

`Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 18th November 2019
in the Methodist Chapel School Room

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

Present - Committee Members: Lyn Jackson-Eves, Myles Hogg, John Fisher, Roy Spraggon, Rob King, John Woodrow, Stephen Bazeley, David Nind, Sheila Smith, Helen Jakubczak, Madeline Hughes, Sheila Greenhalgh, Jane Townsend, Paul Janvier and Sandra Kettiros

Residents' Issues

No residents attended the meeting to raise issues.

Committee Meeting

1. Welcome

Chris welcomed David Nind, representative for Friends of Willaston Meadow and Sheila Greenhalgh, representative for Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club to their first meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Fiona Ennys, Helen Mayles, Ruth McElroy, Suzie Dixon and Annette Troake.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 16th September 2019

The minutes were proposed as correct by Sheila Smith, seconded by Vicky Spraggon and accepted by members present as a true record of the meeting, with two abstentions.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes of 16th September 2019

There was discussion on the following matters, as the other matters were complete, or included elsewhere on the agenda:

5.1 Street Hey Lane (resident's consultation)

Andy Wilson did not provide further details and photos about the container and caravan.

5.2 Stewart Milne Development Information Pack (item 5.2)

Sarah reported that the pack is almost ready and she has applied for funding from the New Homes Bonus fund. However, this has still not been confirmed. Myles agreed to chase it up. **Action: Myles/Sarah**

5.3 Play Area (item 7.2)

Sarah still needs to apply to the Zoom Zoom Trust. **Action: Sarah**

5.4 Willaston History (item 9)

Sheila S has been given a folder with information relating to WW1 and Sarah has two boxes which were provided by Burton History Society. However, she has not yet received boxes from Hugh Morris. It was agreed that Jane and Ruth Hampshire would go through what we have and decide what should be done with it. **Action: Jane**

5.5 Daffodil Bulbs (item 14.4)

Myles has ordered one pack of 500 bulbs which will be shared and planted on the Little Green and at Hadlow Road Station. They will be available in the Spring.

5.6 Remembrance Day (item 14.8)

Myles thanked everyone involved in organising Remembrance Day. He noted that CWaC covered the road closures as Cheshire Police no longer will do this. It was agreed that this should be a future agenda item as the community may need to take responsibility for closing the road in future. **Action: Sarah**

5.7 Bench (item 16.1)

Chris reported that a volunteer had looked at the bench by the bus stop and it is now very rotten. He commented that it needed to be replaced, rather than repaired.

6. WR&CS Matters

6.1 Co-options

Chris explained that the committee is able to co-opt people on the committee until the next AGM. Two co-options were unanimously agreed:

- Vicky Spraggon, proposed by Hilary Booth and seconded by Paul Janvier;
- Greg Leach – proposed by Ceri Jones and seconded by Helen Jacubczak.

6.2 Appointment of Acting Vice-Chair, Publicity Officer and Footpaths Officer

Chris explained that the posts above had not been filled at the AGM and the committee is able to fill them up to the next AGM.

- Vicky Spraggon was proposed for the role of Acting Vice-Chair by Chris Hampshire, seconded by Sue Unsworth and agreed by all present.
- Sue Unsworth was proposed for the role of Publicity Officer by Vicky Spraggon, seconded by Hilary Booth and agreed by all present.

There were no proposals for the role of Footpaths Officer. However, Sandra will contact Jane to understand what this role entails. **Action: Sandra**

6.3 Correspondence/Email/Facebook

A list of correspondence had been circulated in advance to committee members and there were no comments.

