



# WILLASTON

Residents' & Countryside Society

## Minutes of the Committee Meeting

22<sup>nd</sup> January at 7.15pm - Willaston Methodist Hall

**Officers present:** Brian Greenhalgh (Vice Chair), Vicky Spraggon (Treasurer), Sue Hunter (Secretary), Margaret Smyth (Footpaths), Hilary Booth (Publicity), Ceri Jones (Social Media).

**Committee Members present:** Councillor Myles Hogg, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Annette Troake, Sue Unsworth, Roy Spraggon, Jane Townsend, Fiona Mosley, Ruth Hampshire, Sheila Smith, Sandar Kettiros, Madeline Hughes, Rob King,

Prior to the formal meeting, Viv Ley & Bill Hardman gave us an overview of the Reordering of Christ Church. This is now a fund-raising initiative to allow completion of the refurbishment. Once finished, the refurbished Church will incorporate the facilities of the old Church Hall and will be able to offer numerous new facilities for the entire village to use & enjoy. There will be an Open Day on Sat. 24<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2024 from 10am - 4pm for all to attend to view the plans & ask questions. Refreshments will be provided.

## Committee Meeting

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Barry Vowles, Susie Dixon, John Woodrow, John Fisher.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

None.

### 3. Minutes of previous meeting - 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Prior to discussion of the Minutes, Sue H. advised all Committee members of the need for privacy regarding discussions that take place within the meetings. All details will be made available for public viewing only after Minutes have been agreed & confirmed.

No issues were raised from Minutes for Nov. 2023. They were approved by Myles H. & seconded by Hilary B.

### 4. Actions / Issues arising from previous meetings

See Appendix 1 (pg. 5) for Actions carried/brought forward from this & previous meetings.

4.1 An interactive discussion took place regarding the Subject Access Request that was received in 2023.

### 5. WR&CS moving forward

#### 5.1 Discussion paper



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- 5.1.1 Brian G. opened this discussion, looking at where WR&CS fits into the village community, what its strategy is/should be, together with the best form of organisation to take it forward. The current structure & organisation have served it well since its inception almost 50 years ago, however the difficulty of attracting new Officers & the considerable social changes that have occurred over the last few years have meant that we should now take a fundamental look at what we do & how we do it. To remain as we are, is no longer an option. Many questions were presented this evening & all options must be considered. Professional advice will now be sought to advise us on the best way forward.
- 5.1.2 The situation will now be discussed at all upcoming Organisation meetings & brought back to the next Committee meeting in March 2024.
- 5.1.3 Some Committee members felt that there is uncertainty as to how residents currently view WR&CS's general principles & objectives; a meeting will now be organised ASAP for a pan-village discussion.

**Action: Officers**

## **6. Correspondence / Social Media**

- 6.1 Sue H. & Ceri J. reported minimal direct activity via website & social media.

## **7. Financial Report**

- 7.1 As the new Treasurer, Vicky S. had already circulated details of current finances. No questions were raised. We were informed that delivery & distribution of lottery forms in December had resulted in only minimal new ticket holders. As our Lottery year commences on 1 August, any changes to our organisation must be planned well in advance to ensure compliance with Lottery regulations.

## **8. Planning Matters**

- 8.1 Brian G. again discussed the current position where we do not have a Planning Officer in place. Brian again thanked Barry V. for supporting the planning role by undertaking relevant background research & completing the planning reports. On Barry V's behalf, Jane T. stressed that Planning matters are a crucial aspect of WR&CS activity & she urged Committee members to at least consider taking on the task of preparation of the monthly planning report. Barry V. had also asked Jane T. to clarify that he was happy to show anyone interested how to access CWaC's planning details & formulate a report.
- 8.2 It seems that the new Green Belt Alliance is no longer in operation.
- 8.3 Jane T. discussed possible fund-raising initiatives to purchase the field off Hooton Road which is the last remaining area dividing Willaston & Hooton. Vicky S. commented that WR&CS cannot engage in such activities as we are an unincorporated organisation. This means that we cannot take further action on this issue at this time. Brian G. suggested that this item be moved to 'dormant' in the Actions Brought Forward document.



