

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 20th July 2015 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

There were no residents present to raise any issues.

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Jane Townsend (Vice Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Barry Vowles (Planning), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Keith Butcher (Memorial Hall Trustee);
(Committee Members): Hilary Morris, Rob King, Fiona Ennys, Debs Jerrett, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Myles Hogg, Paul Janvier, Vicky Spraggon, Sheila Smith, Martin Collins, Margaret Smyth and Madeline Hughes.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Jean King, Leanne Kershaw, Emma Sharpe, Helen Mayles and Hilary Gould.

2. Declarations of Interest

Chris Hampshire declared an interest in item 7.2 as Chair of Friends of Hadlow Road Station.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th May 2015

The Minutes were proposed by Hilary Morris, seconded by Lynne and accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (16th March 2015)

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

4.1 20mph zone (item 4)

Andy Rayner has agreed to meet Myles, Les and John but a date is yet to be arranged.

Action: Myles

4.2 New Homes Bonus (item 6.1)

The application for Friends of Hadlow Road Station is still to be completed.

Action: Chris

4.3 Litter (item 12.5)

Barry had about six responses to his email to potential volunteers. Some expressed a preference for cleaning their own streets on a regular basis rather than a mass litter collection. Barry agreed to give the email addresses to Myles to organise this.

Action: Barry/Myles

There was then a discussion about the collection lorries. At times, litter comes from them if flaps aren't closed properly. Myles advised that if this is spotted, then Streetscene should be contacted on 0300 123 7 023 and the lorry will return if necessary. Debs commented that there is currently a lot of litter on the Hooton Railway Bridge. The committee noted that the staff on the lorries work very hard.

5. Reports from Working Groups

5.1 Playground Working Group

Sarah reported that the first stage of the play area is finally complete. All the equipment is being used well by the children but the most popular thing is the big sand pit under the cantilever swing. Mainly people have been appreciative but the less positive comments have been on three main themes:

- the path which is made of recycled stones and was difficult for pushchairs as the stones were loose. This will embed over time and the contractors have returned to water and roll the path which appears to have made the path a lot more compact. We will continue to monitor this.

- Some people have expressed disappointment that the larger climbing unit has been replaced by a much smaller one. However, the larger one was deemed dangerous by RoSPA and repairing it would have cost a lot more money.
- Concerns have been raised that one set of the football posts are too near to the cantilever swing. They have been moved slightly further away but consideration is being given to move one post into the corner and remove the other. The committee felt that this was a good idea.

The tunnel area is still roped off to allow grass to grow and has been re-covered with matting, soil and grass seed which should help to keep the shape – on the first day of opening; children clambered onto it and eroded it.

We have arranged with WREN and the Council to have the official opening of the play area on **Thursday 6th August** at 10.30am. Sarah will be liaising with the Council over the invitations but hope that children from Toddlers can come along as they did so much to help raise funds for the area. It was noted and appreciated that the Council had put in approximately 1/3 of the total raised through various sources as well as giving a lot of support with the fundraising.

A new member of staff from the Council will be working with us on stage two. This second stage is largely to provide equipment aimed towards older children (8+) and the current budget is around £35,688 (ex VAT). This includes:

- Additional junior swings (approx. £5,000)
- Concrete table tennis table on flagstones (approx. £1,800)
- Roundabout (approx. £7,000, depending on type decided upon)
- Climbing unit (approx. £17,000, depending on type decided upon)
- Levelling works on the football area (approx. £2,200)

The committee agreed with these proposals except to level the football area which it felt would be undermined by the moles. Sue Unsworth suggested a basketball net might be popular and Myles commented that it would be helpful if notices were put on showing the suggested age range for pieces of equipment.

There was a discussion about how to start fundraising for stage two and several actions were agreed:

- Martin will raise it at the next School Governor's meeting. **Action: Martin**
- Sarah will include an appeal in the next newsletter, asking for £5 a household. **Action: Sarah**
- Myles will investigate what money is available from the Council's allotment pot **Action: Myles**

There was a discussion about knocking on doors and asking for contributions but it is believed that this may not be legal without a licence.

