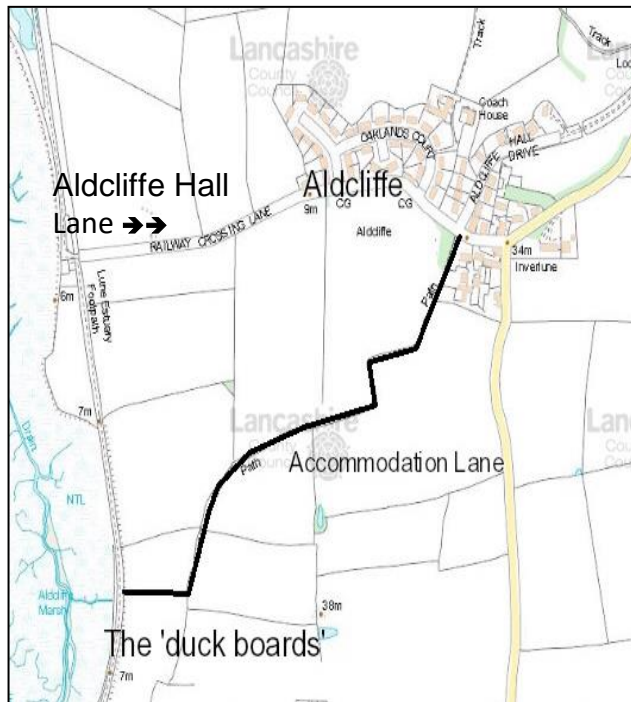


City Council Budget

The Green City councillors produced several budget amendments to the City Council budget. These included a fund to relieve pockets of extreme poverty in the district and to help voluntary groups deal with problems caused by Universal Credit; and help for digital businesses in the City Centre through increased office space and superfast broad-band. The ruling Labour group rejected the poverty fund but a funding bid for improved broadband has been submitted. Previous green proposals for an investment in a small solar farm on council land at Middleton had already been accepted. There is now an additional proposal for one on the old Salt Ayre tip. Green proposals were to be financed by, for example, cutting out consultants' fees and reducing marketing budgets.

Cuts to community grants in Lancashire

Cuts of about £900,000 to voluntary and community groups across Lancashire were included in the County Council budget. County Cllr Gina Dowding argued strongly against the ending of the grants system especially as there was no cut to the elected members' allowances



budget. Gina used her 'Members Grant' this year to fund 14 local projects including the Homeless Action Service, and the Friendship Centre for older people. There will be no funding next year.

Duckboards

repaired: After request for action, the County has repaired the boardwalk slats (duckboards) on the footpath across the fields connecting Aldcliffe to the Lune estuary path.

Electric Cars Charging Points

Charge My Street is a new community benefit society that aims to set up charging points at community venues in the Lancaster District. Money will be raised with a share offer, for which investors may gain interest. See www.chargemystreet.co.uk for details.



County Council to Phase Out Single Use Plastics

Following a resolution by Green Cllr Gina Dowding, the County Council voted to phase out their use of single use plastic items such as drinking straws, cups and crockery. Gina has since been asked to chair a Task Group that will look not just at what the council does in its own buildings and services but also how to influence its supply chain to ensure less plastic is purchased and used where feasible.

New Housing in South Lancaster

The City Council passed the Local Plan at its December meeting with a reduced target figure of 522 new homes per year compared to its previous aim of 675. Councillor Abi Mills says: *"This number is still not deliverable and the Government's own new method for calculating need would bring the figure down to 426 – a much more achievable target. A too-high target means that developers may be able to secure permission for housing schemes in very undesirable locations."* There will be a public examination of the Local Plan in autumn. Local group 'CLOUD' campaigns for more environmentally-sound housing development. Contact Cloudbgv2017@gmail.com

Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety on Ashton Rd

Due to strong lobbying from County Cllr Gina Dowding the County has agreed to draw up a Traffic Regulation Order to consult on introducing double yellow lines to restrict parking on Ashton Road between Haverbreaks and Pathfinder Drive. No date has been given. Restricting the parking will enable a better pedestrian safety and visibility on the road.