In addition, the full response from CWaC about the proposed 20mph speed limits in Willaston had been circulated. Myles commented that CWaC had withdrawn the 20mph proposals for Smithy Lane and Briardale. It was agreed that WR&CS would send a request to the Highways Area Office for additional 20mph measures to be considered on Hadlow Road, from the T Junction to just beyond Hadlow Road Station, as suggested in the letter. **Action: Chris/Sarah**

Paul agreed to let Ged Weeden know that we are taking this action. **Action: Paul**

Sarah informed the committee that she had also received correspondence about listing the war memorial as of historic interest. It was agreed to pass this on to Nigel Pratten to respond. **Action: Sarah**

6.4 AGM Review

There were comments that there were fewer people than usual and John W suggested that Friday evening may not be a good time. There was then a discussion about what we can do to improve our communications but it was noted that we have Facebook, the website, newsletters and put things on the noticeboard so it is difficult to do much more with the capacity that we have.

6.5 Neighbourhood Plans

Chris reported that five Officers had met a representative from Cheshire Community Action to discuss the advantages and difficulties of putting together a Neighbourhood Plan. Barry explained that the primary benefit is that it clearly lays down precise preferences for future development that residents would like to see happen and would then be an integral part of the Planning criteria. However, producing a neighbourhood plan is a time-consuming process that would take several years. Barry expressed the view that Willaston is constrained by the Green Belt and has a village inset so the potential for development is limited. On that basis, the Officers had not felt that it would be a useful exercise at this time, which the full committee supported. It was however noted that it may be useful for the Community Plan to be refreshed.

7. Sub-Committees

7.1 Logo

John F reported that the sub-committee had hoped to present the logo at the meeting but there were some concerns about the quality of the image when it is reduced. Chris advised that Ruth Hampshire had contacted the owner of the mill who had indicated her agreement in principle to the mill being used on the new logo. The sub-committee will circulate a background paper on the process used to determine the logo for the next committee meeting and will present the new logo at the next meeting.

7.2 Play Area

Sarah reported that further funding had been received from Johnston Recreation Ground (£1,000), Sue Unsworth (183.16 for a coffee morning), Christ Church (26.60 for bell ringing), New Homes Bonus Fund (£2,000), Methodist Chapel (£115 for film night and collections), Rotary Club (£532.91 for quiz night) and Willastonhey WI (£243 for soup lunch and donations). This brings the total raised to £5691.98, of which £3,000 is in a separate earmarked account in the Council. Sarah explained that the aim is to get around £8,000 and then apply to FCC Communities Grant. Ideally we would like to put a bid in for December 2019 but it may be the March 2020 round.

Sarah thanked everyone involved for their efforts to support the appeal. Helen J reported that the PTA has agreed a non-uniform day and Sarah will provide an update for this. **Action: Sarah**

Annette will do a stall at the school fair and Sarah asked for committee members to pass on items that can go in mystery bags. **Action: All**

Sarah also commented that the play area continues to be poorly maintained by CWaC and she believes that this has had an averse impact on fundraising. CWaC has confirmed that the hole by the roundabout has been filled in but there has been little strimming or removal of weeds. In addition, someone recently broke his leg whilst playing football in the play area and this is now with CWaC's legal department. An assessment of the play area site is being done by the CWaC, together with the annual RoSPA inspection which may impact on the final plans for development.

7.3 History of the Lights

Ceri reported that she has visited the Cheshire archives and identified some relevant information. She agreed to pull together what she knows so far, with references and to circulate this. However, it was noted that this is not for wider circulation at this stage. **Action: Ceri**

7.4 Post Office

Chris reported that there is no further update on the Post Office. Sue noted that the Post Office in Thornton Hough has closed, following a break-in.

7.5 Assets of Community Value

Jane reported that the sub-committee had had one meeting but had not progressed things any further. Vicky explained that there was a concern if they put an asset on the register, it then is not sold for six months and she questioned what right our committee has to do this to a private owner. Myles further explained that it was difficult to think of any assets in the village that fit the criteria. He had checked with CWaC and most were pubs that were run by the community. Myles asked that if committee members had ideas for Assets of Community Value, they should let him know. **Action: All**

Jane commented that Burton Residents group had used this to keep access to the grounds of Burton Manor, when it went up for sale.

