

## **Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)**

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016 in the Memorial Hall

### **Residents' Issues**

There were no residents present with issues to raise.

### **Committee Meeting**

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Vicki Spraggon (Vice Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Barry Vowles (Planning), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Jane Townsend (Footpaths)  
(Committee Members): Rob King, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Annette Troake, Fiona Ennys, Helen Mayles, Hilary Morris, Sheila Smith, Debs Jerrett and Madeline Hughes

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Margaret Smyth, Hilary Gould, Jean King and Myles Hogg.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There was one amendment, to item six which should have read: '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.' It was not meant to imply that parents were responsible for the increase in dog poo.

With this amendment, the Minutes were proposed by Lyn, seconded by Madeline and accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting.

#### 4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (15<sup>th</sup> 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. However, Annette said she had spoken to Mrs Chambers who has agreed that a non-uniform day could be held next term for the play area.

##### **4.2 Spar Lorry (item 4.3)**

Myles had still not had a response about the letter.

##### **4.3 Noticeboard (item 4.5)**

Myles has ordered a new board from the Parish Notice Board Company via the Council, using his own budget. This is being constructed at the moment.

##### **4.4 Dog Poo Campaign (item 6)**

Myles had reported that several residents had 'outed' the persistent offender. The dog warden and council staff will attempt to catch him and Council leaflets have been distributed in the village. Members commented that the problem had stopped for a bit but had got bad again.

##### **4.5 Clean for the Queen (item 7.2)**

The Brownies had shown some interest in this but it was not known whether they actually undertook a cleaning session. Myles will organise another cleaning session in the village when he returns from holiday. Lyn commented that she had phoned the Council about the litter on Hooton Road. **Action: Myles**

#### **4.6 Saddlewood Farm (item 9.1)**

Myles and Barry had raised concerns about this building with the Council who had promised to look into the building work and get back to us.

#### **4.7 Ramp at Martins (item 13.7)**

Martins has now put in a planning application for an improved ramp. Chris said that he had discussed issues around compliance with DDA with the council.

#### **4.8 Mole Traps (item 13.6)**

Traps were set by a professional mole catcher. However, it appears that someone dug up two traps and left them on the Recreation Ground. These were reburied by the mole catcher. Members reported that moles are now beginning to return.

### 5. Play Area Working Group

Sarah reported that the play area was recently closed for just over two weeks to enable the path to have a new bitmac surface. This was paid for by CWaC. Comments have been very positive about this.

With the path issue resolved, consultation has started on the second stage of the improvements. The Council are funding the Landscape Architect to work with us on the consultation and development of plans which will be done by the end of March 2016. Questionnaires were distributed via all the organisations working with young people in the village and through the school. They were also available at the Village Butchers, where there was a collection box. 47 completed questionnaires have been received. In addition, we held a consultation session outside school on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March as the children finished. Fortunately, the weather was nice and people were very interested to see pictures of our ideas and input their views.

As a result of this, the proposals and costings are now being considered. The proposals are likely to include:

- A large climbing unit suitable for older children. This will replace the slide and chain structure which are not very popular. The unit is likely to incorporate a new slide and maybe monkey bars.
- A roundabout.
- A structure suitable for imaginative play (eg train, pirate ship).
- Road markings on the tarmac.

They probably will not include additional junior swings, basketball hoop or table tennis table as these do not seem very popular compared to the items above.

The final proposals and costings should be available by the end of the month and then we can start looking at funding. Currently we have raised £4,601.86. The key funders to date have been:

- |                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| - Myles' councillors' budget | £3,036 |
| - Festival Society           | £1,000 |
| - WR&CS                      | £500   |

plus several donations.

The likely amount required is likely to be around £40K so this is a good start to attract larger amounts of funds. Annette said that the toddlers will do something to help raise money.

Sarah confirmed that maintenance of the play area including equipment and insurance will be undertaken by the Council.

### 6. WR&CS Matters

#### **6.1 Newsletter**

Sarah said that she had delayed production of the newsletter until April as she is waiting for the play area plans so that they can be included. There also may be some firmer news about the Friends of Hadlow Road Station by then. It was agreed that the new bus service should be featured.

Chris emphasised that all committee members are expected to help with the delivery of the newsletter when it is completed.

