

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

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015 in the Memorial Hall

### **Residents' Issues**

There were no residents present to raise any issues.

### **Committee Meeting**

Present: (Officers): Jane Townsend (Vice Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Barry Vowles (Planning), Hilary Booth (Treasurer); (Committee Members): Hilary Morris, Rob King, Fiona Ennys, Debs Jerrett, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Hilary Gould (for item 3), Myles Hogg, Jean King, Helen Mayles, Paul Janvier and Leanne Kershaw.

Richard Hall attended for item 3.

Les Green and John Henry attended for items 3 and 4.

In Chris' absence, Jane took the Chair.

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Chris Hampshire, Sue Unsworth, Vicky Spraggon, Margaret Smyth, Madeline Hughes, Martin Collins and Sheila Smith.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Hilary Gould declared an interest as an employee of the Martins/the Post Office.

#### **3. Post Office Plans**

Richard Hall from the Post Office attended the meeting to explain the plans for moving the Post Office from the current premises into Martins. He explained that they had gone through a consultation process and received a healthy number of responses. They had shared these with Citizens Advice, who are the consumer body for the Post Office and took the decision to continue with the plans. The Post Office will close on the 9<sup>th</sup> July and open at 1pm on 10<sup>th</sup> July in Martins.

Richard commented that the biggest concern expressed in the consultation was the size of the newsagent and said that changes were being made to ensure that the premises meet disability access regulations, including disability access and a turning space. He agreed to let us have the schedule of works in Martins, along with details about the width of aisles.

Richard commented that the benefit for the community is that there will be Post Office facilities from 6am to 6pm Monday to Saturday and 6.30am to 1pm on Sundays. He explained that the Post Office till will be next to the retail till. The Post Office has done similar moves across the country as it is difficult to maintain a Post Office without retail alongside. They find that customer satisfaction is at over 95%. Queuing is on average about 1½ minutes. He asked that if queuing becomes an issue that WR&CS contact the Post Office.

Richard circulated the plan for the layout in Martins on computer screen. It was noted that there would be less stock. It was also noted, although not in the plan, that the store intends to use its licence to stock alcohol when it re-opens.

Richard confirmed that they had taken into account the population served by the Post Office and explained that they had very accurate records of the visits, transactions and flow of customers. He stated that there were under 800 customers a week using the current facilities.

Richard confirmed that at times there would only be one cashier in Martins and staff would work across both areas. There would be separate queues for the two tills. He confirmed that existing staff at Martins would have to go through the Post Office vetting procedure and sign the Official Secrets Act.

An issue was raised about privacy and Richard said that it was easier with an open till as customers would not have to talk through a screen. Markers will be on the floor for people to queue behind. An issue was also raised about staff security and Richard confirmed that security measures will be put in including limits to the cash available and the ability to lock down.

Jane thanked Richard for coming to the meeting to let us know about the plans.

#### 4. Impact of 20mph Zone

Les Green and John Henry attended the meeting to discuss their findings on the impact of the 20mph zone. Traffic surveys were carried out in September 2013 and October 2014, with the 20mph zone being implemented in March 2014. The analysis that Les and John presented looked at readings from Monday to Friday between 7am and 7pm taken at three sensors on Neston Road – one at the Green before the traffic lights, one between the Florist and Broadlake (central) and one just past the school near Meadow Lane.

Les and John gave a detailed analysis of the change in traffic speed at the three sensors. All three showed a reduction but the most significant was the central one which showed an average reduction of 6.1mph from 27.8 mph to 21.7mph or 22%. In addition, they showed that there were significant improvements in this area of traffic going over 30mph. Before the 20mph zone, 25.8% of traffic went at over 30mph; now only 1.6% of traffic does. The other sensors showed less improvement.

