

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

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

Residents' Issues

There were no residents attending to raise issues with the committee.

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Vicky Spraggon (Vice Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Jane Townsend (Footpaths), Ceri Jones (Social Media Administrator), Barry Vowles (Planning)

(Committee Members): Rob King, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Madeline Hughes, Keith Penny, Annette Troake, Sheila Smith, Paul Janvier, Margaret Smyth, Fiona Ennys, Hilary Morris, Myles Hogg and Stephen Bazely

Chris welcomed Stephen Bazely, who was representing Christ Church and Keith Penny, representing the Legion to their first meetings and members of the committee introduced themselves.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Helen Mayles.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th May 2016

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

4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (16th May 2016)

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

4.1 Parking on Hadlow Road (item under Residents' issues)

Myles reported that he had discussed the problems with the Highways Department but they were reluctant to do anything further.

4.2 Spar Lorry (item 4.1)

Sarah reported that after the meeting, she had been contacted by Carrie Spacey from About My Area, offering to do an article about our concerns. Before going into print, she contacted the Spar PR Dept and this elicited a response to the options in our letter. The distributors said that the only feasible option was to contact the shop in advance so that cones could be put out. However, in discussions with the Spar shop manager, we were told that this had been done in the past and was very unpopular with other traders so they needed something in writing. The Council were not able to put anything in writing as it is illegal to block a parking area with cones. So an impasse has been reached. In discussion, a suggestion of a loading/unloading bay was made and Myles agreed to discuss this further with the Council. **Action: Myles**

4.3 Hadlow Station Garage (item 4.10)

Chris reported that he had spoken to the Ranger who in turn had spoken to the Garage about inappropriate parking. For a time, the situation improved but he noted that the car and van parking has extended again.

4.4 HGVs (item 6.1)

A letter had been written about HGVs but no response received.

4.5 Bridleway at end of Street Hey Lane (item 7.2)

Jane is still investigating costs and has also got an appointment to find out about landowners. She noted that the bridleway is a wildlife area so pH neutral stones are required. It is possible that Wirral Footpaths could support the funding for the labour if an application is made. Once Jane has a quotation for the materials and permission, she will apply for funding from the New Homes Bonus fund.

4.6 Sign at Hadlow Road Station (item 7.2)

Sarah circulated two options for the proposed sign. It was agreed a wooden finger sign saying 'Willaston Village and Shops 500m' was most appropriate. Sarah agreed to check the distance and get quotes.

Action: Sarah

4.7 Benches on the Green (item 12.3)

These have been repaired by the Council following our request, at their expense.

5. Play Area Working Group

Sarah reported that we have had a good response to the appeal in the newsletter with six donations totalling £150. In addition, the Pre-school Playgroup held a sponsored toddle around the play area, raising £95.50. Annette said she had organised a non-uniform day at School and passed over £150 raised. A total of £5026.05 has now been raised and we are expecting £3000 from the New Homes Bonus Fund. This is a good start and we will look at larger funds in the Autumn.

It was noted that there is half a tree on the play area at the moment.

Action: Sarah

6. AGM Plans

There was a discussion about the format for the next AGM, which is on Friday 30th September. It was agreed to have a short business meeting, followed by wine and nibbles. Instead of presentations, there would be tables around the room with different themes so that people could discuss issues in a more relaxed way. This includes organisation tables if required. **Action: Organisation reps to let Sarah know if a table is required**

Sarah will produce an A5 flier for the AGM which will be hand delivered by committee members during the first week of September. Sue will sort the delivery schedule.

Action: Sarah/Sue

7. Plans for Festival 2018

Sarah said that they now have a Festival committee in place but they have less time than in the past. In addition, the committee wish to do something different as the Festival has been the same format over the past three events. She then described the proposed concept of Willaston Windmill Weekend, which will have windmill displays and activities, workshops to build windmills in advance and information about the history of windmills in Willaston. She emphasised that it is very early stages in planning and recognised the need to manage traffic. There was broad consensus for the initial proposals and Chris thanked the Festival Committee for taking this on again.