It was suggested that 'no dogs' notices should be put up by the gates and the latch on the gate by the pavilion should be fixed as some people are bringing dogs into the play area. **Action: Sarah**

5.2 Friends of Hadlow Road Station (FHRS) Working Group

Chris reported that the initial grant funding of £360 was approved and has been used to install three hanging baskets, plant a stone trough and install an automated watering system. Another grant application for £1,000 has also been successful and will be used to buy tables, chairs, safety barriers and tea/coffee making facilities for occasional use at the station. An average of 20 volunteers continues to help with weeding and tidying up the platforms on a regular basis and Ness Gardens has expressed an interest in advising on horticultural aspects. Lyn suggested that badges for working group members would be helpful.

A provisional date of Sunday 27th September has been set for an official opening of the signal boxes and the concept of using it as a Santa's grotto is being developed. However, this is dependent on securing funding for which a grant application is being finalised.

A strategic plan has been agreed with short, medium and long term objectives. Support has been received for this from CWaC and a contract between CWaC and FHRS is being drawn up. This does not include the group taking on full responsibility for the station. Barry is in discussions with the planning team as there may be issues around it being a listed building so change of use consent for some activities may be required.

Action: Barry

Unfortunately, there was some vandalism to the ticket office recently but the offenders have been caught on CCTV.

Martin commented that Bob Davies who owns a joinery company is interested in helping repair/replace the large sign and Chris confirmed he is already in discussion with Bob on this.

6. WR&CS Business

6.1 Website

Unfortunately the website is still not available for use. Barry agreed to speak to Barbara about her capacity to develop it and suggestions for other designers were made including Cheshire University and West Cheshire College. **Action: Barry**

6.2 Lottery

Hilary Booth passed round copies of the Lottery form. She agreed to email it to members and asked everyone to pass it on to friends and neighbours. **Action: Hilary B/All**

In addition, Barry agreed to email it to everyone on the volunteer list and Phil agreed to raise it at the next school PTA meeting. **Action: Barry/Phil**

6.3 AGM

The AGM is on Friday 25th September from 7.30 – 9pm. The following programme was agreed:

- Chris – overview of 2014-5 (including Friends of Hadlow Road) **Action: Chris**
- Sarah – update on play area **Action: Sarah**
- Barry – update on Footpaths (based on presentation provided by Jane) **Action: Barry/Jane**
- Hilary Booth – financial report **Action: Hilary B**

Debs agreed to buy the cheese and wine. **Action: Debs**

The next newsletter will be distributed to very household in time to advertise the AGM. **Action: Sarah/Sue**

6.4 Soup Lunch

Chris asked the committee if they would be interested in raising funds by putting on a soup lunch. 60% of the money made goes to the Memorial Hall and we retain the other 40%. There were not enough committee members willing to support this as most members support soup lunch through their own organisations.

7. Financial Matters

7.1 Financial Report

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 27th June, the current account had a balance of £357.65, the lottery account a balance of £707.64 and the playground account a balance of £1,717.88. An account has now been opened for Friends of Hadlow Road and £286.69 transferred from this new account as it was the remaining funds from the District Plan grant. It was noted that there is some money in the current account which is earmarked for posts for the Willaston walks. Since 27th June, we have also received £840 from the New Homes Bonus which we applied for to fund newsletters twice a year.

We will be able to transfer some funds to the current account from the Lottery account and it was agreed to have as an agenda item for the next meeting what should be done with this surplus. **Action: Sarah**

7.2 New Homes Bonus

Chris explained that the New Homes Bonus is a sum of money available to parishes from CWAC based on the number of houses built in the area. In 2013-4, £2,117 was available to Willaston and Thornton. We have received £840 to fund newsletters and we will apply for the remaining £1,277 to go towards Friends of Hadlow Road Station, as agreed in January 2015.

Chris then explained that there is a further £4,798 to apply for in 2014-5. Once again Hooton residents do not want to apply for funding. In January, options for this money were listed as follows:

- Have a survey of people parking on the Green
- Publicity campaign about local public transport services
- Hadlow Road Station
- Play area
- Footpaths – improved Damhead Lane entrance

- Footpaths – improvement of connecting pathway between Intake Close and Smithy Lane
- Footpaths – improvement of FP32 (Pollards to Wirral Way)
- Signposting of shops/services from the Wirral Way
- Improved noticeboards
- Upgrading of the website
- Flower displays such as hanging baskets

Committee members were asked to consider these options, discuss with the organisations they represent and come prepared to discuss and agree funding allocation at the next meeting. **Action: All**

8. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

8.1 Local Planning Applications

The applications to build a new house in the garden of Netherfield and to replace the bungalow with a two storey house have been approved.

