

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 4th March 2013 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

There were no residents' issues raised.

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Jane Townsend (Vice-Chair & Footpaths Officer), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Barry Vowles (Planning Officer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Keith Butcher (Willaston Memorial Hall); (Committee Members): Sheila Smith, Hilary Morris, Madeline Hughes, Rob King, Leanne Kershaw, Vicki Spraggon, Carol Savage, Myles Hogg, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Roger James, Anna Groves, Martin Collins.

1. Apologies for absence - Received from Margaret Smyth and Eileen McDonald
2. Update on Membership

Chris reported that Pam Irving has resigned as the representative for the Horticultural Society and they have not yet appointed another representative. Chris welcomed Anna who represents the PTA. They PTA will have a rotation of members attending in future.

3. Declarations of Interest - No declarations were received.
4. Minutes of the Meeting held 7th January 2013

The Minutes were accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed by: Sue Unsworth Seconded by: Barry Vowles

5. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (5th November 2012)

5.1 Parking in Old Farm Close

Myles said that he had contacted the Manager of Cannell Court to discuss the problems. He confirmed that there is no breach of the planning rules which gave a number of spaces to residents. The change in age group does not necessitate a new planning application. Les Davis has since commented that there has been some improvement; however this is likely to be an ongoing issue. Hilary Morris commented that people also park up Mill Lane and Myles confirmed that the double yellow lines are going to be extended so that there is not a problem for people turning into and out of Mill Lane.

5.2 House signs on Little Green

Myles reported that he has requested that a sign is put up but not heard anything more.

5.3 Parking Restrictions on the Green

Myles has been given two potential plans, one of which was not suitable. The restrictions will only apply to cars parked by the Green, not on the housing side as the council cannot control these. It will involve five small signs on the Green. There will be a space for a disabled driver included and the restrictions will only be until 5pm. There was a discussion about a one-way system and Chris proposed that we accept a one-way system with the entrance off Neston Road. This was seconded by Sue Unsworth and agreed. Myles agreed to feed this back and also ask for minimum signage. Vicky asked if residents on the Green would be given a permit to park longer. It was agreed to monitor the situation and consider it at a later date if required.

The Traffic Restriction Order will be going out shortly, which includes a consultation period. There was a discussion about whether we should hold a public meeting during the consultation period and how this links with the District Community Plan public meetings. It was agreed not to have a special meeting for the consultation.

Vicky asked about policing the parking. Myles confirmed that the parking will be managed by CWAC and

there will be some enforcement.

5.4 Lighting in the Alleyway between Old Vicarage Road and Hadlow Road

Myles confirmed that two lights will be provided. A small grant was received from Project Rural Matters and the remaining money will come from his budget. He also confirmed that downlighters would be installed.

5.5 Noticeboards in Village

Chris reported that the rules of the noticeboards and website details are now on both noticeboards. Sue reported that they are always full and asked if it was possible to also use the PTA board. Action: Anna

5.6 Play area

Sarah reported that she had been in contact with local companies to see what they can provide for the money available. Two options had been forwarded and Leanne and Vicky had consulted with the toddler group and parents outside the school to see what the preferred option was. Sarah had subsequently liaised with the council who required that surfacing was provided and a ROSPA check was undertaken after installation. She also suggested that the money available could be supplemented by grants for a bigger provision. Martin suggested that the football club may also be able to help.

After discussion, it was agreed to set up a joint working party with representatives from this committee and Johnston's Recreation Ground committee to drive this forward. It was also agreed that items provided should be colourful. Roger, Anna, Leanne, Vicky and Sarah agreed to be on the working party. Sarah agreed to co-ordinate the group and to contact Ray. Action: Sarah

The committee expressed their appreciation on the village's behalf to Sarah for all her efforts on this.

5.7 Recycling near Hooton Station

Myles reported that these bins have now been removed.

5.8 Events at Pollards

Chris reported that he had written and hand delivered the letter, giving him the opportunity to talk to Jamie Kimpton, the owner of Pollards. He has not heard anything more.