8. Speed Limit

Myles reported that there has been a consultation on lowering the speed limit to 40mph in Hanns Hall Road, from Hanns Hall to the High Road, the part of Benty Heath Lane which is currently 60mph and Damhead Lane. In addition, there has been a consultation about implementing a one-way system in Quarry Road. The deadline has now passed but he had not heard from the Highways Department.

Barry commented that he would like additional flashing speed limit signs. Myles commented that in the Autumn some more traffic surveys will be done which will give us information on both speeds in the village and the types of vehicles.

Fiona commented that she felt the 30mph limit on Birkenhead Road should end just after Mill Lane, as there have been a number of accidents there. However, Myles said that a 30mph limit cannot extend beyond the last house.

Paul asked about warning signs that the speed limit is lowering and Myles commented that there can be too much clutter on a road.

9. Financial Report

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 27th June, the current account had a balance of £309.25, of which £61.05 remains for footpath signs. The lottery account had a balance of £482.60. £75 for the lottery licence renewal will be incurred and we will have to payout £180 for lottery winners in July and August 2016 from this account. The play area account has a balance of £1694.55.

10. Local Councillor's Report

10.1 Johnston Recreation Ground

Work has begun on the internal storage unit for the pavilion. The AGM will be on Wednesday 14th September. No volunteers have offered to join the consultative committee.

10.2 Hooton Road

Hooton Road will be closed for one night on 18th October to deal with the main potholes.

10.3 Vehicle on Green

There is a vehicle declared SORN parked on the Green which was reported on 13th July. The DVLA has to action this. Myles has asked for a timeframe for its removal.

10.4 Cannell Court

Myles has been in contact with Cannell Court about the banner advertising flats to rent. Several people have left recently because the service charges increased considerably when it was refurbished. The age limit is still 55 years.

10.5 Cheshire Police

There is a new Chief Inspector for Ellesmere Port and Neston. This is Sarah Pengelly who can be contacted on 01606 363014.

10.6 Mobile Library

The library is currently still in the Methodist Church but books have not been replaced for two years. No decision has been made following the consultation on the mobile library service but the proposal is that Willaston is to have the mobile library once every three weeks on a Monday afternoon, stopping at Cannell Court for 20 minutes and then the Memorial Hall for three hours. Myles commented that there is also a Home Library service run by the WVS for people unable to get out.

10.7 Mobile Travel App

CWaC has developed a mobile travel app for information about routes, timetables and travel information in the area. For more information, visit www.itravelmart.co.uk

10.8 CWaC Parking Strategy

Myles attended a meeting to learn about the parking strategy. A company has done a survey and found that in Willaston there are 41 on-street spaces in the village, which were 88% full and 17 off-street spaces, which were 76% full.

10.9 Police and Emergency Vehicles

Myles had received a number of comments about noise from emergency vehicles. He has confirmed that if they go over the speed limit, they have to use lights and sirens.

10.10 Committee Comments

Hilary Morris commented that the flowerbeds in front of the Red Lion have been missed when the other ones on the Green were planted. Myles will follow this up. **Action: Myles**

Jane commented that the footpath from Elm Green to the Recreation Ground has a lot of nettles and asked if they could be cleared and the area planted more attractively. **Action: Myles**

Lyn asked about what is happening at Hooton Chase. Myles said that the residential home had now been closed and it appears that a planning application is coming in but this is not yet publically available.

11. Organisations' Reports

Chris encouraged all organisations to submit reports as this is the opportunity to let people know what each organisation has done or is doing.

11.1 Friends of Hadlow Road Station raffle

FHRS has asked if they can use the WR&CS lottery licence to hold a raffle for their 150 years' celebration event. Vicky proposed, Sheila seconded and it was agreed unanimously to allow this.

11.2 Wirral Barn Owl Trust

WBOT has asked if we can identify the landowner of a field directly opposite the exit of Leahurst Estate behind the White House where they have two boxes. No-one on the committee knew who it was and the only suggestion was to contact the land registry.

Vicky agreed to give an overview of the work of the Barn Owl Trust at the next meeting.

Agenda item

11.3 Hidden Gardens

The committee congratulated Christ Church and the Methodist Church on a successful event.