There is an application from Badger Butts to erect a dwelling which Barry decided not to object to as it is approvable within the planning regulations. However, he has responded to say that the mature tree line should not be damaged.

The application to build on land behind Fairways is still waiting for a Housing Needs Survey.

8.2 Neston Neighbourhood Plan

The plan had been circulated in advance for members to consider. It was felt that there is little impact on Willaston and had identified the desirability of maintaining the Green Belt area between Neston and Willaston.

8.3 Elizabeth's Cottages

The architect has raised an issue about the final buildings as some aspects are not in accordance with the original design. Barry agreed to look into it and if he has concerns to discuss the issues with the Planning Department. **Action: Barry**

It was also noted that the blue plaque only has one screw holding it on the wall.

9. Local Councillor's Report

9.1 Roften

Myles has written to the landowners at Roften as little seemed to be happening. The response was that they now have a committed developer and will be putting in a planning application in September with house building expected to begin in spring 2017.

9.2 Travellers site at Brook Meadow

The last day for the travellers to appeal is 23rd August.

9.3 Bus services

The trial weekly bus service to Chester, subsidised by Myles' budget, has now ceased as it was not economic. The highest usage was four people. Discussions with the owners of the 272 service have resulted in it being more punctual. The X22 licence has now been handed back by Stagecoach and a new provider is being sought.

The blue card to buy bus tickets has now been replaced by the Yellow Stored Value Card. If you have a blue card with money on it, you can return it and get a refund. For more details, ring 01244 973353.

9.4 Lost Dogs

If you find a stray dog, you are legally required to report it to the Council. Stray dogs can be reported by ringing 0300 123 7038 (8am to 7pm Monday to Friday) or 0300 123 7035 (any other time, including bank holidays).

9.5 Post Office move to Martins

Myles asked the committee about their feelings on how this has gone. People expressed concerns that at times there are two queues and only one person serving. However, it is early days and staff are still being

trained. Concern was expressed about accessibility for disabled people and Chris agreed to write to ask how and when this will be done.

Action: Chris

9.6 Police

There is a new PCSO for Willaston who may come to our next meeting. It was noted that there is more police presence on the Green, particularly at night and a fast response when a local theft was reported.

10. Footpaths and Bridleways

10.1 Footpaths

Jane reported that most of our enclosed footpaths and bridleways have been strimmed although not to full width. A second strimming should take place later in the summer. FP 32 (behind Pollards) is passable except for the field in between the Wirral Way and the A540., Jane has asked the Council for the grass to be cut on the footpath across the field.

There are still open trenches alongside the wider part of FP 30 (between Mill Lane and Hooton Road). Apparently the nearby landowners responsible for digging up the trenches are waiting for the water board to inspect the new pipes. This has not happened yet.

Please email willastonfootpaths@outlook.com if you see any other problems with our Willaston footpaths.

10.2 Bridleways

Chris and Jane had a very positive meeting with Mr Pattwell, Technical and Site Manager of Leahurst where the location of the proposed permissive right of way was discussed. Mr Pattwell is going to speak to other Liverpool University staff and hopefully he will come back with good news. Jane has also shown the new Council Ranger the proposed location and discussed what needs to be done on the Wirral Way to enable access. They also discussed possible sources of funding should permission be given.

10.3 Willaston Walks Footpath Signs

Jane has obtained permission from the Council and most landowners to erect the way-mark posts. She and others, particularly Barry and Colin Jerrett, are gradually putting them in place but it is very time consuming and with limited volunteers it is taking longer than expected. The committee congratulated them on their efforts.

Jane added that as it is impossible to put our way-mark posts on pavements she has been in communication with the Council about putting a way-mark sign on a lamppost at the corner of the Green and the B5133. The Council has given permission for the sign to be attached to the lamppost. Chris proposed and Paul seconded that we approach the Council with a budget of up to £100 and ask for them to do this. This was agreed by all present.

Action: Jane

The sign on the Memorial Hall also needs to be colour coded and Jane agreed to look at options for this.

Action: Jane

10.4 Kissing gates

Myles agreed that the money left over from the kissing gates could be used towards improving the surface of FP 32. Additional money is required to pay for a metal 'bridge' by the pond. Jane has discussed this with Myles and Peter Atkinson.

11. Organisations' Reports

The reports below were circulated in advance.