5.9 Pavement in Wallcroft

Myles reported that he had looked at the pavement but there are many worse so he had done nothing more.

5.10 Empty premises at Atwood Terrace

Myles reported that he had got in touch with the relevant department. However, the premises are not yet in a condition bad enough for enforcement action. This needs to be monitored.

5.11 Overhanging trees at The Tap House

Chris reported that he had delivered a letter to the owners but the trees are still overhanging. Myles agreed to now ask the council to contact the owners. Action: Myles

6. WRCS Issues

6.1 Community Pride Competition

After discussion it was agreed not to enter this year. Sue has got litter picking sticks if anyone wants to use them.

7. Bus Stops

Leanne reported that the bus routes had moved from Neston Road to Hadlow Road and there is no shelter or seating available for people at the new stops. After discussion, it was agreed to set up a working party to look at practical solutions. Chris, Leanne, Myles and Vicky agreed to be on the working party and Chris agreed to co-ordinate it. Action: Chris

8. Pot Holes

It was noted that this winter has caused a lot of pot holes. These can be reported on-line at www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/online_services/report_it/road_faults.aspx or by ringing 0300 123 7036.

9. Waste Permit

There is a new scheme for people wishing to use Household Waste Recycling Centres. People using the Neston centre will need to apply for a Neston Pass as the Cheshire one is no longer valid. This allows people to have unlimited use. Application forms are available from the recycling centres or by ringing 0300 123 7042. If you use a van, pickup, commercial type 4x4, commercial type MPV or a trailer over 1.5m, then you need to get a bar coded permit in advance which is valid for six months and allows six visits. This is available at the number above or online at http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/waste_and_recycling/find_a_recycling_centre_or_loc/permit_scheme.aspx

10. Community Composting

Chris drew the meeting's attention to the community composting initiative being done by the Council. Meetings are currently being advertised in the area.

11. Financial Matters

11.1 Treasurer's Report

Hilary Booth reported that we have paid out £86.25 for the hire of the hall and received a further grant of £300 from Myles' fund for a kissing gate. Our current balance in the current account is £924.74 but of this £892 is for kissing gates and will have to be paid out when they are fitted. Therefore our actual balance is £32.74. The lottery account has a balance of £1122.44, of which £360 will have to be paid out in prize money. The gambling licence has been renewed at a cost of £20.

There was a discussion about how to generate additional money and a suggestion made about doing a soup lunch. However, this was felt to be a lot of work and a better method would be for all members to have a recruitment drive for the lottery.

Chris asked everyone to think about additional fundraising options so this can be an item for discussion at the next meeting. Action: All/Sarah

11.2 Lottery

Hilary reported that the January winners were Rosemary Hurst, Sybil Saunders and William Straiton. February winners were Jean King, Tom Jones and Myles Hogg. A draw was done by Anna and Leanne for the March winners. These were Sue Unsworth, Michael Kennedy and Paul Janvier.

12. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

12.1 Goss Moor Appeal

Barry reported that the details of the appeal are now on the CWAC website. The main issue is that the Chestnuts development was agreed. However, this is on the other side of the Green Belt line. Barry circulated a letter he had drafted and asked for comments. Some neighbours have contacted Barry asking what to do about the appeal and one resident is going to do a petition in the neighbourhood. It was noted

that the property Treetops in Mill Lane is on sale and the estate agent's particulars include an 'option for development in the garden'.

In reply to questions, Myles confirmed that there are no plans by the Council to change the green belt or conservation areas in Cheshire West and Chester and Barry confirmed that there will be questions on this in the Community Plan consultation.

12.2 Advertising sign on Heath Lane

Barry reported that the new application has been refused. He has approached the planning officer to ask for an enforcement notice and this is in the hands of the team.

12.3 Other

Barry reported that the planning officers at CWAC expect to issue final approval for the Roften site at the end of this month.