The following are reports which were submitted in advance:

11.4 Christ Church (Submitted by Stephen Basely)

We have recently finished a course called the Grace Course which has been really well attended by members of both churches looking at the amazing love of God. We also had a great morning celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday with a special celebration service and recently with the Methodist church organised the Hidden Gardens and Allotments which was a great success with beautiful weather.

Sadly, we were unsuccessful in receiving a grant to make repairs to the roof of church, we still have to carry out the repairs but we have to use money ear marked for re-ordering the church as we do not have the funds in our general account.

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

We have made considerable progress over the last two months. The kitchen installation has now been completed by CWAC. (A few minor adjustments still required including opening windows). The fridge freezer and dishwasher have not as yet been installed but this should be done by mid-July. Hopefully the small cafe could be up and running on occasional weekends by August. A draft licensee contract is being negotiated with CWAC.

We supported the "Fun Run" on Sunday 3rd July when light refreshments were made available for around 400 who ran/walked in aid of Hospice of the Good Shepherd. We are now making plans for two oncoming events, namely the 150 year celebrations of the station on October 1st and the Santa Grotto on December 11th. Dates for your diary!

Progress continues on the garden areas with tidy-up mornings still ongoing. The next ones being July 17th and August 7th.

11.6 Friends of Willaston Meadow (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

The Friends held their AGM in May, when the speakers explained their work with rescued hedgehogs. There were many questions for them from the audience. This year a minimum of six orchids have been spotted in the Meadow, both in the area where sods containing plants were introduced, and randomly elsewhere from roots previously dormant in the grass. It is noticeable that where there is a profusion of yellow rattle, which is partially parasitic on grass, the grass is weaker and allowing other plants to compete. A survey is to be undertaken shortly to identify what work is needed to continue to improve the habitat for all species, including human visitors.

11.7 Guiding Organisations

No report received

11.8 Hadlow Green Singers

No report received

11.9 Horticultural Society (submitted by Pam Irving)

On Tuesday 19th July we are having our annual trip this time to Roy Strong's Laskett Garden.

The time for our Annual Show is getting closer. This year it will be held on Saturday 6th August in the British Legion. If you require a schedule, please ring Pam Irving on 327 6048.

The Society meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the Memorial Hall, at 7.30pm; details are shown on the Village Notice board, and if you are interested in joining us, come along or contact the Membership Secretary, Ms Jill Thompson, telephone number 336 5927. Membership is only £6.00 per year and you can get 10% discount at Burleydam Garden Centre on all gardening products on production of your Membership card.

11.10 Johnston Recreation Ground

Nothing to report

11.11 Memorial Hall

No report received

11.12 Scouting Organisations

No report received

11.13 Sporting Organisations

No report received

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

After Willastonhey celebrated its 36th birthday in May with a supper contributed to by members, the next meeting heard about the trials and tribulations of driving instructors. In the coming months we shall learn about the history of Storeton Woods and hear the secrets of a personal shopper. Members who joined a coach party to visit the National Memorial Arboretum were not deterred by rain and wind on the day, but it would have been better if we could have strolled among the trees and memorials in sunshine. In July there will be another mini-triathlon, when members will take part in swimming, walking or cycling, or all three, interspersed with lunch at the Nag's Head.

11.15 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

A big thank-you to everyone who organised and helped in numerous ways with the "Hidden Gardens" on Sunday 3rd July, and particular thanks to the many villagers who supported us on the day.

It was a wonderful village event organised by the combined efforts of the Chapel and Church, and supported by the willing volunteers who opened their beautiful variety of gardens to the public. We were blessed with lovely weather, a happy atmosphere and delicious refreshments. The resulting funds raised, equally split between the Churches, was a welcome bonus.

11.16 Willaston CE School PTA

No report received

11.17 Willaston Royal British Legion/Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club

No report received.

11.18 Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club

No report received

11.19 Willaston Surgery Patient Participation Group

No report received

11.20 Willaston Toddler Group

No report received.