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## 9. Footpaths & Bridleways / Environmental Group update

- 9.1 No activity with Footpaths at the moment.
- 9.2 Monthly litter picking sessions continue & dates are advertised on social media.

## 10. Councillor's Report - Myles Hogg

- 10.1 The Highways Dept. at CWaC has now taken on responsibility for the repair of the wall between Pollards & the adjacent car park.
- 10.2 The request for double yellow lines at the corner of Hooton Road/Overdale Road & at the Green/Hadlow Road has now been actioned & agreed by Highways Dept at CWaC.
- 10.2 CWaC will affix a Commemorative plaque on Johnston's recreation Ground to honour the coronation of King Charles.
- 10.3 Jane T. will contact Howard Pimborough (CWaC Woodland Creation Delivery Officer) to arrange planting of 2 new trees at the corner of Meadow Lane, to replace those felled last year.

**Action: Jane Townsend**

- 10.4 CWaC has launched its public engagement exercise to seek view on the strategic direction of the borough's next Local Transport Plan. Materials setting out proposals & an online survey are available at [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/LTP4](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/LTP4)
- 10.5 Car parking charges in the Borough have recently increased. See local information for details.
- 10.6 Information on CWaC's Streetcare operations is available to view on the Council website & includes schedules for weed control, grass & hedge cutting, & litter bins.
- 10.7 The 'Energy for Everyone' campaign has just been launched. This energy saving campaign provides residents & businesses with advice & tips on saving energy, reducing bills & helping cut carbon emissions for properties. Please visit [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/energyforeveryone](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/energyforeveryone) to upload information. Or email [will.pearson@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:will.pearson@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) for further information.
- 10.8 There will be no wildflower planting in Willaston this year.
- 10.9 For advice & support for flooding in our area, please ring the Council's contact centre on 0300 123 7026 or 0300 123 7035.



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N.B.1 All CWaC Council information & initiatives can be found on their website:  
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk>

N.B.2 General telephone enquiries can be made on 0300 123 8123 / out of hours 0300 123 7035.

## **11. Organisations' Reports - tabled**

Please see Appendix 2 (pg. 6) for all reports.

## **12. Issues Raised / Updates by Members**

12.1 Fiona M. informed us that there was no update as yet available for the Community Energy project.

## **13. Any Other Business**

13.1 Ruth H. enquired if any progress had been made regarding the villager bus shelter. Ceri J. informed us that the owner cannot be traced & that some requests for work quotes were not even returned.

13.2 Ruth H. informed us that she is resigning from the Committee. She was thanked for her tireless commitment shown over many years.

The meeting concluded at 9.32pm.

The date of the next Committee Meeting is Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024.



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## APPENDIX 1: Actions & Issues Brought Forward - Jan. 2024

Original date	Descriptor	Action / Issue	Actioned by	Comment	Date completed
Nov 2023	WRCS not in Church magazine	Enquire with Susan Schwab	Sue H.		
Nov 2023	Lottery forms	Printing & hand delivery	Sue H / Vicky S.	Completed	Dec 2023
Nov 2023	Land on Hooton Rd.	Devise a fund-raising strategy	Jane T.		
Sept 2023	Wall to footpath between Pollards & car park.	CWaC reply received: wall to be monitored only.	Myles H.	MH will progress with CwaC	
Sept 2023	Double yellow lines.	The request for these at corner of Hooton/Overdale Roads is still ongoing with CWaC. Carry forward.	Myles H.	MH will progress with CwaC	
July 2023	Commemorative plaque on Johnston's Rec.	Myles H. will address this with Johnston Recreation Ground Advisory Committee this week.	Myles H.		
March 2023	Removed trees, Neston Rd.	MH will contact CWaC re. trees being replaced with their permission.	Myles H.		
<b>Original date actioned</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Dormant Issues</b>			
July 2023	'Kerry', Hooton Rd.	Ongoing.	Myles H		
May 2023	New sound / PA system for village.	Ongoing.	Helen M		
May 2023	Development of land at Hooton Rd/Benty Heath Lane.	Ongoing. A position statement was issued by WR&CS.			
March 2023	Telephone box on Green	No response to enquiries.			



