

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 17th July 2017 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

1. Fields on Hooton Road/Heath Lane

Paul Jackson attended the meeting to talk about issues he had had on his land on the corner of Heath Lane and Hooton Road. He said that complaints had been made about his activities but that no one had introduced themselves and discussed the issues with him. He commented that his intention is not to develop the site, except to redevelop a nursery and he also offered some land for villagers to grow vegetables or similar use. He acknowledged that the area had been a bit of a mess but when he tried to improve this, issues were raised and he had visits from the Planning Officers of CWaC.

Barry explained that as the Planning Officer for the Residents' Society, he had observed things happening and began to receive calls from residents raising concerns. As is our normal practice, he contacted the CWaC Planning Officers to ask them to look into it. He understood that the officers had asked Paul to remove fencing panels and any business activities on the Hooton Road site and submit a planning application for permission to use containers and to expand the hardcore surfacing at the Heath Lane site. After several weeks, as no application had come to our notice, he had again spoken to the Planning Officers.

Paul commented that the hardcore had been topped up for health and safety reasons and had not been expanded. It had originally been put down because of problems caused by his vehicles parking in Heath Lane. When asked, he said that he had never applied for planning permission and he was encouraged to do this by several committee members.

Regarding the Hooton Road site, Paul said that there was not a business running there but they were cleaning up where stables had been. He agreed that parking at that entrance was not safe and he has now stopped his staff parking there.

Barry explained that these fields are in a Green Belt area but we would probably support a valid planning application for a Nursery. The siting of containers had been an issue in the past on Johnston Recreation Ground.

Vicky thanked Paul for attending and mentioned that our AGM is on 29th September.

2. British Legion Building

John Lovelady and Sheila attended to raise the issue of the potential closure of the Legion. John explained that he shares a boundary with the Legion land and was concerned to hear that the Services Club, which runs the activities in the Legion, is being wound up after the horticultural show in August. He explained his initial concern was the protection of the mixed hedge all along the border but he has now ascertained that this has a preservation order. He asked that if any proposals are made for the site, particularly if it is house building, that it considers the views of residents and environmental concerns.

Vicky assured John that any application for houses would go through planning procedures and immediate neighbours would be informed and have the opportunity to comment. Myles said that if there were any doubts, he can 'call it in' so that the full Planning Committee have the chance to comment. If this happens, local people and the Residents' Society are able to speak at the meeting.

Sheila also expressed concerns about the security of the building once it is empty and Vicky said that there is a number on the Residents' website to report any anti-social behaviour. Myles agreed to raise this issue with the Legion.

Action: Myles

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Vicky Spraggon (Vice-Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Ceri Jones (Social Media), Barry Vowles (Planning), Sue Unsworth (Publicity),

(Committee Members): Myles Hogg, Rob King, Annette Troake, Paul Janvier, John Fisher, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Hilary Morris, Sheila Smith, Fiona Ennys, Helen Mayles, John Woodrow, Madeline Hughes and Debs Jerrett

1. Welcome to new members

Vicky welcomed John Woodrow who is joining the committee as representative for the Patient Participation Group. Vicky also welcomed Sandra Kettiros, a new resident who was attending as an observer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Chris Hampshire, Jane Townsend, Hilary Gould and Stephen Bazeley

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th May 2017

The minutes were proposed by Hilary Booth, seconded by Barry Vowles and accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (15th May 2017)

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

5.1 Sign at Hadlow Road Station (item 4.1)

Sarah had got costings for a finger sign, which comes to £129.60 including VAT. Sarah proposed that we purchase this and fix it ourselves. This was seconded by Lyn and agreed by all present. **Action: Sarah**

5.2 Traffic survey (item 4.2)

Myles reported that Kay Parry, Highways Officer, will be attending our next meeting. He understood that the traffic surveys had been delayed until September but Sue said that one had been done during the period when the road was being dug up and expressed concern that it would not be a true indication of the number of HGVs going through the village. Sheila also commented that the problem with electricity had been dealt with in 12 hours but the hole remained for two weeks.

The committee reviewed the list of issues to be discussed with Kay and agreed the following:

- The outcome of the traffic survey and its implications for us;
- Concerns about the increase in HGVs going through the village, including being re-directed through the village when other roads are closed.
- The possibility of working with SatNav companies to stop them showing the B5133 as a potential route for larger vehicles and how to achieve this.
- The tight bend on the B5133 and whether we can further reduce the speed of traffic, perhaps with additional signage on the road.
- The possibility of putting in additional pedestrian crossings on the Hadlow Road and near the school.
- The potential to extend the 20mph limit to a wider area of the village.