Myles reported that the Weatherstone Court change of use has been agreed.

Barry has submitted support for the pond development at Benty Heath Lane with a comment about parking facilities.

The committee expressed their appreciation to Barry for all the work he is doing on planning matters.

13. Local Councillor's Report

13.1 Dog Road Show

Myles reported that the dog road show did take place, despite very poor weather. Two officers met dog walkers on the Recreation Ground and in the village.

13.2 Bulk buying of energy

The deadline for the collective energy scheme, discussed at the last meeting, has been extended.

13.3 Streetscene

Myles met the Head of Service to discuss how the cleaning of streets operates. He was assured that CWAC still clean drains, gulleys and have barrows out on a regular basis. There are 10 staff in the area. In addition, highways, verges and hedges are now under Streetscene rather than in two separate teams which makes co-ordination easier.

Chris mentioned that at the AGM, it was raised that the footpath on Hooton Road up to the station is getting narrow because of encroaching grass. Myles confirmed that this is on a list for action by the council. It was noted that the Hadlow Road verge is also overgrown. Action: Myles

13.4 Parking

Myles has had another request to deal with parking issues arising from vehicles from Lloyds Garage. This was discussed and it was agreed to talk to the owners of the Nag's Head to see if they would be prepared to rent space out. Action: Chris

13.5 Event Planning

The council has a safety advisory group who provide free support to groups planning events. They have a drop in style workshop on March 18th between 2pm and 5.30pm at St Mary's Centre, Chester. To book a place, email artswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk or ring 01244 976741.

13.6 Grants for Tree Planting

There are grants available from the Tree Council for school and community groups who are able to actively engage children under the age of 16 in tree planting projects during National Tree Week. 75% of the total costs can be funded, to a limit of £700. More information from <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/grants>

14. Footpaths and Bridleways

14.1 Footpath behind Pollards

Following the last meeting, Jane gave Barbara Morris contact details for the Greenspace team and has also discussed the issues of horses and flooding on this path with Greenspace. She has asked for a barrier but currently Greenspace are suggesting a sign. They will however be inspecting again.

It was also noted that the path is used as a cut for cyclists going between Pollards and the Wirral Way.

14.2 Footpath Signs

Jane has been in contact with The Conservation Volunteers who are being helpful and her son has designed a disc for the Willaston walk signs. The request for improved signage for the Wirral Country Park and a fingerpost opposite the Post Office have still not been actioned. Action: Jane

14.3 Memorial Hall Sign

Jane has added a water resistant stain to the walk sign outside the Memorial Hall.

14.4 Kissing Gates

The second kissing gate has been erected on Footpath 28 and Jane is hoping the two others will be installed soon. We now have money for one more kissing gate which Jane suggested should replace the stile south of the Wirral Way on Footpath 34 but there are issues about the exact cost as the price has gone up. Jane will continue to liaise with the council on this. Action: Jane

14.5 Rights of Way

Jane has two new volunteers who have 'adopted' footpaths. Generally footpaths have been very muddy this winter. Jane reported some fencing that has come loose again on Footpath 30 and a tree that fell across the footpath between Hooton Road and Benty Heath Lane. The latter was dealt with very quickly.

15. Issues Raised by the PTA

15.1 Flooding on path by Jackson's Pond

Everyone recognised that this area is very poor and it is difficult for children walking to school that way. It has been on the agenda for the Johnston's Recreation Ground committee for some time. Vicky commented that it would be helpful if parents were encouraged not to cut across the grass on Elm Road and also the wooded area towards the Recreation Ground. Action: Anna

Hilary commented that the Willaston Meadow Society is applying for a grant to the Heritage Lottery Fund to get Jackson's Pond re-profiled. This will include new walkways and there is potential to include drainage as part of this application.

15.2 Dog Fouling around School

This was also recognised as a continuing problem. There was a suggestion that there should be a new sign put up.

Lyn commented that there is also a big problem in Field Hey Lane.