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## APPENDIX 2: Organisation Reports - January 2024

### **Friends of Hadlow Road Station Community Group** *(submitted by Hilary Booth)*

#### Maintenance

The crossing gates have now been given a coat of gloss paint and the fence by the crossing gates have also been painted. In February the kitchen will be given a deep clean, ready for our first pop-up-cafe opening.

#### Santa's Grotto

We had a very successful Grotto in December. A very happy atmosphere, on a cold but dry day, enjoyed by all the children and adults.

#### Events

On January 10<sup>th</sup> BBC North West Television came to include Hadlow Road Station in a 4 programme review, of the 50<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Wirral Way. They filmed for approximately 2 hours. A shortened version of this film will be shown on BBC North West TV in a few weeks' time.

#### Gardening

On 3<sup>rd</sup> January, garden day work was started for 2024. With spring on its way, bulbs are beginning to show, and plans made for future work. Would you like to help us? You will be rewarded with a cuppa and a biscuit at 11am. Garden days are Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> Feb. & Wed. 6<sup>th</sup> March from 10am - 12 noon.

#### Pop-up Café

It will be good to get back into a routine of cafe days once again and meet up with friends and neighbours once more. The first of which is Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2024 followed by Sunday March 10<sup>th</sup> & Sunday March 24<sup>th</sup> from 10am - 1pm.

### **Friends of Willaston Meadow** *(submitted by Fiona Mosley)*

The Meadow continues to be very wet and muddy so please take care and wear suitable boots. We measure the level of Jackson's Pond against the number of planks in the footbridge and it has been exceptionally high, reaching the top plank for several months in 2023.

We have continued our link with students from Ellesmere Port CE College who made lanterns which we hung in School Wood over the Christmas period.

On 31<sup>st</sup> December, we searched for flowers to report to the New Year Plant Hunt organised by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland and spotted buttercup, ivy, hogweed, snowdrops, hazel and annual meadow grass. There are many snowdrops coming through which should soon be a wonderful sign of Spring.

We have a small team of birdwatchers who spotted 43 different birds in 2023 - the most for at least five years.



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In our last volunteer sessions we have cleared some of the brambles around School Wood. We have also built up the dead hedge through the wood using coppiced hazels. We always welcome volunteers at our working group sessions, normally on the first Sunday of the month (weather permitting). We're a friendly group that share a love of the Meadow. Please get in contact if you would like to join us.

For more information, please see our webpage on the Residents' Society website, our Facebook page / friendswillastonmeadow or ring Sarah Shannon on 0151 327 5318.

## **Hadlow Green Singers** *(submitted by Helen Mayles)*

No report submitted. If you, or someone you know, enjoy singing, are able to sight read, you are welcome to join this friendly community choir. Rehearsals are in the Memorial Hall on Thursdays at 7.30pm. Contact person is John Church 0151 336 2228.

## **Johnston Recreation Ground** *(submitted by Sue Unsworth)*

Nothing new to report at this time.

## **Memorial Hall** *(submitted by Rob King)*

A meeting of the Management Committee took place on 9<sup>th</sup> January. The AGM is to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 commencing at 7.00pm.

Bookings during 2023 picked up considerably post COVID and the year ended with surplus of income over expenditure of £7,854 which is £2,000 more than 2022. There was one significant income stream (S4YC) accounting for 35%.

The Trustees held the first soup lunch post COVID which was well received by the community.

The possibility of upgrading our stock of chairs is being further investigated this month with a visit to a wholesaler.

Some external repair and redecoration work to the front of the Hall above the Committee Room is being organised.

Ahead of possible legislation we are arranging for a sanitary waste bin to be placed in the male toilet.