6. WR&CS Matters

6.1 Correspondence

The PTA had written about doing a litter picking fund-raiser. Myles had leant them some equipment and reported that it was a successful event. Several committee members commented on an increase in fly tipping and they were encouraged to report it via the Council website. Myles commented that the Council had caught a few persistent fly-tippers who had received big fines.

6.2 Parking Survey

Debs proposed that the evidence from the parking survey seemed to suggest that parking on the Green is largely self-regulated. There are occasional problems but these are not persistent or consistent. Therefore,

no further action should be taken. Vicky seconded this and it was agreed by all present. This conclusion will be put in the newsletter.

Abandoned vehicles can be reported on-line at <https://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/report-it/anti-social-behaviour/abandoned-vehicles.aspx> or by ringing Streetscene. It was requested that this information be included in the newsletter. **Action: Sarah**

6.3 Newsletter

Sarah reported that this will be finalised shortly and asked all members to help with distribution. **Action: All**

6.4 AGM

It was agreed that the AGM should take the same format as last year, with a quick update and tables where people could go for more information. A flier will need to be distributed in mid-September.

7. Play Area

Sarah reported that the bid to Veolia was unfortunately unsuccessful and that there is not time to put in applications for other rounds of funding and have work completed by March 2018. This leaves £14,783 promised by the Council from various funds in jeopardy, as it has to be spent by this date. She had held a meeting with the Council about this and proposed that we go ahead with the installation of the roundabout and play tractor and raise money separately for the large climbing unit next year. This was seconded by Madeline and agreed by all present. Sarah agreed to liaise with the Council about this and to include some information in the newsletter. **Action: Sarah**

8. Treasurer's Report

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 27th June 2017, the current account had a balance of £858.82. The lottery account had a balance of £1240.47, which should result in approximately £1000 profit at the year-end after meeting the legal minimum pay-out requirements. £1,111 of the current/lottery accounts is for newsletters. The play area account has a balance of £4997.12. Hilary said that the Lottery forms for 2017-18 will be going out next month.

Hilary then raised the fact that the Christmas Card Fair is currently not going ahead and proposed that we take this on. This was agreed by all present and Hilary agreed to form a working group to organise it.

Action: Hilary B

9. Organisation Reports

9.1 British Legion/Services Club

Sarah reported that the Residents' Society has written to the British Legion local Chairman, Richard Berry, expressing concern that an important facility will be lost to the village and asking for a meeting with him. Hilary Morris also expressed concerns that important artefacts would be lost such as the Roll of Honour and photos. She suggested that these could be stored in the County record office.

In answer to a question about ownership of the land, Myles said that his understanding is that the land belongs to the Legion and it receives rental from the Services Club.

After some discussion, it was agreed to write again to Richard Berry saying that the Residents' Society would like to discuss the situation to ensure that it is not detrimental to the village and to write an additional letter to the British Legion Head Office. **Action: Sarah**

9.2 Organisation Reports

The following reports were received in advance.

Barry commented on a problem with children throwing stones at Hadlow Road Station and Rob explained in more detail the improvements being made to the Memorial Hall. It was agreed to include both of these in the newsletter. **Action: Sarah**

9.2.1 Christ Church (Submitted by Stephen Bazely)

A financial update from our Treasurer: 'At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in March, we reported that operating expenditure exceeded operating income in 2016 by £22,000 (and we had deficits in previous years). This trend has continued, and in the first five months of this year (to 31 May), the operating deficit was around £8,000. In the Parish magazine, we also included this message: This is not a sustainable situation and we are asking you to consider whether you can support the work of the Church in the Willaston community through regular giving, reviewing existing regular giving or through a donation. Over the last year, we have spent around £69,000 on repairs to the roof and new chairs, using funds from the sale of the Church hall. The remainder of these funds will be used to support further essential maintenance and re-ordering of the Church in due course.'

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

The Hadlow Road Station cafe openings are continuing to be a huge success, with many visitors from Willaston and beyond enjoying their bacon baps and other tasty options. You may have noticed the K6 telephone kiosk has now been removed. It has been transported to Norfolk for a full renovation. It will be returned to the station in September. Work is continuing to install an Audio Visual in the waiting room. The video will show the history of the station over the last 150yrs along with various refurbishment activities that have been undertaken.