#### **6.2 Committee Members**

Hilary Gould had confirmed that she was willing to remain on the committee but could not do so as a Legion representative. Hilary Booth therefore nominated her as a co-opted member. This was seconded by Sheila

Smith and agreed by all present. It was noted that we need to write to the Legion to ask for a new representative. **Action: Chris/Sarah**

Chris reported that Jean King will not be on the PCC any longer so is not able to continue as their representative. It was agreed to write to the PCC for a new representative. **Action: Chris/Sarah**

## 7. Financial Matters

### **7.1 Financial Report**

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 27<sup>th</sup> February, the current account had a balance of £723.83, of which £352 is allocated for the newsletter. The lottery account has a balance of £1342.60 and the play area account has a balance of £1560.08. £500 from the lottery account is allocated for Friends of Hadlow Road Station assuming a successful resolution with the Council on access.

### **7.2 New Homes Bonus**

Myles had reported that the Council has voted to withdraw the 20% of the New Homes Bonus currently being given to local communities from April 2017. At the last meeting, it was agreed that the funding for the new noticeboard would come from this fund but Myles had enough in his Councillor's budget to cover the cost so he paid for it. The allocation for 2013-14 has been spent and that the allocation for 2014-15 was agreed to be divided between Hadlow Road Station and the play area, as it was not needed for the noticeboard but applications need to be made for this funding. **Action:Chris/Sarah**

The funds for 2015-6 and 2016-17 are believed to be available for allocating. It was agreed to get the figures for the amount available (including a projection for 2016/7) for the next meeting. It was recognised that Hooton may want to spend some of it as the money is available across the ward. **Action Chris/Myles**

It was noted that the school noticeboard on the Rec was unused. Sarah agreed to approach the PTA to see if it could be used for community notices. **Action: Sarah**

## 8. Footpaths and Bridleways

### **8.1 Footpaths**

Jane reported that the narrow section of FP 30 (between Hooton Road and Mill Lane) has been trimmed. The trenches along this footpath were filled in after the water supply was connected. Many of the footpaths are still very muddy or flooded but they are starting to dry out.

Jane is still waiting for a reply from Peter Atkinson about the updated quotation to improve the surface of FP 32 (behind Pollards). The metal platform was paid for through Myles' Councillors' fund and will shortly be put in place.

### **8.2 Bridleways**

Jane reported that she has asked for branches to be cut in the Autumn and for the hollows to be filled in on BR66 (at the end of Street Hey Lane). To date, no action has been taken. Jane has also contacted Wirral Council about local bridleways in their area.

### **8.3 Willaston Walks Footpath Signs**

Jane reported that she is still waiting for the costs of fitting an aluminium sign to the lamppost in the centre of the village. She agreed to send copies of the emails to Chris and he will follow this up. **Action: Jane/Chris** She is still waiting to hear from BT about underground cabling in Old Vicarage Road. Sheila commented that she had seen a lot more people following the footpaths now almost all the posts are up.

### **8.4 Walk Noticeboard on Memorial Hall**

Jane reported that the map has been redesigned and printed. Barry explained some of the issues about fitting it all together and said he was investigating how best to reconstruct it. **Action: Barry**

Any issues around footpaths should be reported to Jane via [willastonfootpaths@outlook.com](mailto:willastonfootpaths@outlook.com).

## 9. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

### **9.1 Traveller Site**

The appeal meeting was held and Barry attended to re-iterate our objections. A decision is yet to be made.

### **9.2 Street Hey**

A new application has been put in for residential outbuildings to use as a gymnasium and studio. Barry is investigating this further.

### **9.3 Hadlow Station Garage**

Sue expressed concerns that there seemed to be more cars at the side of the station since the Ranger has left the office at Hadlow Station. Sue agreed to email the Ranger and ask him to look into it. **Action: Sue**

### **9.4 Willaston Meadow**

Barry reported that an officer had looked at the land behind Goss Moor which had been enclosed by fencing during building works. The officer had concluded that the amount of land was insignificant. Barry asked that the Friends of Willaston Meadow keep an eye on this.

## 10. Councillor's Report

Myles had sent in a report which was circulated.

### **10.1 Road Traffic Order**

Mill Lane will be closed for five days from 13<sup>th</sup> April for micro asphalt surfacing work.

