

54Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 18th January 2016 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

There were no residents present with issues to raise.

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Barry Vowles (Planning), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Jane Townsend (Footpaths); (Committee Members): Rob King, Jean King, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Myles Hogg, Annette Troake, Fiona Ennys, Helen Mayles, Margaret Smyth, Hilary Morris and Madeline Hughes

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Debs Jerrett, Hilary Gould, Sheila Smith, Paul Janvier and Vicki Spraggon.

2. Declarations of Interest

Chris declared an interest in item 8 as Chair of Friends of Hadlow Road Station.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th November 2015

Sarah agreed to check who the bench was in memory of.

Action: Sarah

The Minutes were proposed by Jean, seconded by Lyn and accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting. Hilary Morris abstained as she was not at the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (15th November 2015)

There was discussion on the following items, other items being completed:

4.1 **Play area** (item 4.1)

Martin was not available to report whether fundraising for the play area had been raised at the School Governors meeting. Action to be carried forward.

Action: Martin

4.2 **Planters** (item 7.2)

Lyn had spoken to the Horticultural Society about whether they were able to maintain planters if we provided them but they felt that they didn't have the capacity for this.

4.3 **Spar Lorry** (item 9.1)

Myles had been in contact with the Spar Distribution Centre about the lorry but had still not received a formal response.

4.4 **Footpath Signs** (item 10.3)

Myles had chased up permissions with Andy Raynor but had not received a response.

4.5 **Noticeboard** (item 7.2)

Myles had been in contact with the Parish Noticeboard Company (PNC) who had quoted for a three door board in oak, which would cost £1350 + VAT. Installation is an additional £275 - £325. Annette had also discussed this with her contact but they would go through Jardines who hadn't expressed interest in providing this. It was agreed to pursue the PNC option and Myles was asked for local ones that we could go to view. It was also noted that:

- we would prefer a surface that can take pins rather than magnets;
- troughs so that internal condensation is drained are required;
- locks with different keys were required.

The heading Willaston Village was proposed and agreed by all present. It was requested that we pay through the Council if possible.

Myles proposed and Rob seconded that the officers should have delegated authority to make the final decision. This was agreed by all present.

4.5 Traveller site on Heath Lane (item 8.2)

Myles reported that the hearing will be on Tuesday 16th February from 10am. He and Barry intend to attend.

4.6 Unparished area consultation (item 9.10)

Myles reported that the consultation will take place this year. The intention is not so much to encourage new parish councils but to see if consultation mechanisms can be improved between the Council and local areas.

5. Play Area Working Group

Sarah reported that issue of glass on the path continues to be investigated with discussions going on between the Council and the contractor. Until this has been resolved no consultation will be made on stage two.

The bench donated by the Festival Society has been removed for renovation and this will shortly be replaced, along with a second bench which has recently been donated by the family of Marjorie Jones.

6. Dog Poo Campaign

Myles reported that he had written to the Head of the School, Mrs Chambers who said that the school will send out leaflets but are unable to actively participate. Annette confirmed that the amount of poo in the recreation ground and footpath to school appears to have increased but that parents taking their dogs to school know their responsibility. Several members said that they knew who the main culprit was but were not prepared to approach him. Myles confirmed that you can give the name and address to the council, anonymously if necessary and they will visit him. Alternatively, the information can be given via the Residents' Society through Chris. The dog fouling hotline is 0300 123 7026 or you can report via the Council's website, using the 'Report it' section.

7. WR&CS Matters

7.1 Christmas Lights

The Society had a contact via the website about Christmas lighting in the village, expressing the view that compared to towns like Heswall or Neston, our lighting is dull. The correspondent recognised that the tree looked good but felt that the rest of the village could have more lights. It was noted that some of the lights on the tree went off for a period but were fixed reasonably quickly and some members felt that having just the tree with lights had impact. Myles commented that bigger towns had their lights paid for either through the Town Council or by CWAC because they are major shopping centres. If we wished to have more lights, we would have to pay for them, including ongoing electricity and maintenance costs. It was agreed to write back to the person involved to thank her for her views but to say that we do not have the resources for any more.