11.1 Christ Church (Submitted by Jean King)

The Village Festival was an unqualified success and Christ Church was pleased that services provided by the Church were well received. The provision of a tented "Retreat", a room with comfortable sofas and chairs, small tables and flowers proved very popular, especially the waitress service linked to the Tea tent next door! The children were pleased with their balloons. The Church hosted some clever and original Flower Festival interpretations of popular T.V. programs. Separately, the Chancel was filled with spectacular classical flower arrangements. Finally on Sunday evening, Christ Church attended the Methodist Chapel for Songs of Praise, giving thanks for the Festival which had so successfully brought the Village together.

Other Events: Joanna and Stephen held an Open (Full) House at the Vicarage in early June. Church Prayer Meetings are held at the Vicarage once a month. Home Group twice a month. The ordination of Mark Turner as Deacon. Many of us were in Chester Cathedral to support him. We wish him well as Curate in Burton and Shotwick.

We miss Jill Dennison. She leaves a big gap in our Church life.

The Church Council has also been working hard in seeking God's vision for the church. As we work out our mission 'Sharing the love and joy of knowing Christ' and what that looks like in practice. Our presence at the Festival was an attempt to put this into action and serving and blessing the wider community is a part of that.

11.2 Friends of Willaston Meadow

No report received

11.3 Guiding Organisations

No report received

11.4 Hadlow Green Singers (Submitted by Margaret Smyth)

The choir have had a busy time since Easter preparing for both an appearance at the Willaston Festival Concert and our own Summer Concert. As both are now complete and, from feedback, both highly successful, it will now be nice to have a restful summer until we reconvene on 3rd September to prepare for our Christmas Concert. Make a note in your busy diary now, Friday 11th December. It will be here before we know it!!

Thank you to everyone who kindly supports our concerts, it couldn't happen without you, and remember if ever you feel like you would like to join us, then do come along on any Thursday evening 7.15pm - 9.15pm where a warm welcome (no auditions) and lots of fun will be assured.

11.5 Horticultural Society (Submitted by Pam Irving)

The Annual Show is on the 1st of August and the Autumn Show on the 15th September. Schedules can be obtained from Pam Irving, 327 6048.

11.6 Johnston Recreation Ground

There were new faces at last week's meeting. We were pleased to welcome Peter Costello as the representative for the Allotments. We have been without one for some time. There is an offer for a representative from The Johnston Recreation Ground Preservation Society. This still needs to be accepted by the Council, who are the trustees. It was suggested that there be a representative from the Tennis Club and the Playground.

Jill and Emma from the Willaston Playgroup attended the meeting to ask if it would be possible to use the pavilion for their preschool playgroup. It was thought to be a little small but that we would look into it further to see if it would be suitable. Numbers at the playgroup were dropping, possibly due to the parents requiring "all day" care. The Memorial Hall cannot accommodate all day use, due to other activities held there.

We then discussed the size of the pavilion, as since planning permission for the Football Club container, has been refused, the club will need more storage. It was suggested that perhaps some fundraising by the club and others to extend the pavilion might be the way forward.

Peter Costello asked if there could be a No Parking sign put on the "gateway" to the Recreation ground as parking there restricts them bringing their equipment on and off the allotment and also if there be repairs done to several broken posts around the edge of the allotments.

We all agreed that Sarah had done, and was doing a fantastic job on the playground and would like also to congratulate her and her team for a really wonderful Festival.

Our thanks also go to Jane and the Rangers/Guides for the new Village Walk posts erected around the village and on the Recreation Ground.

Dog waste continues to be a problem. It has improved slightly but there are still the "regular" culprits. Myles has been in contact with the school. We hope they will start a campaign sometime this autumn to make dog owners more aware of the dangers.

We hope to have a revised and abbreviated BYE-LAWS notice displayed soon on a notice board at the Recreation Ground entrance.

11.7 Memorial Hall

No report received

11.8 Scouting Organisations

No report received

11.9 Sporting Organisations

No report received

11.10 Willastonhey W.I.

No report received

11.11 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

The Chapel would like to send congratulations to the Festival Committee for organising such a successful Village Festival. Our participation in the form of a Chapel Flower Festival, was also very successful, a beautiful, happy, event where we warmly welcomed our community in to see the W.W.1 emotion and hymn based theme for our floral arrangements, and of course, tea, coffee and cakes! The weekend ended with a rousing "Songs of Praise" service which attracted a full Chapel with friends from near and far.