Whilst Cheshire West & Chester Council (CWAC) are renting out the Station Master's House for a commercial café, it is still business as usual for our community pop-up cafe. FRHS wish to make it clear that the commercial cafe operated from the Station Master's House is totally independent from the FRHS pop-up community cafe. We are in discussion with the new commercial cafe to ensure that competition will be minimised. Please note that our cafe openings have changed. They are now 10.30am to 13.30pm. Dates of opening are 16th July, 30th July, 13th August and 27th August. Garden maintenance is continuing.

9.2.3 Friends of Willaston Meadow (submitted by Hilary Morris)

After the dredging of Jackson's Pond in the winter, its banks were very bare. Now the vegetation has regenerated, marsh marigolds and yellow flag iris have flowered and purple loosestrife, in flower now, has multiplied. At the last working party, some roots of reedmace were removed from near the new boardwalk, so that it does not choke the pond too quickly. The CWaC contractors have continued to mow the paths and orchard monthly, while the Friends have trimmed the grass close to the trees. As usual some trees appear likely to bear a good crop, others are resting this year.

The first weekend in July saw National Meadows Day, so on Sunday 2 July we held a guided walk round the meadow for six visitors, explaining the history of the site and pointing out flora and fauna of interest. It was a lovely morning for a meadow walk, much enjoyed by those who came.

9.2.4 Guiding Organisations

No representative currently.

9.2.5 Hadlow Green Singers (Submitted by Margaret Smyth)

Busy, busy, preparing for our forthcoming concert to be held in the Memorial Hall on Friday and Saturday 14 & 15th July. Then a Summer rest during August before we reconvene in September when we will be preparing for an appearance at the National Association of Choirs festival to be held at the Kings School, Chester in October and then our Christmas concert. Sounds fun? Join us if you fancy on Thursday evenings in the Memorial Hall.

9.2.6 Horticultural Society (Submitted by Pam Irving)

There is no meeting in July as we have our annual trip and this year we are going to Stonyford Cottage Nursery and Bluebell Cottage Gardens & Nursery, in Cheshire. The cost is £31.00 per person which includes Coach, Lunch, Garden Admissions, guided tours and gratuities. A bargain at half the price! Eileen Richmond has the booking forms if you have not already booked. She can be contacted on 327 4544. There are still some places left.

Our Annual Flower Show is on Saturday 5th August. If you would like a Schedule ring Pam on 327 6048 and maybe you will bring an entry along. It is all good fun and well worth a visit.

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.

9.2.7 Johnston Recreation Ground (Submitted by Sue Unsworth)

Our 3-monthly meeting was held on 21st June.

Tennis Club

Cracking has been found in the court surface. Possibly caused by tree roots. The council to investigate. A successful barbecue was held on 1st July for approx 50 people. Mr Hogg informed us that a seat/storage box may be provided out of his Council Fund for tennis equipment.

Allotments

There has been some work done on allotment 8. The Council are to be asked to cut back the overhanging branches alongside the Allotment and the Play area. Quotes have been requested to ascertain if anything can be done about the flooding at the far end of this path.

Pavilion

Some of the much-needed work on the pavilion was started at the beginning of July.

Football

All the goal posts have been removed for the Summer. The Junior team has been asked to store their posts and remove the block of concrete which sticks out onto the field. They are to have a barbecue on 9th July.

Play Area

Sadly, the grant money they hoped to get has not been successful.

Dog Fouling

The new Rural Localities Officer is Rebecca Irving. She will work with us to lessen this problem. Martin Collins, as a School Governor, is to arrange with the school to contact the parents to try to assist with this ongoing problem. We have requested NO DOG FOULING signs at Elm Green and Neston Road entrances.

Funds

Funds held by the Council may be used for seats between the School and the Play area and on the main Recreation ground. Costs are to be investigated.

Mr. Hogg requested that any problems on the Recreation ground to let him know so that he can deal with it at the time. The next meeting will be held Wed. September 27th 7:30pm in the Church. All welcome.

