

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 16th January 2017 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

There were no residents present wishing to raise issues.

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Jane Townsend (Footpaths), Ceri Jones (Social Media)

(Committee Members): Rob King, Annette Troake, Paul Janvier, John Fisher, Madeline Hughes, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Helen Mayles, Hilary Morris and Debs Jerrett

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Vicky Spraggon, Fiona Ennys, Sheila Smith, Leanne Kershaw, Stephen Bazely, Myles Hogg, Hilary Gould and Barry Vowles.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st November 2016

The minutes were proposed by Paul Janvier, seconded by Sue Unsworth and accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (19th September 2016)

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

4.1 Sign at Hadlow Road Station (item 4.1)

Sarah still has to get costings for a finger sign.

Action: Sarah

4.2 Traffic survey (item 4.4), **Hooton Road Sign** (item 4.4) and **Leaves on Hooton Road** (item 15.1)

In Myles' absence, these items were carried forward to the next meeting.

Action: Myles

4.3 Elm Green path (item 5.2)

Hilary Booth said that Andy James had reported at the Johnston Recreation Ground Advisory Group (JRGAG) meeting that this was an environmentally friendly wood so killing the nettles is not an option. Jane agreed to follow this up. It was also noted that the hedging in the garden on one side has been removed.

Action: Jane

4.4 Sign on the Play Area (Item 6)

Sue reported that the proposal for a maximum age sign in the play area had been mentioned at the JRGAG meeting but she didn't know if a sign would go up.

4.5 Policy on Responding to Planning Applications (item12)

Chris reported that Barry has done a first draft and will bring a proposed version to the next meeting.

Action: Barry

5. Play Area Working Group

Sarah reported that we have been successful in getting a £7,000 grant from CWaC Rural Support Fund which will pay for the roundabout and part-fund the tractor and trailer. We have also got an additional £1747 from Myles' Councillors' Fund. Both these amounts will be held in by the Council in a separate designated pot. The total now raised is £18,658.05.

Sarah has now approached Veolia and Biffa for the remaining £34,000. We have been invited to do the stage two application by Veolia, which she is currently working on. The deadline is in March and we should hear in June. If this is unsuccessful, she will approach Biffa again.

6. WR&CS Matters

6.1 Facebook

Ceri gave a comprehensive overview of our Facebook activity. 271 people have liked our page and this is growing, with the aim of reaching 300 by February. 29 posts have been made since the last meeting. These have seen 1,170 engagements (where people have commented, shared or liked the post) and thus the reach has been 5,909. The best performing posts have been an update on the play area appeal and a listing of the Rotary Club Christmas events, both of which had over 1000 views.

The Facebook pages are also being used by people to comment on village issues. A post about the new footpath walkway received positive comments but also raised an issue about dogs being unable to walk on the surface. There had also been comments about HGVs going through the village and issues were raised about problems with Christmas events clashing. The need to respond quickly to issues raised through Facebook was recognised and Ceri explained how she and Debs had worked together to agree a response about the Christmas issues. Paul proposed a vote of thanks to Ceri for all the work that she had done on the Facebook site, which was supported by everyone present.

Jane commented that the metal platform was the preferred solution for the Council as a wooden one would rot. It was noted that there was space for dogs to walk alongside the platform and there are alternative routes for dogwalkers. Ceri agreed to feed this back on Facebook. **Action: Ceri**

Ceri also commented that the current logo is a scanned image and is not suitable for use on social media or the website. Lyn agreed to ask her son if he would be prepared to design something for us. If not, Ceri will put out an appeal on Facebook. **Action: Lyn/Ceri**

Chris asked all organisation representatives to take this information back to their groups and encouraged them to feed in any information on events, activities etc. in the village, for inclusion both on Facebook and the Residents' website. It was felt that it would be good to have themes on different groups/activities, to help raise organisations' profiles. **Action: Organisation Representatives/Ceri**

It was noted that the concert society is struggling due to lack of members. Sarah agreed to ask Pam Irving if they would like us to put information on the website/Facebook to see if membership can be increased. **Action: Sarah**

6.2 Co-ordination of Events

It was noted that there had been a clash of 2016 Christmas events. The potential of developing a PDF Diary on Facebook/the website was discussed but no decision was made.