A traffic survey was also done in Mill Lane, near Briardale Road in February 2014 and October 2014 as residents had expressed concerns that the implementation of the 20mph zone could affect that road. This showed that there had been very little increase in volume of traffic, from 19 to 20 vehicles an hour. Neston Road had also an increase in volume of traffic from 506 to 521 vehicles an hour.

Les commented that the reductions in speed had been achieved with minimal police enforcement. He commented that currently the speed gun is broken so enforcement cannot be done. Volunteers prefer to work with the PCSO who at times is taken onto other duties so enforcement is difficult.

Les also commented that traffic speeds up in the westerly direction after the school and suggested that this is because drivers can see the 30mph sign and accelerate towards it. He suggested that the zone should be extended to past Birkenhead Road. There was also an agreement that there is a need for police presence outside school to monitor parking in the area.

There was a discussion about the effect on traffic speed in Hooton Road going east as traffic was thought to speed up after going through the 20mph zone. Les has some data of speeds in the past so a traffic survey was suggested.

Les commented that the success of the scheme is largely down to residents who obey the speed restrictions and so slow down other traffic. It was agreed that most residents now accept the scheme.

There was also a discussion about the delivery lorries to Spar blocking the road. Myles has written to Spar main office who have recognised the problem and has undertaken to send smaller vehicles in the future.

It was agreed that a meeting would be set up with Andy Rayner to discuss the results of the survey and any additional action. **Action: Myles, Les and John**

Jane thanked Les and John for the work that they had done on traffic speed and for coming to the meeting to present the results.

#### 5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015

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

It was noted that the itravelsmart website is quite difficult to navigate around.

#### 6. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (16<sup>th</sup> March 2015)

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

#### **6.1 New Homes Bonus Community Fund (Item 4.2)**

An application has been submitted for the newsletter but not yet been confirmed. The delay is thought to be because of the election. The officers took the decision to print the newsletter before receiving the money so that it could be distributed in April. A second newsletter is planned for September before the AGM. The committee expressed appreciation of the newsletter which had received compliments.

An application for the remaining monies to go to the Friends of Hadlow Road Station still needs to be done when the group is ready. **Action: Chris**

#### **6.2 Lottery (item 10)**

Publicising the lottery will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Action: Sarah**

#### **6.3 Dog Fouling (item 12.2)**

Myles has a meeting with the school to discuss a dog fouling campaign.

#### **6.4 Bus Service to Chester (item 7)**

The subsidised bus service to Chester will continue to the end of June and will then be reviewed.

#### **6.5 Kissing Gates (item 13.4)**

An article in the Ellesmere Port Pioneer was circulated. This is also on About My Area and the Neston News websites.

### 7. Reports from Working Groups

#### **7.1 Playground Working Group**

Sarah reported that work on the play area has started. It began later than expected as there were problems over getting the equipment. It is now scheduled to complete on 12<sup>th</sup> June. The working group had an information afternoon but the weather was not good so it was poorly attended. The group now needs to think about an official opening. **Action: Working group**

#### **7.2 Friends of Hadlow Road Station Working Group**

Chris had sent in a report to say that positive meetings have been held with CWaC (Cheshire West and Chester Council) to progress a joint access/licensing agreement of the building. CWaC have commenced making repairs to the signal box but it is believed that the contractors have identified significant further repair work is required. An official opening ceremony is being planned to coincide once the repairs to the signal box have been completed.

A £1,000 express grant application has been submitted to secure tables, chairs and security barriers along with tea and coffee making facilities and disposable crockery. An old stone trough has been offered to the Society and this will be re-located to the station when heavy moving equipment has been sourced. This trough will be filled with plants along with the hanging baskets and an electronic watering system is being installed.

A number of volunteers cleaned the level crossing gate and fencing on the Hooton side and a repeat session for the West Kirby side gate is planned. 20+ volunteers came along to the station on Sun morning 9<sup>th</sup> May to continue the weeding and tidying up and a further session is planned for Sat 30<sup>th</sup> May at 10am for a couple of hours. Additional volunteers are welcome so please just turn up!