8. Financial Report

Hilary Booth circulated a Financial Report of all WR&CS accounts. This report showed that at 15th November 2019, the WR&CS current account had a balance of £404.66; the Play Area account had a balance of £2691.98; the Christmas Lights account had a balance of £12,869.11 and the Lottery account had a balance of £2211.84. Hilary noted that £146 of the current account is ring-fenced for newsletters.

Hilary noted that we had made a loss on the AGM and suggested that we don't serve wine in future to save money. She also noted that we have spare money available and it was agreed that allocation of funds should be an item for the next committee meeting. **Action: Sarah**

Chris thanked Hilary for all the work she had done on the finances.

9. Footpaths and Bridleways

Chris reported that FP70, which goes behind the Memorial Hall has become very overgrown. The Council has given permission to cut down overgrowth on the side without houses. Vicky commented that it was important to involve the neighbours first and let them know what is proposed. Therefore, a sub-committee was set up consisting of Barry, Chris, Sandra, Hilary B and John F to decide what needs to be done and come up with proposals which will be brought back to the next committee meeting before any action is taken.

Action: Sub-committee

10. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

10.1 Questions related to October planning report

Barry commented that several applications that had been dealt with in the past were being re-submitted. He notified the committee that he did not wish to continue in the role for much longer and asked that a new Planning Officer is found. It was agreed to advertise for this role.

Action: Chris/Sarah

Chris thanked Barry for all the work that he has done.

10.2 Planning Guidelines

Barry had updated the guidelines and circulated them in advance to committee members. Helen J said that she had some things she wished to discuss with Barry before they are approved. Therefore, it was agreed to bring this to the next committee meeting.

Action: Helen J/Barry

11. Organisations' Reports

The reports below had been submitted in advance. Chris thanked all representatives that had sent in reports.

11.1 Christ Church (Submitted by Stephen Bazeley)

Since September we have been trialling a new service called Cafe Church at 10:45am, church with a difference. Where we sit around tables, doing crafts, activities and songs to help us engage and discover more about Jesus, the trial has gone really well. We have also collected lots of shoeboxes for Teams 4 U, which will be going to Eastern Europe in time for Christmas. Thank you to everyone involved in donating to this as well as all the donations for the Wirral Ark Project at our Harvest Services. We want to thank everyone involved on Remembrance Sunday, it was great to have both Willaston and Neston British Legion represented this year and to see the number of Scouting and Guiding children join us again to mark the occasion, it really brought the community together. We are also meeting about our re-ordering or church improvements on Thursday and hope to be able to approach Architects soon for some design solutions to meet our needs, to make the church more suitable to the needs of the church and the community.

11.2 Friends of Hadlow Road Station Community Group (Submitted by Hilary Booth)

The daffodils will shortly be planted on the car park embankment, and by the new fence, so these should give a colourful display next springtime. Winter tidy-up gardening has been completed on a cold wet miserable day. Many, many thanks to those very hardy souls. It really is appreciated.

The signal by the crossing gates is now completely refurbished and now back in situ. The old storage heater has been removed from the signal box (with Council approval) The bricks and metal frame will be taken to the recycling centre ready for the arrival of the Model Railway Station, which will be installed in the New Year. You will be amazed at the detail of the 1950 station when you see it.

A new "Do not trespass" sign has been prepared and will be in situ shortly. These signs are well worth reading as they date back a long way! Memories!! Donated train memorabilia has been put into the ticket office. Many thanks to the donor.

The Christmas Grotto is on Sunday December 8th from 12 noon to 4pm. All children's tickets have been sold, but there are a few adult tickets left if any adults fancy walking down. It will be a lovely community Christmas event for everyone, with entertainment and fun. All we need now is some dry weather for the event. Fingers crossed.

The pop-up cafes on October 27th and November 10th saw fabulous warm sunny days and were really enjoyed by everyone. A huge turnout, and a nice change to sit outside to chat in the sunshine. There will be NO pop-up-cafe during December, and there will only be ONE opening in January on Sunday 26th 2020 from 10.30am to 1.30pm. It will be good to see you all back again.