6.3 Correspondence

Chris reported that he had received a complaint about trees on Hooton Road which were blocking lights. He had written to the householders involved, one of whom acted immediately. The other three didn't so he has asked Myles to request a formal letter from the Council.

Chris also reported that he had been chasing the need for a disabled ramp in the Post Office. They now have a portable ramp and there is a bell to ring outside if it is needed, at which staff will put it out for temporary access. It was noted that the old Post Office is still empty. Sarah agreed to speak to the landlord to see if it is going to be rented soon. **Action: Sarah**

6.4 Representatives

Sarah reported that she will be standing down as the Festival Society representative as she is no longer on their committee. She has asked them for another rep. In addition, she has contacted the Guiding groups, the Surgery Patient Participation Group and the Scouts for a new representative but not heard anything yet.

7. Parking Questionnaire

A draft questionnaire about parking on the Green had been circulated and was discussed and amended. Ceri agreed to draw together a list of two-hour slots over seven calendar days for the survey to be undertaken and send out for volunteers to populate. It was agreed that we would do the survey in February/March, avoiding half term week. It was also agreed that a minimum of two people should be in a slot for security. When doing the survey, volunteers need to note the number of unoccupied spaces at that time and how many people drive through without being able to park.

After these results are collated, we could potentially have a second survey to find out what people think about putting in time-limited parking on the Green to seek wider views.

Chris asked organisation representatives to see if any of their members would volunteer to help. We can also see if there are any volunteers on Facebook and contact the volunteer email list.

Action: Organisation representatives/Ceri/Sarah

8. Treasurer's Report

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 27th December, the current account had a balance of £1010.12. £1,056 is for newsletters. The lottery account had a balance of £1780.47, which should result in approximately £1000 profit at the year end. The play area account has a balance of £4990.05.

9. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

In Barry's absence, there were no questions on the December planning report.

10. Organisation Reports

Chris thanked the representatives that had submitted reports (itemised below) and commented that it is their opportunity to let people know what they are doing and these appear on the Residents' website with extracts taken and posted on Facebook/in the summary document.

Chris added to the Friends of Hadlow Station report, saying that a dishwasher had been installed at the station now and that Ceri will be taking on part of the publicity role, following the resignation of Jed Weeden.

10.1 Christ Church (Submitted by Stephen Basely)

After a very successful Christmas Tree festival we had some wonderful services through Advent culminating in some very special services for Christmas with the church packed on a number of occasions. The repair work on the roof is almost complete and the final step is repairing the internal plaster next to the Communion Table in the chancel. The service trial is going very well and the breakfast at 10:10am each week is bringing everyone together which is a great joy. After feedback on the trial the PCC will make a decision on the pattern of services in February.

10.2 Friends of Hadlow Road Station (Submitted by Hilary Booth)

We held a very successful Santa's Grotto on Sunday 11th December. We had sold out of children's tickets two weeks before the event so decided to print a further 20 tickets which again sold out within two days. Councillor Myles opened the event saying he had opened many official council events but it was the first time he had been asked to welcome Santa to a Grotto. Santa arrived at 1pm and walked the length of the platform to his magical grotto talking to many of the wide eyed little children on his way. We had a fine bright day and families enjoyed the Chester Brass Band for the 1st half followed by Simon le Barber for the 2nd half. Children enjoyed the face painting, and it was very nice to see so many lions and tigers around the platform, some hoping that a train might soon arrive. Whilst the children were either waiting to go on the traction steam train ride around the car park, or waiting their turn to climb the steps to the magical grotto to see Santa and his elves, they were chatting away to the snowman who was at the base of the steps. He proved to be very popular. We had a lovely afternoon altogether and Santa has already sent a special request that he would like to come again next year as he enjoyed himself so much.

