee look forward to continuing our work for you in 2024.

Wally Steele (Chairman)



## What we do for you

The objectives of the Trust (as set out in the constitution) are:

- a) To improve, protect and preserve for the benefit of the public the village of Preston.
- b) To stimulate public interest in the area of benefit.
- c) To promote high standards of planning and architecture in the area of benefit.
- d) To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.
- e) To promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of children, senior citizens and others in the area of benefit by the advancement of education, protection of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress.

To support these objectives the activities of The Trust include:

**Planning and Development** – Campaigns against inappropriate development by parties outside of the parish. This includes discovery of residents’ views and third parties’ intent. In addition, the Trust may commission analysis of planning applications and proposals by independent consultants in relevant fields– (a), (c), (d). In a climate skewed in favour of development, the Trust with others have at least been able to mitigate recent developments in the village and prevent scope creep of developers putting in subsequent applications for additional dwellings.

In general, The Trust does not “take sides” in planning disputes between parishioners, although it may give parties a right to reply and commission independent reviews of risks and likely outcomes for sharing with the community.

The Trust may make formal representations in support of, objecting to or asking for modifications to any proposal or planning application where the officers and trustees deem it necessary to support the purpose of The Trust– (a), (c), (d). The Trust is a member of and supports organisations to protect Preston and campaign against inappropriate development including any that increases noise from Luton Airport – (a), (c), (d).

**Litter Picks and Green Clean** – Organised by The Trust (originally intended as a one off as part of the “Clean for the Queen” initiative) this has developed into Spring and Autumn Litter picks with additional litter picking or tidying up events if the state of the parish or an area need it. In collaboration with Preston Parish Council, we organise collection of fallen branches and leaves on the Village Green and surroundings. The leaves and branches are used to build eco habitats by qualified residents. The Trust maintains a relationship with North Herts Council / Urbaser who supply litter picking equipment, pick up and dispose of the collected refuse. – (a), (d). *This year’s Spring Litter pick will be on Saturday 9 March 2024.*

**Preston Website** – This is a resource and portal hosting a lot of documents and images. It has sections for various parish organisations and links to the websites of others. The site provides online copies of the newsletters, a home page noticeboard, details of planning applications, a calendar including church services, parish meetings, events, bin collections and more. – (e)

**Preston News Service PNS** – In the last year we sent out 350+ messages on your behalf (based on a quick search of the “sent folder” – it often feels like a great many more). Some days there were none and others many messages. In addition to these, there were message requests we forwarded to the right people or resolved without needing to send a “PNS”. – (a),(b),(c),(d),(e)

The PNS is used for messages: offering surplus items for sale or free to a new home, promoting village events, asking for help, lost and found, public information from parish organisations as well as from individuals to share warnings about local hazards or issues.

Organises **Community Building** social events (e), such as:

- **The Preston Trust Great Easter Egg Hunt** – This is an event created and run entirely by The Trust with the help of many volunteers from our community. It was another great success enjoyed by participants, their families and the volunteers. There were new Games in 2023, new Chicks in the Meadow and new quizzes. See the May 2023 edition of the Parish Newsletter for our report – available online at [www.prestonvillageherts.com](http://www.prestonvillageherts.com)  
*This year’s Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday 30 March 2024.*
- **Village Day 1 July 2023 and Scarecrow Festival** – Village Day featured the dog show, birds of prey displays and the primary school’s maypole dancing. Also on The Green – food, games and competitions were enjoyed during the afternoon. The scarecrow trail around the village ran from noon Saturday to Sunday evening.
- **The King’s Coronation (7 May 2023) and The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee (2-5 June 2022)** – The Trust shared funding for the events with other organisations in Preston as well as helping with organising, logistics and supplies. We purchased a new marquee (and persuaded the supplier to deliver next day) so that SG4 and others could play in comfort and safety. We provided the projector and screen for the beacon lighting.
- **The Christmas Tree Light Switch On** – The Trust supply and decorate the tree, purchase festive food and drink which the Red Lion kindly prepares. We sponsor the primary school Christmas competition, the winners of which switch on the lights. We organise carols sung round the tree, which in 2023 Rob and Anina Castle led. The Preston Village Voices carried on the carols in the Red Lion after the tree was lit.

Organises **Walks, Talks and Film Shows** to promote interest in the area as well as inform parishioners of issues and - (b), (c), (d). This year we are hoping to have two talks and are planning another walk along the parish boundary to remind us of the curious shape of Preston.

**Offers Material and Pastoral Care** in complete confidence to parishioners, that we can help, who are in difficulty – (e). Provides **Material Support** to other organisations in the parish where members’ skills and our modest budget are appropriate – (a), (d), (e).

For example – back in 2019 we came up with a solution to replace the sign outside the main entrance to the Primary School that should cost a fraction of what had previously been quoted. Fast forward to 2023 (after the pandemic and other issues) and we finally designed suitable signs. With the price of printing having fallen we could replace both main and side entrance signs within our budget.

## **Working together**

The Trust is committed to working in close co-operation with Preston Parish Council and St Martin's Church, though it is mindful of retaining its independence and the need to avoid duplication of effort. In working for the interest of the parish the Trust complements the other organisations. There are sometimes things which the Trust can do which are outside the remit of other organisations.

## **Funding**

The Trust is funded through the subscriptions of its membership, which is open to all those who live or work in the parish, or have sympathies with the aims of the Trust. Donations are very welcome and fund raising events are held if necessary.

## **Joining the committee/register of helpers**

The Preston Trust can only fulfil its commitment to the parishioners and friends of Preston if it has a group of people willing to give a little time and effort, working together for the common good of the parish. New and younger committee members are needed to bring in fresh ideas and more energy. We are hoping that more members of our community would like to join the present committee taking an active role in helping to keep our parish as it is now – attractive and peaceful with a friendly and helpful community. There are typically five or six evening meetings a year, each lasting perhaps a couple of hours. You really can make a difference, whilst having a good time yourself... To steal a motto "Give a Little – Achieve A Lot!"

If you would like to help with or at different events but not be on the committee, you may like to join the Trust's Register of Helpers. This will enable the Trust to contact you and ask for your help. The request will always be a "Please feel free to say no" question. Please indicate on the membership form.

If you have any questions about membership, joining the committee or the register of helpers please call Rae Reynolds, on 07736 34 86 55 or e-mail [admin@prestontrust.org.uk](mailto:admin@prestontrust.org.uk)

Thank you,

Adrian Hardy, Jax Claydon, Liz Hunter, Rae Reynolds, Vicky Pullinger, Wally Steele.  
*The Preston Trust committee*

### **Subscribing to the Preston news Service**

The Preston News Service is free and can be used by anyone in, or connected to, the parish (see previous page). It is run by the Preston Trust who moderate message requests. We may occasionally refuse to send a message, add a disclaimer, ask for or suggest modifications.

To find out more or subscribe please email [pns@theprestontrust.org.uk](mailto:pns@theprestontrust.org.uk) or visit [www.prestonvillageherts.com](http://www.prestonvillageherts.com) and follow the link from the bottom of the home page.