Action: Sarah

Myles thanked the Rotary Club for their support with the Christmas Lights switch on.

7.2 Clean for the Queen

Sarah reported that we have been approached by the Council to take part in the Clean for the Queen campaign which is asking groups to pick up litter over the weekend of 4-6 March. Two litter picking sessions have taken place in the village over the past few months and Myles and Barry agreed to organise another session soon. Margaret agreed to pass the information about Clean for the Queen on to the Guiding organisation but we would not run an event ourselves. Sarah will let the Council know.

Action: Myles, Barry, Margaret and Sarah

7.3 Elizabeth's Cottages

Chris reported that we had also received comments from a resident about the litter and unfinished stone area next to Elizabeth's Cottages. It was felt that the paper/cardboard had been left out for a collection. However, if this is still there, then it was agreed that we would follow it up with the residents in the cottages. The stoned area was felt to belong to the owners of Atworth Cottages. This has always been rough ground and was not part of the Elizabeth's Cottages development. Barry agreed to double check this and once confirmed, Chris agreed to respond to the resident concerned.

Action: Barry/Chris

8. Financial Matters

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 18th January, the current account had a balance of £814.33. The lottery account has a balance of £2016.60 and the play area account has a balance of £1060.08. Hilary reported that the Lottery needs £810 for payments to winners and approximately £100 for sundries, leaving around £1000 available to spend. Hilary proposed and Sue seconded that we should put £500 into the play area account and defer a payment of £500 to Friends of Hadlow Road Station until a decision has been made by the Council about the future of the station. This was agreed by all present.

9. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

9.1 Willaston Planning Applications

Barry reported that a change of use has been agreed for outbuildings in Street Hey Lane into residential use, without any specific conditions to prevent further expansion

Fiona commented on a structure that is appearing on Saddlewood Farm, Lydiate Lane. It was thought that an application was made some time ago. Barry agreed to look into this. **Action Barry**

9.2 Planning Processes

Myles commented that if you are thinking of putting in a householder's application, you can have a free pre-application meeting with a planning officer to discuss it. Barry commented that some officers are better at treating us as a consultee than others – he doesn't always get information sent to him.

9.3 Willaston Meadow

Hilary Morris reported that the planning officers had investigated concerns that the developers at Goss Moor had fenced off part of the Meadow which is Council property. It was thought that this had been done to protect the hedge during the building work and that it would be temporary so no further action is being done. However, if it does appear to become permanent, we will need to chase it up.

9.4 Trees

Helen asked about which trees are protected. All trees in the conservation area have protected status and many others too. CWAC have an interactive map on their website where you can see which trees are protected and if you believe one should be that is not on the map, you can put in an application for protection, as long as it has an amenity value.

10. Local Councillor's Report

10.1 Hooton Car Park

Myles had spoken to Merseyrail about potential plans for expanding the car park into a multi-storey facility and had pointed out that there are residents nearby so it would be better for it to be placed towards the rear of the current car park.

10.2 Petition re New Homes Bonus

Myles said that there is a petition about the New Homes Bonus. Central Government are still giving money to CWAC for every house built in the area but CWAC are proposing to stop giving 20% to local Parish Councils/organisations as part of its budget proposals, which would give us less money in the future. Sarah agreed to forward the link which is at

http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your_council/consultations_and_petitions/council_consultations/new_homes_bonus_consultation.aspx

Action: Sarah

10.3 Funding for Rural Businesses

Local Councils have launched the Cheshire LEADER programme which aims to deliver £3 million of funding to businesses and organisations looking to begin or expand their operations in rural areas. This is funded by the European Union. More information can be seen at www.cheshireleaderfund.co.uk.

10.4 Footpath Warden Scheme

CWAC are setting up a footpath warden scheme where people can receive full training and will get basic hand tools to help with basic maintenance along the paths. For more information, contact Richard.ankers@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk or Jane.