16. Community Reports

The following reports have been received from community groups. Chris thanked all those who had submitted them. In response to questions the following points were made:

- The Willaston Meadow bid will initially be for £16,000 but may be more. They would like to do the work in the Autumn.
- Congratulations were expressed to Natalie who has been selected to visit Ghana on an international guiding trip. It was suggested that she should do a report to school when she returns and an update for our website.
- The next Village Festival will be over the weekend of 26-28th June 2015 and will celebrate 70 Years of Television.

16.1 Christ Church

No report received

16.2 Friends of Willaston Meadow (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

Work has continued when weather permits on winter maintenance of the orchard and meadow. Jackson's Pond has overflowed and flooded part of the path, making it even more necessary to obtain funds to clear it of sludge and deepen it. The flood has also shown that a raised path would be desirable.

This summer it is hoped that we can arrange for a small mammal survey to be carried out, with help from the Wildlife Trust.

16.3 Guiding Organisations (Submitted by Carol Savage)

On Saturday 16th March between 10.00am and 12.30pm Willaston Rangers are holding a Big Spring Clean Sale in the Memorial Hall - so please tell everyone you know to come along and snap up a bargain! This fundraising event is to support one of our village Rangers who, in beating fierce competition throughout Girlguiding North West of England, was selected to join an International trip to Ghana in July 2013. Whilst there Natalie will work in an orphanage in Kumasi in the Ashanti region and will visit the Guide Associations in Ghana, as well as experiencing the Ghanaian culture. She needs to raise over £1,400 to pay for her air fare, accommodation, visas etc. and is working hard towards her goal. As a fledgling Senior Section Ranger unit, we are proud of Natalie's success in her selection for this International experience and we hope that more of our girls will follow in her footsteps in 2014.

There will be an evening of Easter activities for all the village Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers on Monday 25th March.

16.4 Hadlow Green Singers

No report received

16.5 Hadlow Green W.I.

No report received.

16.6 Horticultural Society

No representative currently.

16.7 Johnston Recreation Ground (Submitted by Roger James)

No report received.

16.8 Memorial Hall (Submitted by Keith Butcher)

The Memorial Hall had its AGM on 23rd February. The number of private parties and tenants using the hall has increased over the year, giving us an additional 11% in revenue (nearly £2,000). The running expenses continue to be kept at an acceptable level, although we have had to agree to additional cleaning as a consequence of the higher usage. There were no major repair and maintenance costs last year but a painting of the outside of the building is scheduled for this Spring. The year ended with a surplus of almost £9,000, which brings the reserves for the organisation to a healthy £40,718.

16.9 Scouting Organisations (Submitted by Dave Kendall)

The Group recently received a cheque for £1072 for our involvement in the Scout Post scheme. Part of the money raised is also donated to Wirral based charities and this year this was £26,000 (over £500,000 has been donated since the scheme began). A big thank you to The Spar, Martins and Willaston Pharmacy for selling the stamps for us and to all the volunteers who come to help sort and distribute the post.

Excitement is growing for the visit of the Chief Scout, Bear Grylls to the North West region over the weekend of 11th and 12th May. All the sections will be attending County events and will be hoping to meet the man himself – there are also competitions for all to enter to win an audience with Bear! In Cheshire, we will have 3 separate 'Bear in the Air' visits over the weekend – he will fly in by helicopter on his tour of the North West region. With lots of exciting activities being planned, it should be an event to remember and will be the highlight of the year.

16.10 Sporting Organisations

No report received

16.11 Willaston District Plan

No report received.

16.12 Willaston Hey W.I. (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

Recent events have included our annual dinner, and a very successful fund-raising bridge drive with an exceptional afternoon tea. The darts team have had success, and are now through to the quarter finals of

the county competition. Last week the quiz team were among the winners of the Wirral heat, and will be attending the county final in April. Meanwhile, the ramblers have enjoyed a walk in Marbury Country Park, and on a beautiful sunny day walked from Meols along the North Wirral coast. Outings arranged in the next few months include a trip to see "The Mousetrap" in Liverpool, and a guided tour of the new M & S store at Cheshire Oaks.

