

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 15th January 2018 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

Paul Jackson had been expected to attend but was not present.

Barry Seedhouse attended the meeting to raise the issue of large tractors and trailers going at speed through the village. Others at the meeting confirmed that they appeared to be travelling above the speed limit. People also noted that there were fewer at the moment, presumably because it is the winter. It was suggested that they may come from Norman's off Chester Road. It was agreed to write to them to ask that they encourage their drivers to slow down. It was also agreed to speak to the PCSO to have some radar gun sessions.

Action: Chris/Sue

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Jane Townsend (Footpaths), Ceri Jones (Social Media)

(Committee Members): Annette Troake, Paul Janvier, Madeline Hughes, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Hilary Morris, Sandra Kettiros, David Compton and Hilary Gould

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Vicky Spraggon, Fiona Ennys, Sheila Smith, Myles Hogg, John Fisher, John Woodrow, Rob King, Clare Jones, Debs Jerrett, Helen Mayles and Barry Vowles.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th November 2017

The minutes were proposed by Paul Janvier, seconded by Madeline Hughes and accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (20th November 2017)

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

4.1 Sign at Hadlow Road Station (item 4.1)

The sign has been ordered and will be put up when it arrives.

Action: Sarah

4.2 Flashing Traffic Sign (item 5)

Sandra had found a similar sign in Capenhurst and suggested that a similar one should be on the Hooton Road and Neston Road. She will chase this up with CW&C.

Action: Sandra

4.3 Christmas Card Fair (item 6.4)

The Memorial Hall has been booked for 3rd November 2018.

5. WR&CS Matters

5.1 Correspondence

a. Aldi

Chris reported that a response had been received from Aldi, saying that they will add the B5133 to the list of roads for their drivers and suppliers to avoid. They monitor their drivers and contact suppliers if this is not adhered to. They also commented that the improvements at Two Mills should also help vehicles avoid the village. Rob King had commented by email that he had seen an improvement and others at the meeting agreed. It was agreed to write back to thank them and comment that an improvement had been noticed.

Action: Chris

b. Legion site

John Lovelady had been in touch about the trees on the site of the Legion which have preservation orders. He had been in contact with RBL Estates to see if they could purchase the strip of land with the trees on. RBL Estates responded that they cannot sell it separately to him but there is now a 'preferred purchaser' who is aware of the tree preservation issue and who has commissioned a survey with a view to retain as much as possible. RBL Estates expects development proposals to go to Planning at CW&C in Spring. Hilary Gould commented that she has a copy of the title deeds which she can pass on to Chris. **Action: Hilary G**

c. Lost cat

A series of emails had been received from Sandra Griffiths about a cat that had been lost when they moved house. She also made some very positive comments about how kind and caring people are in the area.

d. Highways England

Following the last meeting, we wrote to Highways England about signage on the A41, on the advice of the Council. They passed it to Balfour Beatty Mott MacDonald who in turn passed it to the Council and asked that they contact us directly. Chris will chase this up. **Action: Chris**

5.2 Update on Willaston District Community Plan

Sarah explained that she and Chris had done the update, circulated before the meeting, as it had not been reviewed since May 2016. It was noted that we had made a lot of progress on many of the items. There were no amendments and it was proposed to accept the document by Hilary Booth, seconded by Hilary Gould and agreed by all present. It was further agreed to put it on the website, Facebook and to include a mention in the next newsletter. **Action: Sarah/Ceri**

6. Working Groups

a. Village Halls

Sarah reported that the group had met, with Clare Jones from Cheshire Community Council. We had looked at the position of each hall and plans they may have. As the Scout Hut, Methodist Church and Christ Church were all seeking to do improvements, it was agreed that a joint needs assessment would be useful. Clare has given some examples of questionnaires and ideas of other ways of getting people's views which we will discuss at the next meeting.

b. Constitution

Chris reported that the group had met and subsequently emailed. They have made significant progress and hope to have a draft to circulate before the next committee meeting.

c. Play area

Sarah reported that the work should be starting on Wednesday to install a roundabout, wobble board and play tractor/trailer. Once this has been done, she will consider applications for the final stage.

7. Financial Report

The financial report, previously circulated, was discussed. On 27th December 2017, the current account had a balance of £950.25. The lottery had a balance of £2247.87 and the play area account had a balance of £5075.48. £944 of the current/lottery account is ring-fenced for newsletters.

