



Lathom South Parish Council

servicing our local community



Newsletter 36

Winter 2025

Welcome to our Winter 2025 newsletter!

What is Lathom South Parish Council? In simple terms, it's a local authority that represents the residents of Lathom South, serving as the closest level of government to the community.

In this newsletter, we answer the question, ***“What is a Parish Councillor?”*** (see pages 2–3). We also highlight local issues affecting our area and take a look back in time with articles on the **‘Skem Jazzer’** (pages 6–7) and the formation of the **Peter Lathom Charity** (pages 10–11).

If you have ideas for future articles, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

We'd also like to thank everyone who completed the survey on the proposed Firswood Road Bridge Project featured in the Spring newsletter. The results showed that 63% of respondents were in favour of the project, 30% raised concerns, and 7% were neutral. The project has now been handed over to LCC Highways for design and implementation.



What is a Parish Councillor?

Parish councillors are local people who volunteer their time to help the community here in South West Lancashire. They listen to residents, discuss local issues, and work together to make improvements whether that's looking after green spaces, supporting local projects, or raising community concerns with West Lancashire Borough Council or Lancashire County Council.

Here is a break down of some of things your Parish Councillors do:

Make Decisions and Set Priorities

- Attend parish council meetings to discuss local issues.
- Vote on how to spend the parish's precept (the small portion of council tax that funds parish activities).

Comment on Planning and Development

- Review and comment on local planning applications.
- Make recommendations to West Lancashire Borough Council on how proposals might affect the community.
- Help shape local development plans and protect the character of the parish.

Work With Other Authorities

- Liaise with **West Lancashire Borough Council** and **Lancashire County Council** about matters such as highways, public transport, and safety.
- Represent the parish at local forums and community partnerships.

Support Community Life

- Encourage volunteering and local initiatives.
- Promote pride, wellbeing, and a strong sense of community across South West Lancashire.

Act with Integrity

- Follow the **Code of Conduct** for councillors.
- Declare any interests openly and make fair, transparent decisions.
- Work as a team with fellow councillors and the parish clerk.

Councillors aren't paid; they simply care about where they live and want to see it thrive. If you ever have an idea, question, or concern about the parish, your councillors are here to help. We're your neighbours, just with a few extra meetings!

To find out more or contact your local councillors, please visit your parish council website or check the parish notice board.

Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

Would you like to get things done and contribute to the well-being of the community in Lathom South?

Lathom South Parish Council is made up local people of varied ages, genders and backgrounds who share a common enthusiasm to improve the Lathom South Parish community.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: To be a Councillor you must be:

- A British, Commonwealth or EU citizen.
- Aged 18 years or over.
- In one of the following categories:
 - a) appear on the Electoral Register for the parish,
 - b) have lived in (or within 3 miles of) the parish for at least a year.
 - c) have had your main place of work within the parish for at least a year.

For more information please contact the Parish Council Clerk

By email:

clerk@lathomsouthparishcouncil.gov.uk

Or phone: 07353074691



Defibrillator

The Parish Council have been working closely with Skelmersdale Cricket Club to purchase a defibrillator for our community.

It is located on the front wall of the clubhouse just off Blaguegate Lane. The procedure to gain access to the defibrillator is to call 999 and give them the cabinet number and they will provide an access code to open the cabinet and hopefully save someone's life.



We hope it never gets used but please bear it in mind should the worst ever happen.





Respect, Protect, Enjoy - The Countryside Code

We are very lucky in Lathom South to have access to rural walks which we hope many of you are able to enjoy.

Whilst out making the most of our beautiful surroundings, please remember the Countryside Code. Issued by Natural England, it is designed to make rural areas safe for visitors to enjoy, without infringing the rights of those for whom the countryside is a place of work.

Respect everyone

- Be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside -

***Leave livestock alone, even if an animal appears to be in distress.
In this case contact the local farmer.***

- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking.
- Be nice, say hello, share the space.
- Follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available -

Keeping to paths is especially important in a field where crops are growing.

Protect the environment

- Take your litter home – leave no trace of your visit -
Litter isn't just dangerous to wildlife, dumping rubbish is a criminal offence.
- Do not light fires and only have BBQs where signs say you can.
- Always keep dogs under control and in sight.
- Dog poo – bag it and bin it – any public waste bin will do.
- Care for nature – do not cause damage or disturbance.

