

ASTON AND TODWICK WARD

Covering Aston, East Swallownest and Todwick



Councillor
Joshua Bacon



Councillor
Aaron Barker

Report to Full Council

January 2024

Ward priorities

- To support residents and community organisations around the cost of living.
- To support and develop initiatives to improve the local environment.
- To explore opportunities to engage and support local businesses.
- To develop and support initiatives around road safety.

How these Ward Priorities were agreed

- Local people are best placed to tell us about where they live and what matters to them. We have attended various local community groups and activities, which gives us the opportunity to speak directly to people who live and work in Aston and Todwick.
- We have analysed ward statistics and information on the demography and geography of the area.
- We have looked at consultations carried out with partner agencies and voluntary and community organisations, enabling us to gather further information and intelligence to feed into the ward priorities and identify any gaps.
- Most importantly we have listened to residents. Consulting with local people is vital to setting priorities that meet the needs of our ward. We have linked this grassroots information with the existing knowledge made available to us and developed a set of ward priorities that are meaningful to people within our ward.



How these Ward Priorities support the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy

To deliver our priorities it is vital for us to work together within our communities and support a 'place-based' and 'strength based' approach as set out in the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy. We are committed to using this approach to get the best possible outcomes for our communities and getting the most value for money from our ward budgets.

Working in partnership

Our approach has always been to recognise the importance of working in partnership on issues and projects to get the best possible outcome. We have used our ward capital budget to deliver various projects across the ward, particularly on aspects around road safety, but also to develop and support initiatives around crime, community safety, and on environmental issues that will enhance our green spaces within the community. Without working together and pooling resources these projects would not have been possible.

Progress so far

The Aston and Todwick ward capital budget and Community Leadership Fund has supported over 30 projects since the start of our term. We have worked with several community groups and partner agencies, including schools, Taras, Churches, Neighbourhood Watch, Parish Councils, Police, Housing, VRU and Green Spaces to deliver these projects. Here is a brief outline of just some of these and how they contribute towards our ward priorities.

Ward Priority 1: To support residents and community organisations around the cost of living

- **Offering budget advice through HSBC in schools to children and parents** - This is something we hope to achieve early new year.
- **Linking in with food and clothing campaigns such as organisations that reduce waste and school clothing banks** - We have continued to support residents and tenants in the Aston and Todwick area by sharing information on how to access help and support during the cost-of-living crisis through our ward e-bulletin, schools, Aston Medical Centre and our network and partnership groups. We continue to share and signpost the school uniform bank through our partners and e-bulletins and are working with the co-op to help support food poverty through our network and partnership event.
- **'Energy Know How' road shows in the community and in schools** - We are hosting a 'Loving Life Road Show' at Aston Service Centre in Feb 24 half term with various partners to help support this aim. At this event various partners will engage with the community about finance, employment opportunities, training, 'Energy Know-How', health, and Lifestyle Housing.
- **To Develop and support initiatives around crime, community safety, particularly in hotspot areas** - We have worked with Aston Tara, Early Help, Rotherham Utd, the local church, and the Violence Reduction Unit in finding ways to support young people around initiatives that prevent crime and antisocial behaviour and through various activities after school and in school holidays. Currently Dinnington Boxing Club are engaging with children and young people in the Aston area through funding gained by VRU.
- **Support setting up of Neighbourhood Watch schemes with SYP:** We have offered support in setting up new Neighbourhood Watch schemes in hotspot crime areas through our pop-up safety roadshows with SYP. We have encouraged friendship circles and a calling tree at these events to support the elderly and vulnerable, as both Aston and Todwick are populated by a high percentage of elderly tenants and residents.
- **Pop up crime safety events around the ward:** We have continued to deliver pop-up crime safety events working with our partner in SYP, Housing and Rotherfed.

Ward Priority 2: To support and develop initiatives to improve the local environment

- **Improvement of Green Spaces** - We are currently supporting Housing through the Ward Housing Hub and working with Greenspaces and landscape architects to improve the green space at the back of the boiler house on Florence Ave. This project will span over three years and its intention is to improve the area with fruit trees, wildlife, and planting, giving the community a better place to connect with the green space through play, as well as an opportunity to meet outside socially. The first community engagement phase is currently under way, including opportunities to work with young people, children, and the wider community. Aston TARA continues to support the improvements to the area. We will be working with them to deliver planned outdoor activities within the local community. This will be taking place in February 24.
- **Community Clean up days** - We continue to work with Aston TARA and SYP, especially when littering becomes an issue. We are working with Housing, SYP, Early Help outreach and CPU in addressing problematic areas, such as the greenspace on Florence Ave and by the convenience store on Hepworth Drive.
- **Support for Litter picking groups** – We offer continued support when necessary.

Ward Priority 3: To explore opportunities to engage and support local businesses

- **Towns and Villages Project** - This is ongoing, and we are hoping that this project will be starting shortly. We have consulted with the community and local businesses in the area to find out what they would like to improve. This hasn't been without its challenges, but our aim is to complete in the new year. This will include erecting a new digital bus shelter on the Pastures at the same time. Another new digital bus sign will also be placed on Worksop Road at Aston, which will improve access to bus services within the ward.

Ward Priority 4: To develop and support initiatives around road safety

- **Hotspots** - We have used some of our capital budget to install speed activation signs. This will be on Mansfield Road between the A57 and Lodge Lane junction to increase awareness of speed in these areas. The signage will be erected shortly.
- **A57 Todwick Roundabout** - We have been working in partnership with Highways to decide on potential improvements around the A57 Todwick Roundabout, including how to tackle the congestion at this roundabout during peak times. We have requested that these options to be put forward should funding be available.