All FHRS meetings are open so anyone is welcome to attend and the next meeting is Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June at 19:30.

### 8. WR&CS Business

#### **8.1 Guiding and Christ Church Representatives**

Sarah reported that Carol Savage is no longer able to be the Guiding representative but she will continue to send in reports and receive papers until another representative is found. The representative for the Church will continue to be Jean King whilst Stephen Bazeley, the new vicar settles in.

## **8.2 Willaston Village Festival Stall**

WR&CS is having a stall at the Festival and people were asked if they could help on it. It was suggested this would be a good opportunity to encourage people to join the Lottery.

## **8.3 Stall at the Legion coffee morning 6<sup>th</sup> June**

We have been offered a stall at the Legion coffee morning on 6<sup>th</sup> June. If anyone is available to help run it, please contact Sarah.

## **8.4 Website**

Sarah reported that the website has been down for several weeks. Emails are also not reaching us. This is because our host organisation appears to have gone into liquidation. A new host has been found in the UK and the website is being redesigned. This is taking a little time but we hope to have it up and running again shortly.

## 9. Financial Matters

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 27<sup>th</sup> April, the current account had a balance of £651.84, the lottery account a balance of £864.64 and the playground account a balance of £1,717.88.

## 10. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

### **10.1 Land behind Fairways**

Myles expressed concern about the delays in making a decision and has discussed this with the Planning Officers.

### **10.2 Netherfield/Netherleigh**

These applications have been amended and Barry had a meeting with the residents in Mill Lane. They are willing to agree to one new house if it is in line with other properties and in a style which fits the lane. They also have no problem with the bungalow being replaced as long as it is the same footprint and height of the existing property. Residents also have said that the contractors should enter the property from Mill Lane, rather than the side road. Barry has discussed this with the planning officer involved and sent in comments.

## 11. Local Councillor's Report

The committee congratulated Myles on being re-elected. Myles commented that as the Authority has changed hands, there will be changes with a new committee structure. He will be the Deputy Mayor of Ellesmere Port for a year.

### **11.1 Roften**

The work is six to nine months behind schedule as there is more contamination than expected. Builders still need to be appointed. As soon as the remedial work is completed, work will be done to improve the condition of Hooton Road.

### **11.2 Travellers site at Brook Meadow**

The application to extend their stay was turned down and they have now appealed. It is expected that this will also be refused as they have been offered pitches on the Ellesmere Port site. The site will have to be returned to its original status as a field.

## 12. Footpaths and Bridleways

### **12.1 Footpaths**

Jane reported that most if not all of our local footpaths and bridleways are clear but brambles and nettles are growing fast. It would be greatly appreciated if walkers could snip brambles etc. that are growing over footpaths as they walk. It was noted that the contract for cutting the meadow has been removed and the Council is seeking a new provider. There was concern expressed that this will also affect the strimming of footpaths.

There is still are open trenches alongside the wider part of FP 30 (between Hooton Road Service Station and Mill Lane). Apparently the nearby landowners responsible for digging up the trenches are waiting for the water board to inspect the new pipes. An oak log fell across the narrower part of this footpath causing an obstruction

which the owner removed at Jane's request. Please email willastonfootpaths@outlook.com if you see any problems with our Willaston footpaths.

### **12.2 Bridleways**

There is no change in the situation relating to the proposed permissive bridleway linking Damhead Lane and the Wirral Way. Jane has been in discussions with local experts about suitable materials for repairing the surface of local bridleways.

### **12.3 Willaston Walks Footpath Signs**

Some of the waymark posts and discs have been put in place by girls from the 1st Willaston Ranger Unit from Girlguiding Senior Section. Jane has been painting some of the coloured bands on existing posts and is still waiting for permission from a number of Council departments and landowners to erect some of the posts.