9.2.8 Memorial Hall (Submitted by Rob King)

The last few weeks has involved various Trustees in putting together bids for funding from different sources. Approaches were made to four sources and we are pleased to report that we received offers from three of the sources. We are finalising details and then during the summer holiday period a significant schedule of work will commence to improve the interior of the Hall and the facilities we offer. The work being programmed is quite extensive and we apologise in advance for any inconvenience that will be caused to users of the Hall.

The application for a new Premises licence earlier this year had resulted in an unwelcome requirement for internal monitoring by CCTV 24/7. We appealed against this and are pleased to say that after statutory public consultation this particular clause has been removed.

We continue to look for a new Booking Secretary and anyone interested should speak to either myself, Liz Young, the current incumbent or Colin Jerrett, our Chairman of Trustees.

9.2.9 Scouting Organisations

No representative currently.

9.2.10 Sporting Organisations (Submitted by John Fisher)

Willaston FC

The team was only able to register one win in 2017, however they finished above the relegation zone so remain in Division Two of the West Cheshire League for the 2017-18 season. The team struggled to raise a side for most of 2017 which resulted in the manager resigning in March. Tom Kidd took over as temporary manager for the end of the season and despite improved performances, especially against Marshalls who were promoted, the team failed to score sufficient goals from the chances created.

A new manager, Colin Jones, was appointed in the close season, and he has successfully managed Willaston previously. Colin will be assisted by 2 coaches, John Norman and Ian Cooke. Training on a Wednesday and a Saturday has already started and the first friendly game starts on 29th July with the first match of the season on 12th August.

Willaston Wolves

There will be 5 teams running in the 17/18 season:

Under 7's - home matches Saturday morning typically at 10am on mini pitch (5-a-side), training 5pm to 6pm on Wednesdays;

Under 10's - home matches Saturday morning typically at 10am on mini pitch (7-a-side), training 6pm to 7pm on Thursdays;

Under 12's - home matches Saturday morning typically at 10am on colts pitch (9-a-side), training 6pm to 7pm on Thursdays;

Under 14's - home matches Saturday morning typically at 9.45am on 11-a-side pitch, training 6pm to 7pm on Thursdays;

Under 16's - home matches Saturday morning typically at 11.15am on 11-a-side pitch, training 6pm to 7pm on Wednesdays;

Under 16's - home matches Sunday afternoon at 2pm on 11-a-side pitch, training 6pm to 7pm on Wednesdays.

Winter training is from 20th September 2017 to 22nd March 2018 at Ellesmere Port Sports Village.

Anyone interested in playing for Willaston or the Wolves should come along at the times given above or contact John Fisher (Willaston Open Age) 07780 693 284 or Jerry (Willaston Wolves) 07714 071552

9.2.11 Willastonhey W.I. (submitted by Hilary Morris)

A few members recently attended the national annual meeting of the WI Liverpool. and at the following meeting we received a report from our delegate. Cheshire WI held a garden meeting for members at Haughton Hall, near Tarporley, which was enjoyed despite an untimely heavy downpour. The walking group have held walks to Neston/Ness and West Kirby/Caldy; the next one is planned for Dutton, a site belonging to the Woodland Trust. A few members have signed up for cycling group, while many more went to the "dining club" at the Nag's Head.

The Knit & Natter group received a letter of thanks from the Special Care Baby Unit at Arrowe Park for the hats for premature babies, and the latest request, for knitted octopuses for babies to hold.

We replanted the flower beds outside the hall for the summer with plants kindly supplied by Follyfield. Members were asked to water them in dry weather and pick out and weeds and litter that appear.

9.2.12 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

The children's activities, Church Mice and Create take a break now for the summer, recommencing in September with Create and October for Church Mice. See the Chapel noticeboard for our regular services. A warm welcome to all.

The Methodist Chapel collection for Christian Aid came to £728.47. Gift Aid added a further £77.08. Therefore, Christian Aid benefited by a total of £805.55. Thanks to contributors, collectors and to John and Teresa Edwards for organising and co-ordinating.

9.2.13 Willaston CE School PTA

No representative currently.

9.2.14 Willaston Royal British Legion/Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club

No report received.

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

There are no forthcoming events being run/held by the W&SWRC.

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

The last Patient Group meeting attracted over 100 patients and there is clearly concern regarding the fact that Bridgewater have given up the contract to manage the surgery early. Correspondence with NHS England and the Clinical Commissioning Group has resulted in two meetings with them regarding the new tender specification. All along I have been keen that a clearly defined geographical limit be imposed so that the surgery will continue to be in Willaston. I am pleased to report that such a limit has been agreed and the tender specifies a preference for continued use of the existing premises subject to the agreement of the landlords.