11.3 Friends of Willaston Meadow (submitted by David Nind)

We are still urgently looking for a new treasurer. The post is not onerous; our committee meets every two months and the treasurer would need to keep a list of Friends, manage subscriptions, oversee our modest bank account and produce balance sheets for committee meetings, and particularly for the AGM in May.

Committee members have recently renewed contact with John Ellinson, the lead teacher for the Willaston CE Forest School which continues, enthusiastically, to use the meadow. He has agreed to be co-opted on to the committee and we appreciate his involvement.

11.4 Hadlow Green Singers (submitted by Helen Mayles)

The next main event for this friendly village choir is the Christmas concert at 7.30pm on 6th December. Look out for flyers around the village for how to get tickets and they are also available on the evening.

The choir is also singing at the Willaston Christmas Lights Switch on - Friday 29 November between 5.30 and 6pm - and is supporting the Santa's Grotto Event at Hadlow Road Station on Sunday 8 December.

We are actively recruiting new members and are providing an opportunity for anyone interested in singing, to see what it is like to be in the choir, by having a Come & Sing Event on Saturday 14 March from 2.30 to 4.00 pm in Willaston Memorial Hall. No previous experience in sight reading is required and there is no audition!

11.5 Horticultural Society (submitted by Pam Irving)

There is no meeting in December but we start the New Year on Tuesday 14th January with a talk on Snowdrops by Andy Lambie.

The Society meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the Memorial Hall, at 7.30pm; details are shown on the Village Noticeboard, 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.

11.6 Johnston Recreation Ground

No report received

11.7 Memorial Hall (submitted by Rob King)

The trustees met on 5th November. At the time of writing we are pleased to report that a new Bookings Secretary, Val Brizell, has been appointed and has already taken up her duties. Our long-standing Booking Secretary, Liz Young, has now formally resigned both from that role and as trustee representing the Horticultural Society so there is now a trustee vacancy to represent that organisation. Liz has provided excellent service for 11 years and is still assisting Val in learning the ropes. The Trust Deed also allows for a representative from S4YC and the Hadlow Green Singers but so far there has been no uptake of those vacancies. We are also delighted to report that Catherine Jones attended our recent meeting with a view to taking over the Chair in the New Year. Catherine is very well qualified for the role having been Academic Secretary at the University of Liverpool reporting direct to the Chief Operating Officer/Deputy Vice-Chancellor, with a staff of c250. Catherine lives in Eastham so yet again we are grateful for the fact that someone outside the village is prepared to step in.

As previously reported, the defibrillator has now been fitted and is in a bright yellow box to the right of the pharmacy display window. Please note that training has been organised for Saturday 30th November at 9.30am until 11.30am. A maximum number of 30 people can be accommodated at the Memorial Hall for this training and places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Anyone interested should contact our Secretary by email (Doreen.francey@btinternet.com). We are grateful to the WI for agreeing to provide refreshments and a donation will be made to the British Heart Foundation. If there is a high level of interest above the 30 available places we will see if a further training session can be organised.

The monthly soup lunch season is now upon us so any organisation wishing to hold such an event should contact the Bookings Secretary as soon as possible. The Hall Trustees are holding one on Saturday 16th November. Proceeds from our raffle will be donated to the appeal for new play apparatus at the recreation ground.

We are grateful to Follyfield Nurseries and WI ladies for the winter planting of our front garden beds at the Hall.

It is with regret that we announce the resignation of our Publicity and Social Media Officer, Felicity Robinson, who is going on Maternity leave. Felicity has made a significant contribution in developing our social media presence and the production of a specific leaflet relating to weddings at the Hall.

Just a reminder that casual booking rates are being increased from January 2020 and during the forthcoming year we will be reviewing our position in relation to charges for regular bookings. Any increase will be effective from January 2021.

Please note that our Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th March 2020 commencing at 7.00pm in the committee room.