## **Willastonhey W.I.** *(submitted by Susie Dixon)*

Our Bridge Drive is booked for 21st February, further details to follow. W.I meetings take place on 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. For further information email [willastonheywi@weebly.com](mailto:willastonheywi@weebly.com) Website [www.willastonhey@gmail.com](http://www.willastonhey@gmail.com)



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## **Willaston & District Horticultural Society** *(submitted by Pam Irving)*

Our February meeting is on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February which will be our AGM followed by cheese and wine. Always a good evening.

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, Val Brizell, on 07786 982845. Membership is only £8.00 per year, and you can get 10% discount at Burleydam Garden Centre on all gardening products on production of your Membership card.

## **Willaston Christ Church** *(submitted by Viv Ley)*

No report received.

## **Willaston CE Primary School** *(submitted by school office)*

December is always a very busy month in school, with lots of festive preparations as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We enjoyed our Christmas Church Service at Christ Church with Reverend MacLeod and held our Nativity Performances for parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. We also had our annual PTA Christmas Fair in school, and a special panto visit of Treasure Island.

Our Year 5 Brass lessons also came to end with a brief performance for parents, to show what they have learnt. We also had lots of sporting opportunities for our older children with girls and boys football tournaments and the opportunity to attend a Cheshire Phoenix Basketball Match Day clinic which included return coach travel, basketball coaching and games, lunch, meet the players and finally the match against Leicester Riders - what a fantastic day!

We would like to thank all parents for supporting the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and thank our House Captains and Mr Graham for laying the wreath on behalf of school at the Remembrance Day Service.

It is with sadness that we share with you, the news of the passing of Mrs Joy Drew. Mrs Drew was headteacher of Willaston CE Primary School from September 1994 until her retirement in July 2006. During that period of time she steered the school through three successful Ofsted inspections. Her final Ofsted in February 2006 reported that she 'had created a happy ethos where every child is valued within the Christian 'family' of the school'. We send our sincere condolences to her family at this sad time.

It was so lovely to welcome all our children back to school after the Christmas break, as they returned with bright eyes and eager minds, ready to tackle the new year head-on. We now turn our attention to the exciting adventures that await in the Spring term.

We have a jam-packed calendar ahead, filled with stimulating lessons, engaging activities, and enriching experiences that will nurture our pupils' curiosity, challenge their intellect, and most importantly, spark their love of learning.





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We also want to use this communication to keep you updated regarding building work on our school roof. It was hoped that the improvements would have been completed by the end of Autumn Term. However, due to the bad weather we have recently endured, this has somewhat delayed the completion date. As yet, the completion date is very much dependant on weather conditions in the coming days and weeks.

In January, our Year 4 children start their Ukulele lessons in class. Our Year 6 children will be working towards their QCF Entry level 3 Arts Award Explore qualification. To assist them with this and give them an insight into how a gallery works and what's involved in planning an exhibition, Year 6 pupils will visit The Walker Gallery in Liverpool and The Williamson Art Gallery in Birkenhead to view the work of local artists.

We are also looking forward to welcoming all parents into school for our Parents Evenings, as they learn about their child's progress in school and look at the work in their books. We are always keen to welcome volunteer helpers into school and would love to hear from you if you can spare a few hours a week and would like to come and volunteer in the school. We have many areas within school where we'd appreciate support - assisting pupils read, helping with cooking and Forest school to name a few. However, we are also happy to be led by your expertise, so should you have a skill you think you could pass on to our pupils we would very much like to hear from you. You can contact the school office on either 0151 832 5360 or [office@willastoncheshire.sch.uk](mailto:office@willastoncheshire.sch.uk) We look forward to hearing from you.

Remember to take a look at our website for all our up-to-date news - [www.willastonprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.willastonprimaryschool.co.uk)

## **Willaston Football Club** *(submitted by John Fisher)*

Since the last report, very few of our teams have played any football because of weather. The pitches have either been water logged or frozen. So there is little I can report on.

Willaston FC are still looking for volunteers to help run the Club including new coaches as well as new players for all age groups. Please contact either Steve Blackledge (Chairman) on 07899 063336 or John Fisher (Secretary) on 07780 693284 if you are interested.

## **Willaston Methodist Chapel** *(submitted by Sheila Smith)*

Following on from a busy Christmas period with successful Christian celebrations we look towards Easter time.