Enjoy the outdoors

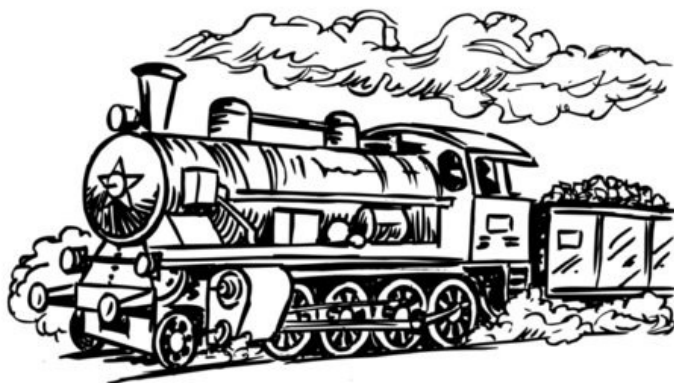
- Check your route and local conditions -
Some areas are restricted during wildlife breeding seasons.
- Plan your adventure – know what to expect and what you can do -
Some areas of land are restricted if work is being carried out.
- Enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory.

The “Skem Jazzer”

Many people who are new (and even not so new) to the area will not have heard of the “Skem Jazzer”.

There used to be a railway line from Ormskirk to Skelmersdale (and on to Rainford) which followed a route from Ormskirk Station, through Westhead and on to Skelmersdale, via this Parish. It was closed in 1956 to passenger traffic and in the early 1960’s it closed completely. The line can be seen across a field next to Wigan Road as the road exits Westhead, past the end of Dicks Lane. It crossed Plough Lane over a bridge which was one of several bridges demolished in later years; this is where it entered the woodland known as “Swells Wood”, a Biological Heritage Site which this Parish Council bought from Lancashire County Council in 2022.

From there it went under the bridge at Firswood Road and on to Skelmersdale Station, which was where the (Asda) BP filling station stands now. So, the abandoned line goes alongside the Lathom Pastures 1 development and through the Lathom Pastures 2 development to “Railway Roundabout”, at the junction of Neverstitch Road and Railway Road (the ring road). Services went



on from Skelmersdale to their final stop at Rainford, where there was a link through to St Helens.

“Skem Jazzer” was a nickname given to the service on account of Skelmersdale’s popular jazz concerts of the time. It is never likely to be revived because the rail link to Ormskirk has been abandoned for ever. More recent plans have focused on a link from Skelmersdale to the Wigan to Kirkby Merseyrail line, where a new station at Headbolt Lane in Kirkby is now open. A bus service (319) which stops on Neverstich Road, opposite to the duck pond on Old Engine Lane, takes passengers to Headbolt Lane.



Abandoned railway line

The abandoned railway line appears in the Borough Council’s Green Infrastructure and Cycling Strategy (2017) as a future ‘linear park’, the Ormskirk end of which from Ormskirk Station has existed for many years. However, the eastern end is only just starting, with the Lathom Pastures 2 development. Should it ever extend as far as to Plough Lane the Parish Council is legally bound to sell back the line (but not most of the woodland) to the County Council and

access to the woodland at that end of Swells Wood is promised as part of the purchase agreement.

Photographs of the ‘Skem Jazzer’ and Skelmersdale Railway Station can be seen on the Skelmersdale Heritage Society website -

www.skelmersdaleheritage.org.uk/photography/skem-jazzer/

Bag it, bin it!



Dog fouling - whether loose or bagged is not only deeply unpleasant but is a health hazard. Fortunately the majority of dog owners in Lathom South 'bag it and bin it' but sadly not everyone!

There are several areas where dog fouling remains a particular issue. We remind dog owners who do not clear up after their pets that they can be issued with a fixed penalty of £75.00 and may be prosecuted.

We ask that used dog bags are either placed in a street bin or taken home — please don't leave them on the pavement or hang them in trees! Not disposing of used bags properly is classed as littering and can therefore incur a fixed penalty of **£100**. Dog waste bags can be placed in **any** street bin.

Why proper disposal is crucial

1. **Disease Prevention** - Harmful parasites and bacteria which are transmissible to humans can be found in dog faeces including E.coli, Campylobacter, Roundworm and Salmonella.
2. **Environmental Contamination** - left waste can contaminate water sources and soil, creating ecological hazards that last for months.
3. **Pest Attraction** - Decomposing waste can attract rats and other pests.
4. **Cross-Contamination** - Traces of waste on the soles of shoes can be taken into homes, vehicles, shops, increasing the risk of spreading harmful bacteria.