### **12.4 Kissing gates**

There was a press release with a photograph advising the public about the fact that all the stiles in the parish that needed to be climbed have been replaced by gates. It is hoped that the surface of FP 32 (footpath behind the Pollard Inn) will be improved this financial year, using money left over from the kissing gate fund.

### **12.5 Litter**

There was a discussion about the state of the gutters of some roads, particularly Hooton Road and it was noted that the Hooton residents' group had done some litter picks. It was felt that we should do the same. Barry agreed to send out an email to the volunteers to see if people would be interested in joining the occasional litter picking group and tidying up footpaths. **Action: Barry**

## **13. Organisations' Reports**

The reports below were circulated in advance. In addition Rob stated that the Patient Participation Group had had another meeting in which they heard that the telephone line is now open at weekends.

### **13.1 Christ Church** (Submitted by Jean King)

Stephen and Joanna Bazely, with Grace their small daughter have recently moved from temporary accommodation into the "new" Vicarage in Broadlake. Since their arrival in our midst in February all three have become involved in both Church and Village activities. Christ Church is feeling very blest. Stephen wishes to become familiar with all aspects of the Parish and community, getting to know us and the varied activities, aspirations and problems. He is already a very busy man.

The PCC appreciate the fact that WR&SC has always welcomed Christ Church Vicar onto the Committee. Stephen is both interested and concerned about the Village as a whole and is keen to become involved. However during this initial period it is suggested that a member of the PCC continues to attend the meetings and that copies of the Agenda and Minutes could be sent to Stephen for his information.

The Annual Parochial Church Council (APCC) was a well-attended and happy occasion. In addition to reports from the Vicar, Warden, Treasurer and the Election of Officers, the growth of the Church in 2014 was highlighted by reports from C.C. Youth; Men's Group; Home Group; Mothers Union; Worship at Weatherstones; Primary School involvement; and Christian Aid. The excellent glass of wine added to the evening's enjoyment!

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

Recent work in the Meadow has included clearing of brambles and sowing of seeds in the annual patch. The AGM of the Friends will take place on Thursday 21 May at 2.00 p.m. in the Methodist Hall. The speaker will be Anne Litherland, who is the ranger at the Port Sunlight River Park.

Port Sunlight River Park is a vibrant, stunning green space formed on the site of the former landfill at Bromborough Docks. It gives unrivalled views not only of the Liverpool skyline and waterfront, but also across Wirral and North Wales. There are woodlands and an ecologically important wetland; the site has excellent views of the Shorefields mudflats and its associated wildfowl. Friends and interested residents are welcome. A guided walk of the Park is being arranged for 4 June.

### **13.3 Guiding Organisations** (Submitted by Carol Savage)

Sadly after almost 8 years building up this vibrant and happy unit of Guides, Tracy Lloyd our Guide leader has needed to retire and we are urgently looking for one or two adults (aged 18 - 65) to work with the girls at our meetings on a Monday evening, term time, between 7.30pm and 9pm.

We would love to hear from anyone who would like to become involved as either a Leader or unit helper with our Guide Unit. For an informal chat, please contact: Carol Williams, Hinderton Division Commissioner & Assistant Leader at Thornton Hough Guides on 0151 334 5866 or 07725 988 513  
Sarah Curnow, 1<sup>st</sup> Willaston Guide Leader on 07527 848 781

Rainbows will be starting the summer term by learning some valuable first aid skills from a nurse, planting some seeds and making some bee houses. We are hoping for some nice weather over the next few months to allow us plenty of opportunities to get out and about, and we have some exciting outings planned. Rainbows will be represented and fundraising for the unit at both Willaston C of E Primary School summer fair on Sat 16<sup>th</sup> May and the Village Festival on Sat 27<sup>th</sup> June. For more info on Rainbows and how to get involved, contact Wendy on 07852 236330, wend1103@aol.com

Brownies have been really busy having lots of fun! We started the year designing recruitment posters inviting new Brownies to join us as we currently have places to fill. We had great fun at our "Bring a Friend Night" when we shared lots of typical Brownie activities and game. In February we invited our Rainbow friends to our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Valentines Party which was WILD! as our Rainbows took us over!! We'd like to thank all the Leaders, Mums and Young Leaders who helped make this such a fun afternoon.