The school children enthusiastically entered into the "Meet the Characters" Christmas experience. We had a large congregation for the Candlelit Carol Service, and the earlier Christmas Day service, and the nativity Grotto in our Chapel porch survived the wet and windy weather!

By the time this report goes out, the Chapel will have hosted the January Soup Lunch at the Memorial Hall, and we thank all who supported and helped with it, our first since 2020!

Our Minister, Heather, is now on leave but any enquiries can be made through Jim, 327 7183 or Carol, 394 3335. Please note Carol's new number for bookings.

A Happy and contented New Year to everyone.



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## **Willaston & South Wirral Rotary Club** *(submitted by Stephen Mosley)*

2023 was seen out with the traditional switching on of the Willaston Christmas lights (installed by Willaston Residents and Countryside Society), followed by Santa sleigh collections around the village. A large number of families turned out for the central event with Councillor Myles Hogg once more leading the countdown to the big moment before everyone had a chance to meet Santa Claus.

The donations made during this event, the tours of the village and the collections held at Burleydam garden centre raised a magnificent £1685 for charity. Willaston & South Wirral Rotary Club would like to thank everyone who came along and who made donations at all of the events. The club would also like to extend its thanks to the local businesses and groups who helped make the switch on such a success, including the residents who kindly moved their vehicles from the green for the evening. Special mention must be made regarding "Simon le Barber" who, as always with community activities in the village, provided free entertainment, and the Nags Head who kept their kitchen open so the team could get warm with a supply of chips afterwards.

The members of the club had a well-earned evening out for their traditional Christmas meal, this year at Craxton Wood, in December as well with further social events including a "murder mystery evening" planned for 2024.

## **Willaston Scouts** *(submitted by Remco Buckley)*

No report received.

## **Willaston Surgery Patient Participation Group** *(submitted by John Woodrow)*

I hope that all our patients had a good Christmas and I send to you all my very best wishes for a healthy 2024.

I have personal experience and also feedback from patients that there have been difficulties over getting prescriptions from the Surgery and with them being processed by our local Pharmacy.

Dealing first with the Surgery my understanding is that the Surgery is now issuing prescriptions well within the 72 hours that they advise. If when you read this in February this is not your current experience, please get in touch with me.

Turning to our Pharmacy, although this is not within my brief, I have had some discussions with them regarding the processing of prescriptions. As you will probably be aware the Pharmacy has recently been taken over by new owners. The new owners, Well Pharmacy, will as I am sure you will appreciate, have a different way of working from the previous owners and the staff have been having to cope with getting to understand how the new system works. To compound matters a new computer system was installed before Christmas at one of the busiest times of the year and again the staff have been struggling to understand how it works. Staff shortages didn't help and new staff compounded the situation.



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I had a chat with the Pharmacy on January 4<sup>th</sup> and they told me that they thought that they were now on top of the situation and expected that matters would now get back to normal.

I understand that some patients have been dissatisfied with the performance of the Pharmacy and that they have transferred their business elsewhere. Whilst I understand their actions there is always the risk if we don't utilise the Pharmacy we will lose it. I would ask those patients who have taken their business away to find out, say in February, how the Pharmacy is performing with a view to transferring their business back. Some patients who have transferred their business may have gone to national Pharmacies who deliver medication. Please be aware that our Pharmacy delivers as well.

Again I am very keen to hear your current experiences with the Pharmacy as it is only by being aware of the current situation that I can take up concerns patients have and, hopefully, get the problems sorted out. To contact me please ring me on 327 3260 or email me at; [johnwoodrow@btinternet.com](mailto:johnwoodrow@btinternet.com).

John Woodrow, Chairman, Patient Participation Group

## **Willaston Tennis Club** *(submitted by Andrew Walton)*

Nothing to report from the tennis club this month.

Andrew Walton. WTC Chairman. 07961 680 683

## **Willaston Toddler Group** *(submitted by Annette Troake)*

No report received.

## **Willaston Village Festival Society**

Nothing new to report.