Chris commented on the profit from the Christmas Card Fair which was £135.11 and thanked all those who had helped. He also thanked Hilary Booth for the work she puts in to make the lottery a success.

8. Footpaths and Bridleways

Jane reported that the local footpaths are all muddy, particularly FP28 (from the Mill to BR66) and the bridleway itself that leads to the end of Street Hey Lane. FP32 (behind Pollards) has been flooded quite extensively but the metal platform is doing its job well. She hoped to be able to use the sleepers and stones when the tracks at Hadlow Road are replaced to create a small bridge over a flooded ditch and to fill hollows in Change Lane.

Jane had reported the erosion of FP30 (Hooton Road to Mill Lane) to CW&C. A worksheet has been raised for remedial work but so far no work has been done. She has had help with FP31 (between Benty Heath and

Hooton Road) cutting back overhanging vegetation. Other promised work from the Council has also not yet taken place. She has applied for funding from Myles' Councillor's budget but not yet heard the outcome.

Jane has also contacted the new Ranger about complaints of flooding and the need for a ramp where FP34 meets the Wirral Way from Wallcroft. She understood that some of Myles' Councillor's budget has been earmarked to fund resurfacing and a ramp for this. The Ranger is having a clearance day on the bridleway past Hadlow Road Station on 25th January from 10am to 2pm. This has been advertised on Facebook and our website. Hilary Gould agreed to do a notice as the working party could be hard to find. Jane agreed to let Ceri have the directions to put on Facebook. **Action: Hilary G/Ceri**

Jane also commented that the board walk across the Jackson's Pond has been covered by water. Hilary Morris said that the Friends of Willaston Meadow will be getting the rear of the pond dredged and extend the board walk in Spring.

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

9. Organisation Reports

The reports below had been submitted in advance. In addition, the following comments were made:

- Chris said that Friends of Hadlow Road Station had installed three benches on the South platform and a picnic table on the North platform which seats eight. Two additional bike racks had also been installed. He said that it is not clear when the permanent café will be set up.
- David Compton explained more about the Life Explored sessions which are being trialled by Christ Church currently.

9.1 Christ Church (Submitted by Steven Bazely)

The Christmas period was a joyful time with hundreds of people coming to join us, all kicked off by the Christmas Tree Festival. A huge thank you to the Festival Committee and the volunteers from Church for making it such a success. We also now have a faculty making permanent the space at the side of the church. Finally, we started a course called Life Explored to which you are all invited, on Tuesdays at 7:30pm in church, looking at where we find happiness. You don't need to know the Bible, sing or pray and every week has a film to start the discussion, so come along on Tuesdays until the 20 Feb.

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

We successfully held Santa's Grotto on 10th December. Santa arrived at 12.45 and walked through the falling snow along the main platform to his Grotto in the fully decorated Signal. The main platform had been cleared of snow and gritted earlier that morning by volunteers to keep it safe for the 400 visitors on the day. Over 140 children visited Santa and his elves in his grotto to receive their Christmas gifts.

The opposite platform provided an ideal fun area for young children to build snowmen and throw snowballs, which they thought was just perfect! Youngsters were kept entertained with face painting, colouring pictures and of course having rides on the Steam Traction Engine around the car park. (It took some time to build the steam up as it was so cold).

Adults were kept entertained by the Hadlow Green Singers, Simon le Barber, and the Riversign Choir. Refreshments were included in the ticket price – Ginger bread biscuits and a soft drink for the children and mince pies and mulled wine or tea/coffee for the adults.

Positive feedback was received from many visitors including "It was all just Magical" - which makes the significant volunteer effort worthwhile on a very cold day.

We have received a £2,000 grant from the Postcode lottery trust for refurbishing the existing railway track which will be one of our priorities for the spring time. You will notice the new picnic table near the Hadlow Road Station sign and one luggage trolley has now been refurbished and is secured on the platform but lots more developments are still to be done, including:

- Fitting seats on the opposite (South) platform near to the existing old shelter.
- Refurbishing other luggage trolley.
- Cleaning and painting the signal.

- Connecting the signal to the lever in the signal box so it works.
- Fixing the Audio Visual unit to the Waiting Room wall that will show short films of Hadlow Road Station.

As you will see a number of improvements are now progressing very quickly with many willing hands producing a lot of hard work. Many thanks to all the volunteers as their participation is fundamental to getting these improvements undertaken.

Finally, we look forward to seeing our regular and new customers at the pop-up café openings at Hadlow Road Station throughout 2018 with the next pop-up café openings from 10:30 to 13:30 on Sunday 28th Jan; 25th Feb and 25th March.