We have finally obtained keys to the kitchen which is a great help to the catering lead Debbie Weeden as this will make things so much easier to organize further breakfast brunch mornings and other events as they occur. The next Breakfast Brunch will be on Sunday 29th January 10am-2pm.

We have been successful with a Rural Support Grant application and have been awarded £3250 towards a

refurbished K6 telephone box, a PA system and a commercial dishwasher based upon 50% match funding. Meanwhile ground maintenance work and tidy-up days are planned to continue throughout the year.

10.3 Friends of Willaston Meadow (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

Following the installation of the new boardwalk over Jackson's Pond, further work has been carried out. The Friends employed a contractor with a mini-digger to dredge part of the pond, and the silt has been banked up around the edges, so that there is now water in the pond. A space has been left so that water can drain from the very boggy corner of the Rec into the pond, although ideally proper drains should be installed. The regrowth round the pond will be monitored this season, and if all is satisfactory a further section of the pond will be cleared next winter.

The Friends of the Meadow also took part in the Christmas Tree Festival, and were particularly pleased that their tree decorated with natural materials was voted favourite by the most people.

10.4 Guiding Organisations

No representative currently

10.5 Hadlow Green Singers

No report received

10.6 Horticultural Society (Submitted by Pam Irving)

On Tuesday 17th January, we are having a talk on Transforming Bluebell Cottage Garden by Sue Beesley. Tuesday 21st February is our AGM followed by cheese and wine.

10.7 Johnston Recreation Ground (Submitted by Sue Unsworth)

The last meeting was held in the Church on 14th December. Thanks were expressed to Ted Dew for putting out chairs and for heating the Church for our meeting. Apologies were received from David Smith and the Rev. Stephen Bazely.

The container has now been removed and the converted store-room is working well. There is only temporary lighting as yet and the ceiling has still to be replaced but this is in hand.

Football - if there is anti-social behaviour by either team, the Referees can issue red cards. Willaston F.C. has a new manager. There was concern that the grass on the pitch had not been mowed by the council regularly enough causing thick cuttings to be a nuisance during play.

Allotments - although allotment number 8 has now been "let", it has not been cultivated. If, after 4 weeks, this is still the case there is a warning sent to the tenants. A skip has been suggested by tenants but refused as there may be a danger of all sorts of household waste being put in by others.

The flooding on the path adjacent to the allotments is still a problem. It was suggested that a ditch could be made to drain away excess water. This is an ongoing request. The hedges alongside have been trimmed back.

Tennis - the hole in the fencing has been patched.

There continues to be a problem with the fence alongside the farmer's field. Dog owners are advised that they must keep their dogs under control or risk them being shot if they worry the sheep. The farmer is to be asked to repair the fencing.

The Dog Warden is to be asked to attend again as dog owners are still not "picking up" A bin was suggested for the far side of the field but it was thought that the refuse collectors would not come to empty it at that distance.

Playground - It was agreed that a donation of £1000 would be donated by the advisory committee (the council) to the Play area.

The next meeting will be held in the Church on Wed 15th March at 7:30 P.M.

10.8 Memorial Hall

No report received

10.9 Scouting Organisations

No representative currently

10.10 Sporting Organisations (submitted by John Fisher)

Willaston Wolves teams are battling on with occasional wins. U11 & U9 teams have the best records. Trying to get U8 & U7 teams going. U13 & U15 (*2) teams play regularly. Moles have caused a problem on the pitches used by the younger teams. Willaston AFC had a poor start to the season but under a new manager the team have moved off the bottom of the league. There has been a consequent improvement behaviour of the players and manager both on and off the pitch. Willaston Vets (over 40) have started playing games on a Saturday and have replaced the Youth team that folded because of a lack of numbers. The Vets have the best record of all the teams.

The Pavilion has had a storage area made in it to replace the container which has been removed to be used by CWaC elsewhere, but still the ceiling and flooring needs to be replaced. The issue in common to all the teams is the need to clear the pitches of dog excreta. At the beginning of the season the 3-week cycle of grass cutting caused problems.