11.21 Willaston Village Festival Society (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

We now have sufficient committee members to continue as an organisation. We are making initial plans for the next Festival in 2018, which we will discuss at the committee meeting. We are also aiming to put on another Christmas Tree Festival at the end of November, working with Christ Church.

12. Footpaths and Bridleways

12.1 Footpaths

Jane reported that, following an unusually wet June, many of our footpaths are muddy and the enclosed sections are getting quite overgrown. She has been told that strimming would start in the middle of June with our footpaths and bridleways getting priority. So far there is no evidence of this taking place.

The work on FP 32 (footpath behind the Pollard Inn), has not yet taken place. Neither has the metal platform been put in place by the pond as the Council found that it needed to be three times as long as the platform that they had produced. It is not clear if the Council will provide the additional funding to extend this platform. Jane asked if Chris had written confirmation of the Council's promise to fund the £1500 to provide a raised section of path and improved drainage on the area that is muddy in wet weather. Chris will forward the email he received to Jane. **Action: Chris**

12.2 Bridleways

Jane is waiting to get an estimate for the cost of materials for filling in the hollows on BR 66 (end of Street Hey Lane), which get flooded and looking at options for the labour.

Jane had reports from a resident that there is no evidence that Wirral Council had done work on the bridleway opposite the mill leading to the Birkenhead Road, despite the fact that we had been told that work had been done. She has asked Wirral Footpaths & Open Spaces Society Northern Officer to follow this up.

12.3 Willaston Walks Footpath Signs

Jane is still waiting to hear from BT to find a suitable place to position a Village Walks way-mark post, as we do not want to dig up cables. The Council has agreed that we can put up a village walks sign on a lamppost at the junction of Old Vicarage Road and Moss Close. The committee agreed to fund this, as long as it is within the remaining funds in our account.

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

13. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

13.1 New applications

Barry will look into applications at Nursery End, Ness Acre Lane and Laburnum House before responding.

13.2 Glenmoriston Farm, Eastham Rake

Myles had been to a meeting with residents on the plans to change agricultural buildings into housing. He said that this appears to fit the planning regulations.

13.3 Vauxhall

Myles reported that CWaC planning committee has agreed to 50 affordable houses on the Vauxhall Sports Club site. He expressed concerns that this is Green Belt and has no facilities and so requires central government approval.

13.4 Ramp outside Martins

It was noted that the application has been withdrawn and the ramp has been removed.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 Facebook

Ceri reported that the new Facebook site went live six weeks ago. To date we have 143 likes and have put on 19 posts. The most popular was about the sponsored toddle. Ceri emphasised that this is a good opportunity to share information about events.

Action: Organisations to provide Ceri with information

14.2 Hadlow Road

Paul said that a neighbour had asked him to express concerns about car parking on Hadlow Road, particularly in front of the bollards which blocks people's sightline. Also the traffic is often speeding. It was noted that if a mirror is put up to help vision, planning permission would be required.

14.3 Surgery

Rob reported that Dr Rowland has handed in her notice and will be leaving in August. Recruitment for a replacement GP is in motion. He also brought to committee members' attention that there is a consultation about prescriptions for minor ailments. Rob is going to resign as Chair of the Patient Participation Group. If a new Chair is not found, the group will continue, run by the practice.

14.4 Co-option

As Rob will no longer be the representative for the Patient Participation Group, Sue proposed and Sheila seconded that he continue on the committee on a co-opted basis. This was agreed by all present.

14.5 Rogue Traders

Annette reported that there had been problems with rogue traders in Broadlake. The police are aware and keeping an eye on the resident involved.

14.6 Hedge Cutting

Fiona reported that the hedge cutting in Mill Lane had been done at the wrong time. She has contacted the Council and will be following this up.

14.7 Parking

Sue wondered if an arrangement could be made with Willaston Services Club about day time parking. It was thought that Lloyds Garage had also approached them. Keith agreed to raise this with the club.

Action: Keith

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 19th September 2016

Monday 21st November 2016

AGM: Friday 30th September 2016

2017:

Monday 16th January

Monday 20th March

Monday 15th May

Monday 17th July

Monday 18th Sept

Monday 20th Nov

AGM: Friday 29th September