10.5 20mph roll out

The Council has a programme to roll out 20mph speed limits in residential areas with a particular focus around schools. Sites throughout the CWAC area have been identified, including in Neston and Ellesmere Port but not in Willaston.

11. Footpaths and Bridleways

11.1 Footpaths

Jane reported that she has been trimming brambles etc. on FP 31 (between Benty Heath Lane and Hooton Road). She noted that many paths are very muddy or flooded. There was a discussion about funding to improve the surface of FP 32 (behind Pollards Inn). She had received an estimate of £2700 for putting in a raised path with a membrane and sides. This will be in addition to the metal platform which is going to be erected by the pond. The committee suggested that the cost could potentially be reduced through using the Community Payback Team and also that the platform funds could be used to draw in match funding from other sources. Jane agreed to look into these options and Myles agreed to check if he owes money for the bridge and to see if other funds are available.

Action: Jane/Myles

Jane also reported that people have commented that parts of FP29 (between the Recreation Ground and the Mill) and 28 (between the Mill and Street Hey Lane) are also very muddy. However, the Committee felt that we should concentrate on one footpath at a time.

Jane expressed the hope that the open trenches alongside FP30 between Mill Lane and Hooton Road will be filled with soil as work is being done in Mill Lane.

11.2 Bridleways

The Council has been reminded about cutting overhanging branches and filling in hollows on the bridleway between Street Hey Lane and Benty Heath Lane but so far nothing has been done.

11.3 Memorial Hall Walks Sign

Jane is planning to laminate the map and place it over the original one as the cost of encasing a new map in acrylic is expensive.

12. Organisations' Reports

The reports below were circulated in advance.

12.1 Christ Church (Submitted by Jean King)

Christmas is an exciting time for everyone. For Christ Church particularly so. From December 1st, when Mother's Union attended their Advent Service through to Christmas week when our young people performed a Nativity Play, written and produced by themselves. There was the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols and on Christmas Eve, Christingle followed by a Christmas Night service. Christ Church welcomed the Vet's for their Carol Service; Hadlow Road singers for their concert; Willaston School for a Christmas Service and we were visited in Church by the Playgroup. We had a Fish and Chip Supper and danced enthusiastically to music provided by the Lounge Lizards, aka Simon the Barber! Stephen and Joanna held a Christmas Open House which was a wonderful evening. Anyone who could, came! Mulled wine, exciting things to eat and a warm welcome. We sang Carols at our short monthly service with the residents of Weatherstones. We were busy at Gordale with Christian Aid buckets.

The Lent Course will be shared with Willaston Methodists. "Six steps to Loving your Church". Finally, our website was a runner up in the Premier Digital Awards; do have a look at www.christchurchwillaston.com.

12.2 Friends of Hadlow Road Station (Read at the meeting by Hilary Booth)

Santa's Grotto on 13th December was a great success despite the weather. The feedback has been very positive and we managed to make a reasonable profit on the day. This provided some invaluable learning should we be able to run this event in future.

Most of you will now know that the Rangers have had to remove everything from their office and outside storage from 14th December, as they are no longer based at Hadlow Road and the main building is now empty. We have also had to remove all our items of equipment from their outside storage and these are now

kindly stored in one of the Officer's garages on a temporary basis. At this moment in time the future of the Station building is unsure. Chris and Barry have had meetings with the council and are awaiting a decision after the meeting of the Office's Assessment Group. However, this month's meeting (Jan) has been postponed whilst this Group are reformed so when we will hear whether we have any involvement in this ongoing is unclear. Friends of Hadlow Station, on the assumption we will have some responsibility for the upkeep of the building, are considering taking up charitable status as this opens up a raft of additional grant funding opportunities.

12.3 Friends of Willaston Meadow (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

The wet weather has taken its usual toll on the paths, and has also restricted maintenance work. When a team from CWaC came to help, paths were cut through the woodland area allowing greater access to that part of the Meadow. Planned work this winter includes checking the labels on the orchard trees, some of which have become tight, and clearing grass from round the saplings planted last year to reduce competition.

