

## Theme 5: Communication

### Key Findings:

- Largely people were happy about communication and the various methods used.
- Several people suggested the newsletter should return and/or more information put through doors.

*'Very happy with newsletter and Facebook groups and noticeboards ... all great.'*

### Actions:

- To restart the publication of a Willaston newsletter delivered to every house within the Willaston boundary twice a year
- To continue with the WR&CS Facebook site and website with regular updates
- To continue to keep the noticeboards up to date
- To continue to provide a welcome pack to new residents
- To hold public meetings when necessary and an Annual General Meeting

## What is the Residents' Society?

As Willaston does not have a Parish Council, the Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS) was formed to:

- Protect and improve the environmental amenities of the village and its surroundings;
- Preserve and encourage village cultural and social activities;
- Represent the views of the village and monitor matters of common interest.

Anyone who lives within the defined area marking the borders of Willaston shown on our website is automatically a member of the Society. The committee are all volunteers who give our time freely and do not claim expenses. A full list of our committee members, our constitution and minutes of our meetings can be seen on our website.

Facebook /willastonresidents  
Website: willastoninwiralresidents.org

# Willaston Matters



**WILLASTON**  
Residents' & Countryside Society

Issue Nine - May 2021  
Free to Willaston residents  
Funded by CWAC New Homes Bonus Fund

## Questionnaire Response

This is a special edition of Willaston Matters, following our questionnaire to the community in April. Many thanks to everyone who filled out our questionnaire. We received 155 responses. These are the key results and resulting actions agreed by the Residents' Society (WR&CS) committee.

Actions are coded as follows:

- Green – expected implementation within six months
- Amber – expected implementation within twelve months
- Red – likely to take more than twelve months
- Purple - ongoing

## Theme One: Village Facilities

### Key Findings

- The facility most people would like to see in the village is a Post Office, followed by cashpoint facilities and take away food
- The organisation most people would like to see developed is a litter picking group (see theme 3 - environment).
- Many people said they were pleased to see new businesses in the village.
- Some people said they would like to see more village events such as fetes.

*'It's really good to see [new businesses]. They are bringing life back into what was a dying village.'*

### Comments

There is little influence that WR&CS can have on commercial enterprise in the village, including provision of a permanent Post Office, although we would support any commercial organisation wishing to host one.

### Actions

- To increase the number of allotments on the Recreation Ground, working with JRG Advisory Group
- To work closely with Willaston Festival Society to deliver a celebratory weekend for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022
- To agree scope and seek funding for an outdoor gym trail in Johnston Recreation Ground (JRG), working with the JRG Advisory Group

### Post Office Van



A Post Office van is outside the Memorial Hall every Tuesday and Friday from 11.30am to 2pm.

Services include:

- Cash withdrawals from bank accounts;
- Posting letters and parcels;
- Savings accounts;
- Travel money and travel money card;
- Vehicle tax; Homephone and broadband;
- Bill payments; One4All gift cards;
- Health lottery; Mobile phone top ups;
- Personal and business banking deposits;
- Gas and electric top ups;
- Change service for businesses.

## Want to have a say?

If there is a particular issue you would like to raise, the first 15 minutes of each meeting is open to any resident to discuss issues with us. Residents are also welcome to attend the rest of our meetings, as observers. We are hoping to restart our meetings in July 2021, Covid rules permitting. Please contact us if you would like to attend as numbers may be limited. You can use the 'Contact Us' page on our website. Alternatively, you can write to us c/o The Chair, 11 The Courtyard, Willaston CH64 2UT.

## Want to take forward some of these actions?

We always welcome new people onto our committee. If you are interested in supporting us to take forward some of these actions, please consider joining us. We are friendly and would welcome new members.

We are particularly seeking new officers, including a Chair and a Secretary. If you would like to discuss these opportunities and play a key role in the future of the village, we'd love to hear from you.



## Theme 2: Transport



### Key Findings

- 72% said that we should continue to press for traffic speed restrictions
- The biggest demand was for restrictions in Hadlow Road, followed by Hooton Road.
- Various solutions to improving parking facilities were proposed, of which the most popular was time - limited parking.
- The biggest issues for parking are at school drop off/pick up times.