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

The WI's contribution to the Christmas Tree Festival was much appreciated, and the handmade decorations greatly admired. Members were pleased to see that it achieved the largest sum in the auction.

A fine evening ensured a good turnout for "Carols on the Green", and the proceeds from donations and refreshment sales were used to pay for the band and make a donation to the Memorial Hall.

A large party of members enjoyed a Christmas dinner at the Nag's Head, and we now look forward to a new year of monthly meetings and our annual dinner in February.

10.12 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

Our special Christmas services were happy and well attended. We continue to share some services with Neston, Little Neston and Heswall Methodist Churches as well Christ Church, which enhances all our worship. Moving into Lent next month, our Easter services will be advertised on our website and on the notice board.

Now that the library has vacated our premises we plan to redecorate the schoolroom shortly, to refresh it for future use.

Willaston Methodist Chapel will be hosting the February Soup Lunch at the Memorial hall on the 11th of the month and we look forward to seeing everyone there.

Happy and peaceful New Year to you all.

10.13 Willaston CE School PTA

No representative currently

10.14 Willaston Royal British Legion/Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club

No report received.

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

We don't have any upcoming activities planned but are looking for information about any possible (free) secure storage of a Christmas sleigh.

10.16 Willaston Surgery Patient Participation Group

No representative currently

10.17 Willaston Toddler Group

No report received.

10.18 Willaston Village Festival Society (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

We have been able to fill the post of Secretary and are currently searching for a new Chair. If this position is not filled by 28th February, it was agreed at the AGM that the Festival Society will fold.

The Christmas Tree Festival in November was successful with some beautiful trees and many people coming along. The inclusion of a Christmas Market on the Saturday and music on the Sunday was appreciated and we were very pleased to have so many visitors over the two days.

11. Footpaths and Bridleways

11.1 Footpaths

Jane reported that the Council intend to repair the surface of part of FP 33 (Change Lane) and FP 32 (behind Pollards) but these have not yet been done.

They are also looking at FP37 (between New Hey Lane and the A540), where the footpath goes around the pond. It appears from their digitised mapping and Definitive Map that it should go on the northern side of the pond, not where it currently is. This would mean that the current stile and sleeper bridge could be decommissioned. The Council will be in contact with the landowner on this issue.

11.2 Bridleways

Jane reported that the hollows on BR 66 (end of Street Hey Lane) have not yet been filled in. The Council has confirmed the intention to do this but there is currently a spending freeze so it is unlikely to happen this financial year. Helen Mayles had also requested a sign to say where the road ends and they have added this to their worksheets.

Jane also reported that the number of Footpath Officers in the Council is being reduced from three to two.

Please email willastonfootpaths@outlook.com if you see any other problems with our Willaston footpaths or bridleways and put 'Footpaths & Bridleways' as the subject of the email.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Storage for Sleigh

Debs said that the Rotary Club has been offered a sleigh but needs secure storage and requested members let her know if they are aware of anything that could be available.

12.2 Road Sweeping

Lyn commented that she had rung the Council three times about road sweeping without successful. Sarah said that Barry had asked them formally for their system on road sweeping in villages and suggested that other members do the same.

12.3 Speed Signs

Jane commented on complaints that traffic is being diverted through the village. It was agreed that this should be an agenda item for the next meeting. **Action: Sarah**

12.4 Hadlow Road Station Parking

Chris reported that there are two humps at the entrance to Hadlow Road Station which caused problems for wheelchair users. He has written to the Ranger to ask for them to be removed.

12.5 Historic Police Officer

Sarah reported that we had been contacted via the website by someone who dresses up as a police officer from Victorian, Edwardian or 1946 and can be hired for events.

12.6 Waste Recycling Trip

It was agreed to organise a trip to the waste recycling centre.
The WI are also hoping to have their own trip.

Action: Chris

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 20th March 2017

Monday 15th May 2017

Monday 17th July 2017

Monday 18th Sept 2017

Monday 20th Nov 2017

AGM: Friday 29th September 2017