### **10.2 Number 22 Bus Service**

This service is being reinstated by Avon Buses from 24<sup>th</sup> April. It will run hourly through Willaston on the Chester – West Kirby route. This is unsubsidised by the Council.

### **10.3 New Council Website to Report Problem**

You can now report environmental issues such as potholes and graffiti on:

[www.westcheshireyourstreets.co.uk](http://www.westcheshireyourstreets.co.uk).

### **10.4 Playing Pitch provision**

There is currently a consultation around playing pitches, with views sought by 5<sup>th</sup> April on:

[www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/playingpitchstrategy](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/playingpitchstrategy)

### **10.5 Non-parished Area Reviews**

Chester City will be done first, followed by areas such as ourselves, with the aim to complete by the end of 2017.

## 11. Organisations' Reports

The reports below were circulated in advance. The following comments were also made:

- Chris encouraged all organisation representatives to submit a brief report.
- Chris told members about a public consultation being done by the Friends of Hadlow Road Station. He agreed to circulate the link to members and asked organisation representatives to circulate it to members of their groups. Sarah agreed to put a link onto the website.

**Action: Chris, Organisation representatives, Sarah**

- Sarah asked about the original proposals to turn the church into a community space with the proceeds from the sale of the church hall. It was agreed to write to the PCC about this. Hilary M said that she understood that the church is on an 'at risk' list of listed buildings because of the state of the roof. **Action: Chris/Sarah**

- Sheila thanked everyone who had attended their soup lunch.

- Rob informed the meeting that a new cooker had been purchased for the Memorial Hall. The hall also now has its own website, which is linked to the WR&CS website's organisation page.

#### **11.1 Christ Church** (Submitted by Jean King for Stephen Basely)

We were relieved when Stephen was back among us having been ill throughout January. Several things are happening at Church as we try to bring all Church members together more often. There will be a trial period of a new pattern of services sometime after Easter. Our half hour afternoon service at Weatherstones is held monthly on the 3rd Sunday.

New things. An application for a grant has been made to repair the church roof. Formation of the Discipleship Team and a Pastoral Team. Relaunch of the Men' Group. Hope to re-establish the Youth Group. Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be in April. The Basely family are expecting the birth of their second child in the very near future.

A note from Stephen: "I am sorry I am not able to represent Christ Church personally, however this is true of a number of other meetings I would like to attend. This may change in the future, yet we will always seek to be represented so that people know what is happening at church. I am very happy to meet with any of you with questions or you are most welcome to come along to church to see what is happening for yourself. My number is 01513273693 or c.c.willaston@gmail.com.

#### **11.2 Friends of Hadlow Road Station** (Submitted by Hilary Booth)

Discussions are still ongoing with the Council as to the long term future of Hadlow Road Station, as yet there is nothing to report. A questionnaire is being produced for all visitors to the station to complete if they wish to do so, as there is still considerable interest in the station from people who just pass through when either walking or cycling.

Grant applications, to support the serving of light refreshments, have been submitted.

There have been two "tidy up days", sadly the weather was poor on both of these days so not well attended.

Our AGM will be held in the Memorial Hall on 29th April at 7.30 when we would expect to have some information to share about the future of the station.

#### **11.3 Friends of Willaston Meadow** (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

The very wet winter has left the paths round the Meadow muddy, but has filled up Jackson's Pond, where there is now some frogspawn. At a recent working day the Wirral Conservation Volunteers carried out more hedge-laying and hedge maintenance, with the regular helpers removing and burning the trimmings. The Beavers have been making bird and insect boxes which we hope to install in the near future. Our newsletter is in preparation and the Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday 12 May at 2 p.m. in the Methodist Hall. After a short business meeting there will be a talk by Caroline Howe on the work of Wirral Hedgehog Rescue, which she established in 2005. All are welcome at this meeting.

#### **11.4 Guiding Organisations**

No report received

#### **11.5 Hadlow Green Singers**

No report received

#### **11.6 Horticultural Society** (Submitted by Pam Irving)

On Tuesday 19th April we are having Ann Litherland giving us a talk on Port Sunlight River Park. This is a very interesting project run by the Autistic Centre in Bromborough Pool. Well worth finding out more. If you have now paid your subscriptions and sponsorship monies, these can be paid this month. Jill or Liz will be on hand.