Also in February we joined over 100 Rainbows, Brownies and Guides at Neston Town Hall to celebrate our annual Girlguiding Thinking Day which falls on 22<sup>nd</sup> February every year. We "visited" our four World Centres joining in on various activities. In Sangham, India we made elephant finger puppets and tissue garlands to celebrate Diwali, at Our Cabana in Mexico we tried a traditional God's Eye craft and because Brown Owl knows all about Mexico, we tried Mexican tortillas and jalapeno dips; some were very hot! At Our Chalet in Switzerland we tried a chocolate marshmallow fondue and learned the words and group actions to Edelweiss and closer to home we "visited" Pax Lodge, England where we made a St George's Cross with beads and iced yummy Union Jack biscuits.

In amongst all of these exciting events, on our "normal Mondays" we've been icing cakes and making Mother's Day and Easter cards and over three weeks every one of us completed all the challenges to qualify us to receive a special "Animal Antics" Friend to Animal badge. We're really looking forward to our summer term too when lots of more exciting activities await us, including welcoming our new Vicar Revd Stephen Bazely to meet us and the all the Guide and Scout leaders. The Brownies will be completing their Hostess badges.

### **13.4 Hadlow Green Singers**

No report received

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

On Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June we have Matt Thomas giving a presentation on 'From the Muddy Banks of the Dee' which sounds very interesting.

Contrary to what is printed in your Membership Card, our trip to Biddulph Grange Garden is on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July. There are still some seats available and further details and booking forms can be obtained by calling 327 4544.

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 £5.00 per year and you can get 10% discount at Burleydam Garden Centre on all gardening products on production of your Membership card.

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

There are no minutes received from the last mtg. The planning for the container is still undecided by the council. One set of spotlights is still on the roof awaiting removal and the other set (lying on the ground) is still to be removed. We are still awaiting a bin to be placed for litter next to the Pavilion. We have had a gentleman apply to join the committee to represent the ALLOTMENTS. We await council approval for this.

### **13.7 Memorial Hall**

No report received

### **13.8 Scouting Organisations** (Submitted by Dave Kendall)

Our Scouts excelled themselves when they entered the Annual Cheshire Hike just after Easter. Joshua Smith and Alfie Moore won the Ellesmere Port and Neston District Junior Trophy (and came 4<sup>th</sup> overall in the County for juniors) whilst Ben Parr and Max O'Hare won the Intermediate age trophy (and were pleased to find they were 11<sup>th</sup> overall in their age group). In total we had 6 teams of 2 Scouts each taking part this year (the most for some time) and they all completed the hike having spent considerable time training in the weeks leading up to it.

All sections recently took part in an event called Jamboree on the Trail – this takes place annually on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in May. Scouts all over the world take a journey - some hike, some paddle and others use bikes. This year Ellesmere Port and Neston District gathered at Thurstaston Common for hot dogs etc. 1st Willaston Beavers walked from Thurstaston Church, Cubs set off from the Boathouse at Parkgate and the Scouts hiked all the way from Hadlow Station.

We are pleased to announce that our Leadership team has recently been enhanced by the arrival of Daniel Ramage as an Assistant Scout Leader and Gary Horswill who is taking on the role of Section Assistant with the Cub Pack.

We currently only have vacancies in the Beaver Colony and in the Cub Pack. The Scout Troop is presently full and (looking at the number of Cubs due to move up), likely to be for some time – we can help prospective members find places in other Troops in the District so please enquire. Any offers to take on Leadership roles within the Group would be very welcome – we are currently in need of 2 more Assistant Cub Leaders and 1 more Assistant Scout Leader.