I made the point that discontinuance of weekend opening may make the contract more attractive to potential bidders but this will be subject to a three-month consultation period involving patients. Watch out for further information on this point

I am also pleased to report that Mr John Woodrow has come forward to act as the new Group Chairman.

9.2.17 Willaston Toddler Group

No report received.

9.2.18 Willaston Village Festival Society

No report received.

10. Councillor's Report

10.1 Roften Development

There is now a named builder for the Roften site next to Hooton Station but Myles expressed concerns that there is still a lot of remedial work to be done.

10.2 Heath Lane Travellers' Site

Myles has been working with the Enforcement Officer about this site as they have permission for three families and there currently appear to be many more caravans on the site than is permitted.

10.3 Mobile Library

A six-month review of usage of the mobile library shows that there are now 20 visitors per session on average, whereas there were only 10 when the library was at the Methodist Church.

10.4 Council Housing Management

The management of the Council's housing has been transferred to ForHousing, which are part of the ForViva group. They can be contacted by phone on 0300 123 55 22. The website is www.ForHousing.co.uk.

10.5 Parking on Hadlow Road

Myles had a meeting with residents about parking issues on Hadlow Road and is waiting for an engineer's report about what can be done. He will also ask about decreasing the speed limit to 40mph in the 60mph zone and to 20mph in the 30mph zone. He has spoken to the police about doing spot checks on speed.

Fiona also commented on the need to reduce speed in Birkenhead Road, near Mill Lane and Sheila commented that some of the large tractors going through the village are intimidating.

Myles confirmed that the Quarry Road proposals are still under consideration.

10.6 Dog Warden

The dog warden will be visiting Willaston to do another campaign.

11. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

11.1 Planning Applications

Barry reported that the plans for the Hooton Road Service Station site have been changed on the request of the planning officers. They are now for three houses, rather than four. However, at the front will be a large detached house which faces sideways to the road. Barry will respond requesting that the design looks like a frontage so that it fits in with other houses along the road. He will also speak to a neighbour who has some concerns.

Action: Barry

There were comments that the footings have been dug for Netherfield and the area involved appears to cover the full site. Barry will investigate.

Action: Barry

Myles expressed concern that the proposals for Lindum, Heath Lane look like a commercial venture and has included this in his comments on the application.

Fiona commented that we need to keep vigilant about the turkey farm in Mill Lane that had a fire as an area of land has been cleared.

11.2 Planning Principles paper

The final version had been circulated in advance. Barry proposed its adoption and this was seconded by Rob and agreed by all present. It was agreed to call it Planning Guidelines and to put it on the website.

Action: Barry/Sarah

12. Footpaths and Bridleways

Jane had reported in advance that the footpaths and bridleways are beginning to get overgrown but are still passable. She has asked the Council when the strimming is likely to be done.

At our request, the Community Payback Team has cleared plants and soil from Footpath 29 behind Elm Green and deterred the growth of nettles and brambles on the verges. We hope to plant wild flowers/plants in these borders when appropriate to do so.

There is a large dead tree alongside FP30 (Hooton Road to Mill Lane). Jane has contacted both the landowner and the Council about this and some large branches have been removed. She has also reported further erosion of the footpath nearer Hooton Road.

Jane has followed up on the promised improvements to FP32 (behind Pollards Inn), filling in hollows on BR66 (end of Street Hey Lane) and FP33 (Change Lane).

The Council has reduced the number of Footpath Officers. Until recently there were five and now it is two. Richard Ankers will be responsible for our area.

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

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Patients Participation Group

Rob said that he would now be stepping back on the PPG. The tender is going ahead with the requirement that the surgery has to be within a mile of the centre of Willaston. Tender responses have to be received by 2nd August and the contract is expected to be awarded early in September and the new provider should take over at the end of November. There will be a PPG meeting on 4th September at the Memorial Hall. John W commented that after three months, there will be the option to consider a five day a week provision, rather than seven. He also expressed concern that the contract will be awarded on a paper-based scoring system, without any presentations.

13.2 Barn Owls

Vicky reported that there has been a high production of baby barn owls this year in Willaston, they have all been tagged and are doing well.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 18th Sept 2017
Monday 20th Nov 2017

AGM: Friday 29th September 2017