We thank all residents who clean up after their pets and help to keep Lathom South a beautiful and safe place to live.

Litter Pick

The Parish Council are organising a litter pick in Lathom on

Sunday 22nd March 2026

This ties in with “The Great British Spring Clean 2026” when people, groups and councils up and down the country will be doing their bit to keep Britain tidy.

Everyone is welcome to come along and help keep our Parish tidy whilst making some new friends along the way. The Parish Council will do their best to supply enough rubbish bags and litter grabbers but if you have your own then feel free to bring them along.

If you'd like to get involved or have any further questions then please e-mail Jane, our Parish Council Clerk, on **clerk@lathomsouthparishcouncil.gov.uk** and we'll make a note of your interest and send out all the details nearer the time.



PETER LATHOM'S CHARITY

Historical research appears to show that Peter Lathom of Bispham was born in 1651, the son of William Lathom of Haigh, and died in October 1701 unmarried and with no apparent heirs. Of the present day Charities for the county of Lancashire, one of the most widely operative, and to have retained its original identity, is that known after its founder as Peter Lathom's Charity.

Growing up during some of the most disturbed periods of English history he saw the confiscation of the Parbold, Wrightington and Allerton estates; he witnessed the extremes of poverty into which this confiscation had thrown the Lathom family and he saw some of them practically worthless both as to goods and lands, constantly harried by religious and civil strife.

Although little is known of the founder's life and much is shrouded in a degree of mystery, Peter Lathom's choice of Executors - 6 described as gentlemen and only two as 'husbandmen' appears testament to the fact that he had made his mark in society and amassed a considerable estate by the time of his death, represented in the main by land, no doubt acquired through shrewd investment of his profits.

The main thrust of Peter Lathom's Will was to direct his Executors to apply the rents and profits from land and premises which he owned at the date of his death situated inter alia in Mawdesley Bispham Lathom Burscough Wrightington and Parbold for the benefit of the poor in specified townships in West Lancashire. The current Scheme of the Charity specifies the areas of benefit as **Ulnes Walton, Eccleston, Newburgh, Lathom, Welch Whittle, Heskin, Wrightington, Dalton, Parbold, Bispham, Mawdesley, Skelmersdale, Bickerstaffe, Ormskirk, Scarisbrick, Rufford, Croston and Burscough.**

Interestingly in a report of the Charity Commissioners of 1828 distributions to the poor, in accordance with the terms of Peter Lathom's will made between 1826 and 1827 were set out in some detail and include the distribution of linen "*amongst such poor persons belonging to the Township as are considered proper objects and who have not received parochial relief within 12 months.*"

The discovery of coal under lands owned by the charity in Skelmersdale, in the late 1820s and into the 30s proved to be a milestone in the history of the charity. Leases were granted to two companies to work the mines namely Crow Orchard Colliery and White Moss Colliery. The mines were successfully worked for many years until they became either unworkable or exhausted in value, toward the end of the 1890s, beginning of the 1900s. Revenue from the extraction of coal and in consequence the income of the Charity increased dramatically.

The work of the Charity continues to the present day; the current trustees endeavour to identify and provide assistance within the terms of the Scheme, to apply the Charity's income in relieving persons resident in their respective districts who are in need, hardship or distress. Yearly distributions also include benefits to schools and to individual pupils meeting the eligibility criteria under the Scheme.

Applications are invited at anytime throughout the year for consideration by the Trustees and should be directed, preferably by email to the Clerk:

Applications/General enquiries to be addressed to the Clerk to the Peter Lathom Charity c/o 71-73 Hoghton Street, Southport PR9 0PR

or via email karen.thompson1624@gmail.com

Article provide by Peter Lathom's Charity

Contact Details

Clerk: Mrs Jane Smith

3 Old School, School Lane, Melling, L31 1FE

Telephone: 07353 074691

Email: clerk@lathomsouthparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.lathomsouthparishcouncil.gov.uk

Your Parish Councillors are:

- Andrew Chanter
- Roger Clayton (Vice Chairman)
- Karen Fairhurst
- Ernie Pallas
- Darren Steele (Chairman)
- Andy Taylor

All contact via the Clerk

Meetings are held at 7:30pm at the Cricket Club, Blaguegate Lane, Lathom, WN8 8TY
Meetings are usually held on the second Wednesday of the month but please check the website.

Please contact the Clerk (details above) to raise any items you wish your Parish Council to discuss.