Dave Kendall (0151 339 4205)

### **13.9 Sporting Organisations**

No report received

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

Among the events marking the centenary of the WI nationally is a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, hosted by the Princess Royal, the Duchess of Cornwall and the Countess of Wessex, to which one member from each WI is invited. Willastonhey has selected the lucky member by ballot, but has decided to hold its own event on the same day. Members are invited to take afternoon tea at Inglewood, where the dress code will be the same as at the Palace (day dresses and optional hats). Let us hope 2 June is a fine day.

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

This month the Chapel celebrated 126 years in its current building! Looking forward, on Sunday 24th May the Methodist Chapel will be sharing with Christ Church in the annual Open Air Pentecost Service on the Village Green. Rev. Stephen Bazely will be preaching and the singing will be accompanied by a brass band, so come and enjoy the service.

The Chapel will be very much involved in the coming Village Festival. We will have the Chapel open from 10a.m. until 6p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 1p.m. to 6p.m. Sunday for viewing our three day Flower Festival with the theme of World War One. Tea and cakes will be available, and finally, on Sunday at 6-30p.m. there will be a "Songs of Praise" service.

### **13.12 Willaston PTA**

No report received

### **13.13 Willaston Royal British Legion**

No report received.

### **13.14 Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club**

No report received.

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

No report received

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

Over 100 people were present at our meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> March, a really excellent attendance clearly demonstrating the continued strength of concern about the level of service provided by our Surgery. I am grateful for the support which was forthcoming just when it was needed.

On the Thursday after our meeting the position was summarised to Surgery staff by Neil Gregory, Assistant General Manager from Bridgewater as needing immediate attention to redress and respond to the concerns expressed by the Patient Group. What follows is an extract of an email I received from him:

*"Following on from the Patient Participation Group (PPG) last week and our meeting held this Monday, I would like, on behalf of the Surgery to thank the PPG for the comments and feedback provided to us.*

*I can confirm that immediate action was taken following the PPG to ensure there are more pre-bookable appointments, set against the clinic templates. In addition, administrative staff have the ability to make decisions and "override" the predefined clinic templates, if required and appropriate.*

*This intended impact of this action is to redress and respond to the immediate concerns raised by the PPG. As such, the impact of this action will be reviewed on a regular basis, whilst further options relating to clinic templates and access are considered. A review will take place in four weeks, subject to concerns being raised in this time, at which time, we would review the position."*

This is, I believe, a significant decision which Bridgewater has taken and demonstrates that they will not only listen to the concerns of the Patient Group but also take action. This is good news for the Group but we have to closely monitor how things develop. You are encouraged to complete a Friends & Family Test questionnaire which are readily available at the Surgery or online via the Surgery website.

Whilst the way Bridgewater has responded is encouraging our next meeting on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May will be important in determining how Patients now feel. Surgery management refer to conditions being "challenging" that referring to the fact that they still find it difficult to cover sessions previously held by Dr Meyer. Anecdotal reports provide a mixed view regarding access to appointments with some Patients satisfied with service and others not. With continued loss of some long standing administrative staff there is some way to go to build up experience levels and this is not helped by the fact that the Clinical Services Manager (Practice Manager) is on what seems to be prolonged sick leave.

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

We are now gearing up for the Festival which takes place from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June this year. We need many volunteers to make the weekend a success so if you can help with cake baking, taking money on a stall, stewarding an exhibition, setting up or selling raffle tickets, please ring 327 5318. Just two hours of your time over the Festival weekend would be an enormous help.

Tickets for all events are on sale through our website and selling quickly. You need tickets for the concert, barn dance, drive in movie and children's lunch. All these are likely to be sold out before the day and you will not be able to get in without a ticket. Go to [www.willastonvillagefestival.org](http://www.willastonvillagefestival.org) for more information. If you are unable to use the internet, please ring 327 5318/3711 and we will sort it for you.

### 14. Any Other Business

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

### Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015

AGM: Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015