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.

#### **11.7 Johnston Recreation Ground (Submitted by Sue Unsworth)**

Bad weather has helped to flood the path end adjacent to the Allotments. It was suggested to Andy James (Council representative) that a quote be obtained for draining excess water into Jacksons pond or the small pond on the allotment. The ditch at the back of Meadow Lane houses does not flow anywhere. The Council are to contact the owner of the field adjacent to the Rec to see if anything can be done via his field. As Willaston is built on clay, soakaways are not efficient.

Most of the moles seem to have gone. The traps are not a danger to users of the field when buried under ground. Some seemed to have been dug up and placed on the surface, causing panic to some residents.

A No Parking sign for the double gates at the entrance of the Rec has been fitted. A copy of the Byelaws has been placed in the Methodist Church. A note to this effect is on the notice board. A new No Horse riding sign at the entrance to the Rec may be obtained.

Dog fouling continues to be a problem. Information can be given to the Animal Health officer, Nicki Rose on 01244 976742.

The date of the A.G.M. is still to be announced, but the date of the next meeting is Wed. 20th April, probably in the Pavilion. All welcome.

The container is still on the Rec. It has been suggested that a stud wall be put across the interior of the pavilion in order for football equipment to be stored in the pavilion once the container has been removed. A quote for this is being obtained.

The suggestion that water be supplied to the allotment was again discussed. It would be metered and the Council would fund this but allotment holders would be expected to contribute - possibly £15 p.a. each. This would be put to a vote. There are still 1 plot and one half plot vacant at present. The allotment holders have been asked if they would like to participate in the Village Garden Trail on the 3rd July this year.

#### **11.8 Memorial Hall**

No report received

#### **11.9 Scouting Organisations (submitted by Dave Kendall)**

The Group is expanding again – 11 new Beavers have joined since the start of the year! We do, however, still have spaces in all our sections so if your child is interested in joining then please see below. We are always keen to hear from adults who may be interested in helping.

Some highlights from our recent busy programmes:

- The Beavers recently made bird boxes and bug hotels which they are now looking to locate and then watch for signs of habitation. They have also been working on their photography activity badge and had a visit to a pantomime.
- The Cub pack have been playing indoor golf (and will be visiting a golf course in May), making kites and will shortly be attending a special screening of the new Jungle Book film – much of the structure of a pack is based around the Jungle Book including the Leader names. They are also taking part in Sports Relief with a 3 mile walk.
- Scouts held their annual Pimp my Pancake night with an interesting variety of pancakes produced – some were even the correct shape! We also set some unusual challenges for the patrols including making a structure from balloons to support one of their team. With the Cheshire Hike at the beginning of April they have also been practising navigation and hiking skills. We are looking to arrange a walking weekend in the Lake District, a day of air rifle shooting and are looking forward to our annual canoe camp at the end of June.
- Explorers took part in a night hike down the Wirral Way to the nearest chip shop, held a couple of fish cooking evenings plus a pancake night. They have also been climbing at Awesome Walls and bowling with the other units in the District.

All the Group sections will be attending a District Activity Day at the end of April at our County Campsite. The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts will take part in a variety of activities including climbing wall, cavebus (a caving system inside a specially adapted bus!), catapults, canoeing, rafting, katakanus, air rifle shooting, cooking on fires, low ropes and many others in what promises to be a busy all finished off with a roaring campfire.

#### **11.10 Sporting Organisations**

No report received

#### **11.11 Willastonhey W.I.** (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

At the January meeting we were updated on the continuing work at schools in Uganda by a group of young people from Heswall. The walking group has had winter walks around Willaston and Parkgate, mainly avoiding the very muddy fields. Our Bridge Drive in February was a success, at which the participants appreciated the exceptional home-made afternoon teas. The quiz team have reached the county final in April, and the darts team are continuing to practise with some friendly matches. An outing is planned to the glass museum in St Helens, and we look forward to meetings exploring "Disney and the Music", and the experiences of a village vet.

#### **11.12 Willaston Methodist Church** (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

Many thanks to all who supported our February Soup Lunch. We had a tremendous turnout, even having to use the committee room! By the time this March report comes out we will have celebrated Easter with special services in the village. We wish everyone God's blessing as we welcome the Spring.