Contact was made with the planning authority about possible encroachment on the land during the development at the rear of Goss Moor, but the inspector who visited decided that no action was necessary.

12.4 Guiding Organisations

No report received

12.5 Hadlow Green Singers (Submitted by Margaret Smyth)

Our Christmas concert held in Christ Church was once again very well attended so our thanks to all those who turned out to enjoy an evening of traditional carols. Judging by the resounding notes echoing around the church everyone seemed to be having a very good sing-a-long. Tea and refreshments over in the Memorial Hall finished off the evening nicely and some lucky people went home with gorgeous looking Christmas Hampers they had won in the ever popular raffle. Some of the choir then attended 9 Lessons and Carols the following Sunday and it was once again very rewarding to see the church pews full of happy faces singing their hearts out.

Having enjoyed a rest over the festive holiday we reconvened on 7th January to start preparation for the Easter Concert to be held in the church once again. Make a note in your diaries for the date - Friday 18th March and hope to see many of you there.

12.6 Horticultural Society (Submitted by Pam Irving)

Tuesday 19 January we have a talk by Mr Gavin Hunter of 'Thornton Manor'.

Tuesday 16 February is our AGM followed by Cheese and Wine.

12.7 Johnston Recreation Ground (Submitted by Sue Unsworth)

The container used by the football club has not yet been removed. This is due to the soft, very wet ground for any large vehicle attempting to remove it. Photos are to be taken of the interior as to the size needed to be placed alongside the Pavilion. The asbestos in the Pavilion has now been removed so it is back in use.

Moles continue to be a problem on pitch number 2.

A water supply for the Allotment was discussed but could be expensive to install. There is some money held by the council for use on the Rec. as a whole.

A "No Parking" sign was requested by the allotment on the entrance gate to the Recreation ground as it is sometimes blocked when deliveries of manure, large equipment, etc. are due to be delivered. The Notice Board is too small to display the bye-laws so a copy is held in the Methodist Chapel.

The next meeting is to be held in the Church on Wed 27th January at 7.30 P.M. All welcome.

12.8 Memorial Hall

No report received

12.9 Scouting Organisations

No report received

12.10 Sporting Organisations

No report received

12.11 Willastonhey W.I. (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

Two events held for the village before Christmas, the Soup Lunch and Carols on the Green, were both very successful, and the carols enjoyed much better weather and therefore higher attendance than the previous year.

Our annual fund-raising bridge drive is scheduled for Wednesday 10 February, and all the tables are now taken. At the January meeting members will find out what interesting and varied speakers have been booked for the year, and plans are in hand for a number of outings.

12.12 Willaston Methodist Church (Report read at the meeting)

The Chapel is hosting next month's Soup Lunch on Saturday 13th February. An ex Willaston young resident is coming to talk at the service on Sunday 24th January about her experiences of voluntary work in Leros with refugees and orphans.

12.13 Willaston CE School PTA

No report received

12.14 Willaston Royal British Legion

No report received

12.15 Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club

No report received.

12.16 Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club (Submitted by Debs Jerrett)

There are no planned events being held before May 2016.

12.17 Willaston Surgery Patient Participation Group (Submitted by Rob King)

As we start a new year, I would like to thank patients for the support shown during 2015 and hope that this will continue during 2016. At the end of December, Dr Diane Taylor retired from the Practice. At the request of the Patient Group, Sue Hancock of Willaston Pharmacy was good enough to host a collection for Dr Taylor and this achieved over £190 together with pages of good wishes from patients. It had been hoped that Dr Taylor would be available for a presentation at either a Friday Market or the January Patient Group meeting but now that she is retired Dr Taylor is spending every Monday to Friday in Worcester where her husband works. The money collected was used to purchase a John Lewis Gift Card and this was delivered on Saturday 9th January. Dr Taylor has asked me to relay the following message to Patients:

"I have been overwhelmed by your kindness. I have had a very happy and fulfilled time working at the Willaston surgery and feel very privileged to have played a small part in your community as a local GP. I would like to thank everyone for all the kind wishes, lovely cards and gifts that I have received and hope that Willaston Surgery will continue to support its local community for a long time to come."