11.8 Scouting

No report received.

11.9 Willaston CE Primary School (submitted by Ruth McElroy)

The School Christmas Fair is on December 6th, 3.15pm to 5.30pm.

11.10 Willaston Football Club (submitted by John Fisher)

The new season has seen a new combined committee and an improvement in the upkeep of the pitches. With the agreement of the Johnston Recreation Committee the Club has been cutting the pitches on a regular basis and ensuring the grass is kept at an optimal length for the seasonal conditions. Autumn has been unusually wet with many fixtures being postponed, but the condition of the pitches on the Recreation Ground has allowed the majority of home fixtures to be played.

Open Age

In the West Cheshire League, the young adult team have performed creditably winning as many games as they have lost and sit in midtable. Performances are gradually improving as the team get to grips with the competitiveness of adult football. The Vets will continue to play a mix of friendlies and a local area competition on a Saturday afternoon and have a mixed record so far.

Youth Teams

The Sunday U21 side started playing in the North West Counties U21 Premier League afternoon but with limited resources they struggled to raise sides and the decision has been taken to disband the team with a view to developing a team for next season. The Youth Reds and Youth Whites have opposite records with the Whites being top of the league and the Reds still looking for their first win despite some strong performances.

Junior Teams

Under 7's, 8's, & 9's play regularly where pitch conditions allow with some good and some poor results. They continue to be enthusiastic. Under 12's has struggled especially in the second half of games. In a strong league the U16's has one victory under their belt and have been on the losing side for the rest of their fixtures.

Anyone who wishes to play for any of the teams or to assist the Committee will be very welcome. If you are interested in playing for Willaston you should contact John Fisher (Willaston Open Age/U21) 07780 693 284 or Jerry Hopkins (Wolves Juniors/Youth) 07714 071552 or Jonathon Todd (Willaston Vets) 07976 458 383

11.11 Willastonhey W.I. (submitted by Susie Dixon)

- Village Defibrillator: A couple of members will be attending for training on November 30th.
- Memorial Hall flower beds: Planted in time for Remembrance Sunday.
- Soup lunch: Very successful. The raffle took £186 which will be donated to the village playground appeal. in addition to £57 from members meeting making a total donation of £243.
- Carols on the Green take place on December 17th December at 7.30pm. Refreshments will be provided.
- Our members enjoyed a visit to the Empire to see Les Miserables.
- Next rambling 19th November to Royden Park.
- Christmas dinner at Nags Head 11th December.
- Annual dinner 11th February
- Bridge drive 19th February
- Centenary concert 25th February

11.12 Willaston Methodist Chapel (submitted by Sheila Smith)

The Methodist Chapel is happy to have hosted another event for the Willaston school children. November 5th saw the Chapel premises set out to present six 15-minute sessions depicting various aspects of Remembrance, with the emphasis on World War One. It was aimed for junior year 4 children and featured;

- Life in the trenches.
- What and why we remember.
- Flanders Field & Wreath of Hope.
- Coming Home.
- Saying Goodbye.
- Conflicts since 1914.

On December 3rd they will again be "Meeting the Characters" telling the Christmas story in different parts of the Chapel. We look forward to their participation.

Special Christmas services:

- December 8th - 10-45am - Toy Service, where donated toys will be sent to The Ark, Birkenhead for distribution to the less fortunate.
- December 15th - 6-30pm - Evening Candlelit Carol Service
- December 22nd - 10-45am - Nativity Service
- December 25th - 10am - Christmas morning service.

Thank you to all who, again, supported the Shoe Box appeal, when filled boxes were collected to be sent to Eastern Europe, showing love for the poor in the world.

Finally, please put February 8th 2020 in your new diaries/phones, when the Chapel will be hosting the Soup Lunch at the Memorial Hall.