9.3 Friends of Willaston Meadow (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

The very wet weather of the last four months of 2017 (375mm/15in) has left large parts of the Meadow even wetter than usual. Jackson's Pond has overflowed on to the surrounding area, and the new boardwalk is largely submerged, whereas in the previous year the water level barely reached the base of the boards. This should be alleviated next winter, as the Friends are using their funds to have the further half of the pond dredged and deepened in the coming weeks. This has to be done in the winter when any great crested newts are absent. From our experience last year, the pond looks untidy for a time, but in the spring the vegetation soon takes over again.

December saw another visit from the Wirral Conservation Volunteers, who laid a small section of hedge and re-erected an apple tree which had been blown over. In January a planned working party to prune the apple trees so that they do not intertwine with each other had to be postponed, as it was too frosty for this job.

9.4 Guiding Organisations

No representative currently.

9.5 Hadlow Green Singers

No report received.

9.6 Horticultural Society (Submitted by Pam Irving)

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 16th January when we will be having a talk on Controlling Pests, Diseases and Weeds in your Garden.

9.7 Johnston Recreation Ground

No report received

9.8 Memorial Hall (Submitted by Rob King)

The timing of the report is not ideal as the Memorial Hall Trustees meet during the week after which this report is required.

Following the various resignations which took place in November an additional meeting was held in early December primarily to take stock of the situation and to make sure we could continue to function i.e. meet requirements under the terms of the governing Trust Deed and the Charity Commission and continue to provide a service to the community. The Committee is confident that this can be achieved but do look to users of the Hall to let us know if they encounter any issues which appear to need attention. A book is in the kitchen for comments to be recorded but in addition comments may be passed to the Bookings Secretary or any Trustee.

At this point it is worth reminding hirers that under the terms of the hire agreement the facility should be left in a good and proper state ready for the next user. Recently we have had examples of the oven being left dirty after use, chairs not being stacked and put away correctly, tables being incorrectly placed on trolleys and not secured. Tables being borrowed and not returned immediately which caused a shortfall for another group who had hired the Hall.

Please note that whilst an organisation may previously by arrangement have had the use of tables or chairs off site this must not be taken as a signal that such items may be borrowed in the future without permission. Removal from the premises must be left as late as possible and return to the Hall should follow no later than the day after the event for which the items have been borrowed.

Consideration is being given to the recruitment of a caretaker because there are so many matters always needing attention to keep the facility in first class condition. We did have Trustees who acted as "handymen" but our numbers are somewhat depleted. Whilst we have no intention of increasing our hire rates in the short term (invoices for regular users for 2018 have been issued) it may, of course, require us to review that position if we are having to pay someone to do jobs which had previously been done on a voluntary basis.

A review of regular users is being carried out with a view to inviting new trustee nominations. The governing Trust Deed will be reviewed and updated accordingly. A new Chairman has not yet been appointed and for the time being we are dealing with this in accordance with the terms of Trust Deed i.e. on a meeting by meeting basis.

We are pleased to report that even with the 2017 significant refurbishment costs all taken into account, we have ended 2017 with a surplus rather than the projected deficit. Demand for our facilities remains high and we have some new users because of the closure of the Willaston (RBL) Services Club facility. We have lost one regular Friday hire, Weight Watchers, who have moved to Neston but that vacancy was immediately taken by another Rainbow Group.

9.9 Scouting Organisations

No report received

9.10 Sporting Organisations (Submitted by John Fisher)

Willaston Wolves Junior Football Club currently has an U7's, U10's, U12's, U14's and U16's team playing in the Eastham Saturday League (Saturday morning for home fixtures) and an U16's team playing in the Eastham Sunday League (Sunday afternoon for home fixtures). It continues to be a very inclusive and supportive club with 93 members playing and training and managers committed to supporting players of all abilities. Winter training from late September through to the end of March takes place at the Ellesmere Port Sports Village.

Willaston AFC have struggled since the start of the season but now have a new manager. He is the third manager since the start of the season. The best result was the team's only win this season against the leaders of the league. Willaston FC are looking forward to a change of fortune in 2018. The wet December meant that all games on the Johnston Rec were postponed because of a waterlogged pitch.

Willaston Vets (over 40) have started playing games on a Saturday. The Vets have the best record of all the teams.