Rev. Marcus Torchon is now on sabbatical until October, so any ministerial needs can be sent to a relevant circuit minister by means of contacting one of our stewards: Carol - 327 3593, Jim - 327 7183, Di - 328 1789, Roger - 336 1515, Geoff - 327 5032.

11.12 Willaston PTA

In 2014/2015 we generated an overall income of £13,460. After deduction of expenditure, we generated a profit of £8,115. This month we raised around a further £800 at our PTA Summer Ball held at Neston Cricket Club. This year, the PTA has made a significant contribution towards refurbishing the school playground and buying a piece of equipment as a lasting legacy for our friend Jill Dennison.

11.13 Willaston Royal British Legion

No report received.

11.14 Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club

No report received.

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

July started the new rotary year and we welcomed in a new president. Our main charitable focus remains local and we will be supporting the regeneration of Hadlow Road Station, Riding for the Disabled and looking into a local dog charity. This year we are also hoping to raise money for an international good cause - literacy in a box.

We have a charity Race night planned for the coming autumn, details still to be finalised.

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

Since last reporting, things have been relatively quiet with a noticeable decline in the number of complaints received via the Patient Group. Indeed the fairly volatile Patient Group meeting on 25th March was instrumental in getting some reversal of systems relating to appointments which resulted in some improvement. The main complaints received by the Patient Group currently relate to a continued difficulty getting through to the Surgery first thing in the morning and delays in getting prescriptions.

There have been further staff resignations and Bridgewater have only recently re-advertised for a GP, this being to fill the outstanding surgeries held by Dr Meyer. It is, of course, now over a year since Dr Meyer retired and we continue to express our disappointment regarding the very slow recruitment process. Bridgewater admits that conditions have been challenging, and for the time being continue, at times to be so. It should be noted, however, that during May and June they only received TWO completed Friends & Family Test questionnaires. Unfortunately Bridgewater seems to take great note of these forms and use them very much as one of the measures of their performance. We need more forms to be completed – they can be used whether your experience at the Surgery has been good, bad or indifferent and if you prefer the forms are available for online completion via the Surgery website. www.willastonsurgery.nhs.uk/

Our next Group meeting is on Tuesday 21st July, 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall. We are very fortunate that we have Alison Lee, Chief Officer of West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group coming to our meeting to talk about important developments in the provision of your healthcare which are under trial. Feedback on the

proposals is important to the Commissioning Group and because of the high turnouts at our meetings, Willaston was viewed as an excellent place to speak about developments and get feedback. At our March meeting, had there not been the high attendance, it is doubted that we would have achieved the results we did. This is a key meeting providing Patients with an opportunity to comment on the direction of the provision of healthcare at a local level. Continued strong support at our meetings sends out an important message to management that there is an ongoing strength of feeling amongst Patients regarding services and the way they are provided at Willaston.

In addition, on another day, there is a further opportunity to attend a presentation regarding DEMENTIA. This is a re-run of the well-attended presentation made last autumn by Linda Agnew, Director of Corporate Development at Bridgewater. Patients who went along to that meeting found Linda's presentation very interesting, eye opening and informative. This will be a lunchtime presentation on Thursday 30th July commencing at 1.15pm in the Memorial Hall. If you attended the meeting last autumn and want a refresher, please come along!

11.17 Willaston Village Festival Society (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

We are all recovering after the Festival. We were extremely pleased with the way it went and had lots of positive feedback – thank you everyone. Of course, the weather really helped! We are still sorting out the financial aspects but believe we have made a healthy profit.

At the moment we are not sure if we will be able to put on another Festival in 2018 as we currently do not have enough committee members. If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in joining us, we have the following roles available: Secretary; Services Manager; Exhibitions Co-ordinator; Community Event Co-ordinator. 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.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Martin's staff

Polly and Ian were touched by the gifts and good wishes they received when leaving the shop.

12.2 Junk mail

Paul suggested that people return junk mail with 'Junk – return to sender' on it. This leads to less mail.

12.3 Fir tree at Delamore's Acre

Myles reported that this may be taken down as it is causing damage to the road. The householder has applied and the tree officer is not objecting. It was also noted that the beech tree on the Green needs trimming.

Action: Myles

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.37pm.

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 21st September 2015

Monday 16th November 2015

Monday 18th January 2016

Monday 21st March 2016

Monday 18th July 2016

Monday 19th September 2016

Monday 21st November 2016

AGMs:

Friday 25th September 2015

Friday 30th September 2016