11.13 Willaston Phil Supporters' Group (submitted by Sarah Shannon)

Our season so far has been very successful and we are taking a record number of people to the Christmas concert on 18th December. We are now taking bookings for concerts up to July 2020. These include performance by Sheku Kanneh-Mason, who played the cello at the Royal Wedding and Nobuyuki Tsujii, a blind pianist who is superb and we have enjoyed performing before.

For a copy of the programme and booking form, contact Joan Butcher on 0151 327 5191 or email infoconf@dircon.co.uk.

11.14 Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club (Submitted by Sheila Greenhalgh)

Willaston & South Wirral Rotary Club held a quiz in October which was well attended and raised over £500 for the Playground appeal.

The Rotary Club is also organising the Christmas lights switch-on and Christmas market on Friday 29th November on the Green and in the Memorial Hall. The market will include food and craft stalls both inside the Hall and outside with pizzas, hot dogs (by the scout group), ice cream and mulled wine / mince pies. Santa will arrive on his sleigh just after the switch on. All proceeds will go to the club's nominated charities, which this year are Stick n Step for children and Dementia Together Wirral.

The Rotary Club will also be using the Santa sleigh for Charity street collections on 29th November after the switch-on, 5th December and 11th December.

11.15 Willaston Surgery Patient Participation Group (Submitted by John Woodrow)

I know that some of you have put your names forward to partake in the revised format of PPG meetings which we are trialling. I would encourage those who have not done so to consider joining our meetings. They will be held at the Surgery at lunchtime and we will have the added bonus of one of the GP'S joining us.

There has been a change to the procedure regarding submitting prescriptions at the Pharmacy. They will now have to be submitted at the Surgery. The reason for the change is because it is felt not be appropriate for patient's medical information to, potentially, be able to be seen by the Pharmacy assistants. I would, however, encourage those of you that have access to the internet, to consider registering at the Surgery to be able to request prescriptions electronically, After submitting your prescription request, if you nominate Willaston

Pharmacy as your collection point, the Surgery will electronically send the prescription to our Pharmacy where you can pick it up.

I regret to have to inform you that Mandy, our practice nurse will be leaving us on the 31st December. In the meantime, we will be advertising for a replacement. On your behalf, I would like to thank Mandy for all her efforts over the time she has been with us and wish her well in her new career.

If you have any matters regarding the Surgery that you would like to raise with me you can contact me on 0151 327 3260 or at johnwoodrow@btinternet.com.

11.16 Willaston Toddler Group

No report received.

11.17 Willaston Village Festival Society

No report received

12. Councillor's Report

12.1 Former RBL site

Myles is in contact with the Royal British Legion about the overgrown bushes on the site.

12.2 Play Your Part engagement exercise

Myles reported that CWaC is asking residents about how to tackle six key challenges. There is more information at www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/playyourpart, including questionnaires. The deadline for responses is 5th December 2019.

12.3 A550 Welsh Road

Carriageway resurfacing and improvement work will take place on the Welsh Road over six weeks from 4th November and four weeks from 6th January 2020. This will include road closures.

12.4 General Election

Myles encouraged all committee members to make sure that they are eligible to vote in the forthcoming General Election. The deadline to register to vote or apply for a postal or proxy vote is 5pm on 26th November 2019.

12.5 Free bus shelters

Myles reported that there are five free bus shelters available for community groups. However, it was felt that the design is not suitable for Willaston.

12.6 Information for residents

Myles reported that a new Live Well Cheshire West website and directory has been launched. This can be seen at www.livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk. Sarah agreed to update the information we currently have on the website. **Action: Sarah**

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Path to School

Helen J raised concerns about flooding to the path through the recreation ground. Myles said that this will be on the agenda at the next meeting of the JRG Advisory Group and encouraged Helen to attend.

13.2 Best Kept Village Sign

Chris reported that the sign has now been refurbished. It was agreed to ask the Memorial Hall if it could be put on the wall, with the other signs. **Action: Chris**

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 20th January 2020

Monday 16th March 2020

Monday 18th May 2020

Monday 20th July 2020
Monday 21st September 2020
Monday 16th November 2020