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

The WI does not hold a meeting in December, but we participated in the Christmas Tree Festival and organised the Carols on the Green, and some members enjoyed a Christmas dinner at the Nag's Head. All activities resume in January, with groups participating in walks, bridge, darts and the County Quiz. At the first meeting of the new year David Allan will tell us about Eastham Ferry, while in February we shall reminisce about the past pleasures of summers at Wirral Lidos. Also in February we shall be holding our annual Bridge Drive with its famous afternoon tea, as well as enjoying our annual dinner at Inglewood.

9.12 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

Happy New Year to everyone. Following the happy celebrations of Christmas services and the events surrounding Christmas, we now look forward to the year ahead. We will, again, be hosting the February 10th Soup Lunch when we look forward to seeing friends and neighbours at the Memorial Hall.

9.13 Willaston CE School PTA

No representative currently.

9.14 Willaston Royal British Legion/Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club

No report received.

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

We have no events scheduled for the next two months.

9.16 Willaston Surgery Patient Participation Group

No report received.

9.17 Willaston Toddler Group

No report received.

9.18 Willaston Village Festival Society

No report received.

10. Councillor's Report

Myles had submitted a report in advance which was discussed.

10.1 Christmas Lights

The Christmas lights on the tree were refurbished this year. When they are removed, the tree will be trimmed. Paul considered that there is a need to find out more about why the current lights cannot be mended and replaced before we start raising funds for new lights. Ceri had sent some information in advance about how Hoylake had developed a community approach to getting funding for their lights, with many innovative ideas. Hilary Booth had got some information from the Hospice about who had provided their lights. Chris suggested that a working group is set up to look at the options and to work with Myles on what needs to be done. Paul and Ceri agreed to be on the group and Paul agreed to contact Myles to sort out a date. **Action: Paul**

10.2 Unparished Areas

The Council has agreed the recommendation that unparished areas such as Willaston should remain unparished but that it should help to promote Residents Associations where they exist in unparished areas.

10.3 Double Yellow Lines

The Highways Officer does not think it would be a good idea to extend the double yellow lines at the junction of Hadlow Road and Neston Road further as parked vehicles would only be dispersed into surrounding streets necessitating even more requests for double yellow lines. It was agreed to make this an agenda item at the next meeting so that Myles could explain further. **Action: Sarah**

10.4 Consultation on Local Plan part 2.

Consultation on the local plan ends on 29th January 2018. Representations can be submitted online (www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/localplan), by email or by post. Part 2 gives more detail to Part 1 in terms of allocating land to meet development requirements, identifies assets that should be safeguarded and provides additional detail to Part 1 policies. Jane expressed concern that part of Johnston Recreation Ground is in the village inset area, where development can take place. Chris agreed to discuss this further with Barry. **Action: Chris/Barry**

10.5 Fly tipping

A fly tipper in Chester has been fined £450. Report illegal tipping of waste on the Council's website (search 'fly tipping') or on the Your Streets website www.westcheshireyourstreets.co.uk or via twitter @Go_CheshireWest.

10.6 Community Assets Consultation

Assets include community centres, libraries, play areas, public conveniences and green spaces. The aim is to rationalise assets, provide services with partners and manage these assets well and the object is to save money. The consultation runs until 25th February 2018. There is an outline survey and draft framework at http://inside.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/get_involved/consultations/draft_community_assets_framework_consultation

11. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

The planning report for December, previously circulated was discussed. Concern was expressed about the Tenleys proposals, where there is going to be a rebuild.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Street Light

David confirmed that the street light by the church has been replaced.

12.2 Road Sweeping

Lyn commented that she had rung the Council three times about road sweeping without successful. Sarah said that Barry had asked them formally for their system on road sweeping in villages and suggested that other members do the same.

12.3 Historic Cottages

Sue expressed concern about the state of some of the historic cottages in the middle of Willaston. She agreed to raise this with Myles. **Action: Sue**

12.4 Old Post Office Counter

Hilary Gould suggested that some use of the old Post Office counter which is quite historical.

12.5 Nags Head bend

Jane wondered if a solid white line could be painted in the centre of the road at the Nag's Head bend.

12.6 Hedgehogs

Chris said that Wirral Animal Sanctuary Hedgehog Rescue have some hedgehogs ready to be released into the wild. If people could provide a safe garden for rescued hedgehogs, they should contact Ruth Hampshire.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 19th March 2018

Monday 21st May 2018

Monday 16th July 2018

Monday 17th Sept 2018

Monday 19th Nov 2018

AGM: Friday 26th October 2018