There will be two special services in May: 8th May is our Chapel Anniversary, come and help us to celebrate; 15th May will see both the Methodist and Christ Church joining together for our annual ecumenical Pentecost service on the village Green. Welcome to all.

#### **11.13 Willaston CE School PTA**

No report received

#### **11.14 Willaston Royal British Legion/Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club**

No report received.

#### **11.15 Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club**

We are holding a barn dance on 7<sup>th</sup> May at the Memorial Hall. A fish and chip supper will be included and there will be a paid for bar. Tickets cost £15 and profits go to local charities.

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

Since last reporting, not a lot has happened and in some ways that is the troubling news. The actual appointment of the two new doctors which has been referred to previously has been and still is a somewhat drawn out process. Unfortunately, Dr Siva Sarangan has withdrawn and so the recruitment process starts yet again. As far as Dr Kazemi is concerned, her appointment is subject to the results of the DBS check being satisfactory although we cannot understand why that check was not put in hand as soon as she had been successful at interview. In the meantime, she continues to work at the Practice as a locum. Bridgewater being a large organisation, has its own HR department and it does seem that there is no sense of urgency on their part which is a great shame bearing in mind the general shortage of GP's. We can only leave you to reach your own conclusion as to why Dr Sarangan has withdrawn!

Sue Hamblett the Practice Phlebotomist who many of you will know is leaving at the end of March and when enquiring about progress with recruitment of a replacement the following response was forthcoming:

*"We decided in the interim it would be mutually beneficial to utilise the staff already placed within Willaston to provide a Phlebotomy service, therefore keeping as much continuity for the patients as possible. The staff are Mandy Lee and Bernie Brennan. We are in the process of going through the applicants for the new post and intend to interview shortly."*

We are again frustrated that there has been no sense of urgency in appointing a replacement bearing in mind

the Practice has had generous notice of Sue's retirement. Whilst there will be Phlebotomist cover in place as mentioned above it does seem a very expensive way of providing the service when it would normally be done by someone at Healthcare Assistant level rather than a Practice Nurse / Nurse Practitioner.

The appointment of a Nurse for the Practice appears to be another long drawn out process for which we get no satisfactory reasons other than HR department having to carry out pre-employment checks.

Overall we believe that Patients are getting a pretty good service but our concern is that the way the Practice is being staffed is far more expensive than it needs to be and could possibly impact on future service levels/practice development.

Neil Gregory the Assistant General Manager with Bridgewater, who has operational responsibility for the Practice, has advised that there are going to be structure changes within the organisation and as such it is likely that he will no longer be involved with us. A timescale has not been indicated.

We have been assured that after some delay regarding the availability of Patient Medical Records Online the facility will be available by the end of March. If you wish to have access to your own records, please speak to a Receptionist at the Practice.

#### **11.17 Willaston Toddler Group**

No report received.

#### **11.18 Willaston Village Festival Society** (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

We are currently recruiting new committee members and planning future events. If you would like to get involved, please contact me on 327 5318. Our gazebos continue to be available, free of charge to Willaston community groups and have recently been used by the WR&CS to support the play area consultation.

### 12. Any Other Business

#### **12.1 Market on the Green**

Sarah informed the meeting that the Country Market will be holding a pop up Market on the Green on Easter Saturday.

#### **12.2 Hooton Road**

Lyn commented on the mud on Hooton Road. She said that the footpath had been cleared between Street Hey and Benty Heath Lane but the road was very muddy. It was noted that the Roften clearance had instructions to keep the road mud free and they do bring in road cleaners. However, the current mess was thought to be farming, rather than Roften. Lyn had brought it to the Council's attention.

#### **12.3 Trees**

Madeline commented on overgrown trees between Ness Acre and Damhead Lane, which were scratching cars. Hilary M and Fiona both commented that they had reported problems like these on the new website and received a rapid response.

#### **12.4 Parking on the Green**

Hilary M expressed concerns that parking on the Green had got worse.

#### **12.5 EU Election**

Sue said that a resident had wondered if WR&CS could put on a husting for the EU election. However, the legalities around this are complex and we did not feel able to do this.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

#### Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016

AGM: Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016