During December I was invited to be involved in the interview process for a new Practice Nurse and am pleased to say that all those of us involved were unanimous in our choice. Bridgewater is currently proceeding with their normal recruitment offer process.

I have referred previously to the appointment of new doctors to work at the Surgery and am now able to give more detail of the intended appointments. In both cases, conditional offers have been made to and accepted by the doctors concerned. Bridgewater is currently waiting for the mandatory checks to be completed and as soon as they are in a position to do so they will proceed to formal appointment. The doctors who we look forward to welcoming to Willaston are:

- **Dr Siva Sarangan** will be familiar to many patients as he worked at Willaston for some time before moving away to another Practice. Dr Sarangan will be better known to many of you as "Dr Siva". His appointment will be a full time post.
- **Dr Sabrina Kazemi** will be joining on a part time basis and will be a familiar face to some patients as she has been working at the Practice in recent weeks as a locum doctor. Dr Kazemi will be contracted to do 3 sessions per week but has indicated that she will be happy to consider additional sessions to cover holidays and other absences which will provide a greater degree of continuity at the Practice.

I am sure that both doctors will be a most welcome addition to the team at Willaston and will be a significant help in providing an even greater level of service than that which we have enjoyed since Bridgewater took over the management of the Practice. It is likely that Dr Kazemi will start before Dr Sarangan as he is required to give 3 months' notice at his current Practice whereas Dr Kazemi has been employed by an agency and we understand there is not such a significant notice period involved.

12.18 Willaston Toddler Group

No report received.

12.19 Willaston Village Festival Society (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

Our AGM took place on 21st November. Unfortunately two committee members resigned, leaving us with just three people. At the moment we are not sure if we will be able to put on another Festival in 2018 unless we recruit more committee members. If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in joining us, we have a range of roles available. You will be expected to work extremely hard throughout the Festival weekend but the reward is seeing the community come together and have fun. For an informal discussion, please ring me on 0151 327 5318.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Street Sweeper

Barry commented that there had been a number of complaints about leaves not being swept during Autumn. A sweeper finally came just before Christmas but by then the leaves had compacted badly.

13.2 Surgery

Rob reported that the phlebotomist will be retiring in March and he will be asking Bridgewater about a replacement. The Practice Nurse is going to be replaced.

13.3 Meadow Lane houses

Sue reported that she had received comments about the gardens of houses backing on to Johnston Recreation Ground being regularly flooded.

13.4 Lighting

Sue also reported that she had received comments about the lights in the village seeming to be dimmer.

13.5 Buses

Jane suggested that we write about the loss of buses to appropriate people. After discussion she proposed and Madeleine seconded that we should write to our new MP who may not be aware of the issue. This was agreed by all present.

Action: Chris

13.6 Mole Traps

Hilary Booth said that two pin traps had been found on the Recreation Ground, lying on the surface. The police had been informed and Myles agreed to contact the Council to find out more information.

Action: Myles

13.7 Martins

Chris reported that the ATM at Martins is now charging for withdrawals. However, you can get money across the counter for free.

The ramps has now been installed at Martins but Chris will get back in contact with the Post Office with a picture and expressing concern that it is a trip hazard and no permission from the Council was applied for.

Action: Chris

13.8 Hilary Gould

Chris reported that Hilary has now resigned as Treasurer to the British Legion. Barry proposed and Hilary Booth seconded that Hilary should be co-opted onto the committee. This was agreed by all present and Chris agreed to write to her, inviting her to take this role.

Action: Chris

13.8 Request for more information

A resident has asked for information to be put through her door. Sue agreed to continue to do this.

Action: Sue

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 21st March 2016

Monday 16th May 2016

Monday 18th July 2016

Monday 19th September 2016

Monday 21st November 2016

AGM:

Friday 30th September 2016