*'Traffic development has increased so much over the last 20 years that we're considering leaving, much as we love it here in other ways.'*

### Comments

Although WR&CS and many residents feel that parking is a problem, there is no obvious solution that would be acceptable to the majority of the community.

### Actions

- To work with Cheshire Police to revive community enforcement of speeding in the village
- To make the disabled parking bay on the village green clearer and enforced.
- To work with Willaston School to investigate setting up a walking bus provided by the community
- To continue to press Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) for 20mph speed restrictions in Hadlow Road and Hooton Road

## Theme 3: Environment

### Key Findings

- Many footpaths were identified as needing improvement
- Comments were made about the state of pavements, including that some were narrow and others had overhanging hedges.
- There were several comments on the amount of litter and dog poo/poo bags.

*'It's generally a good environment, apart from the recent increase in dog fouling.'*

### Actions

- To advertise the Willaston Walks leaflet more widely
- To advertise more widely how to report issues and incidents directly to CWaC
- To develop an environmental sub-group, with the aim of establishing an independent Keep Willaston Tidy Group that would undertake activities such as litter picking, street sign cleaning, improving the Green and maintaining benches
- To press CWaC to install a dog poo bin on Mill Lane by the exit of the path to the village
- To continue to press CWaC for improvements to the pavements in the Centre of the village
- To press CWaC for more frequent gully drainage clearance
- To prioritise footpath improvements – the first priority will be to cost and seek funding to improve FP 28 (from Mill Lane to Street Hey Lane)
- To support Friends of Willaston Meadow to improve the footpath around Jackson's Pond
- To press CWaC for improved street lights on the bends of Hooton Road
- To continue to contact householders whose hedges are overhanging pavements and report to CWaC if no action is taken

### Did You Know?

Cheshire West and Chester Council now has an app that you can use to report local environmental issues? This can be downloaded from their website: [Cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://Cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) by clicking onto Report a Street Cleaning issue'.

## Theme 4: Planning

### Key Findings

- 88% agreed with the principles used by the Residents' Society when responding to planning applications.
- Areas that people want to see developed are the former Royal British Legion (RBL) site on Hooton Road and the plot on Hadlow Road by Cherry Tree Farm.
- There were mixed views on what should happen to the former RBL site.
- Some unhappiness was expressed about recent new developments.

*'The main thing is to secure the future of the village without losing its character.'*

### Comments

The influence that WR&CS has on planning applications is limited. We monitor applications and respond to the Council on those that we feel are contentious and inconsistent with our planning principles. The Council then decide what should be approved. Applications that are rejected by the Council are then entitled to go for independent appeal. For example, the planning application for the development at Hanns Hall stables (see picture) was objected to by WR&CS on the grounds that it infringed the Green Belt and hadn't been used as housing before, turned down by the Council but then approved at appeal by an independent inspector.



### Actions

- To increase community awareness of the monthly planning report
- To increase community awareness of how to get alerts from CWaC, how to object, the planning process and WR&CS's role in the decision process
- To continue to strictly apply our principles when responding to planning applications as a society:
  - ◊ To protect the Green Belt around Willaston so that we remain a rural community
  - ◊ To preserve the Conservation area within the village and maintain its unique character
  - ◊ To ensure that any new development in Willaston maintains or enhances the existing village character

### What is happening at the former RBL site?

McCarthy and Stone has agreed to buy the land from RBL for retirement housing and will purchase the site if they get planning permission. WR&CS objected to the first application on the grounds that the building proposed was too high, too dense and didn't fit in with the village. This application was turned down by Cheshire West and Chester Council and rejected on appeal.



Subsequently, a second proposal has been submitted but the Council has responded to McCarthy and Stone saying that the new plan has not met all the reasons for rejection and asked them to reconsider. It is now in the hands of McCarthy and Stone to decide if they are prepared to further amend the planning application or if they wish the Council to consider the version currently submitted.

### Did You Know?

WR&CS produces summary of all planning applications each month. These are displayed on the noticeboards and on the website planning page. In future, we will also put the information on our Facebook page.

You can find out more about any application by going to the Council's website and clicking on 'See or comment on a planning application'