As a service to members, a testing session for osteoporosis was arranged locally. This week our speaker took us on a walk through Liverpool, with an excellent presentation and some little-known facts. Next month a representative of Pyke's jewellers will tell us about sourcing fine gems from Belgium to Bangkok to Bogota.

16.13 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

Thanks to all who supported the very successful Soup Lunch which the Chapel ran in February. Extra tables had to be set out, but there was plenty of soup and desert for all. The annual ecumenical Lent Group meetings have begun and anyone is welcome to join in the weekly sessions. They are held each Wednesday in the lead up to Easter, meeting at the Chapel at 7.30p.m. The relatively new Bible study group, "Pause" welcomes all, on alternate Tuesdays in the Chapel schoolroom from 10.30a.m. to 12 noon. This is in addition to the weekly Wednesday evening Bible study meetings at people's homes.

The information for the Easter services will be on the Methodist Chapel notice board and in the Parish magazine.

16.14 Willaston PTA (Submitted by Faye Clowes)

A new committee was formed in Sept 2012 and consists of the following people:

- Chair – Faye Clowes
- Treasurer – Anna Groves
- Secretary – Deborah Pickering
- Committee – Lyn Massie, Carol Owen, Sara Wood, Lesley Taylor, Carl Jones, Lizzie Dale, Jane Perry, Sarah Kennedy, Charles Buckley

The PTA are organising these events over the next 2-3 months:

- 8-Mar-13 3:15pm-5:15pm: **Film Night**, venue is School (children only)
- 22-Mar-13 9:00am: **Bag2School** (clothes and textiles recycling).
- 27-Mar-13 10:15am: **Cake Sale**, venue is School during breaktime (children only)
- 15-Apr-13 3:15pm-5:15pm: **Zumba for Kids**, venue is School (children only)
- 26-Apr-13 7:30pm onwards: **Wine Tasting Evening**, venue is Memorial Hall (all welcome)
- 18-May-13 11:30am-1:30pm: **May Fair**, venue is School (all welcome)

If anyone would like further information on any of these events, please contact Faye Clowes (faye.clowes@hotmail.co.uk)

16.15 Willaston Royal British Legion Branch

No representative currently

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

Our late January meeting was attended by approximately 120 people – a 50% increase in attendance compared to our October 2012 meeting. Two representatives of the West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) gave a joint presentation outlining its formation and purpose and a lively Q & A session ensued. The representatives of the CCG were extremely surprised by the numbers present and went away under no illusion as to the feelings of patients regarding their expectations for the future of the surgery. The strength of feeling demonstrated has resulted in the Chief Executive Officer of the CCG personally undertaking to find out more about the tender process for taking over the Practice in April 2014 and reporting back to us. The CCG have now offered the opportunity for us to have the Chairman attend and speak at our next meeting. We have made the point that if he attends he must have something relevant to say regarding the key issues.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 22nd May, Memorial Hall commencing 7.30pm. A high turnout is essential if we are to maintain the momentum. The agenda for the next meeting is still being finalised but will be advertised well in advance of the next meeting.

16.17 Willaston Village Festival Society (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

The cycle racks have now been installed on the footpath to Elm Road, bought with the proceeds of the last Festival. We had a dinner at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club with entertainment from a guitarist from Canada and a pianist. It was a very enjoyable event.

We have gazebos, urns and tea pots available should any Willaston organisation wish to borrow them for events in the future.

17. Any Other Business

17.1 Max Kirby has not been well. It was agreed to send a card.

Action: Chris

17.2 Food Bank Collections

Sheila reported that the chapel and church are going to be contact points for food bank collections and will have boxes where items can be left to go to the Chester and Ellesmere Port Food Bank. Items can also be collected. Contact Linda Williams on 0151 327 4413. Anna also agreed to enquire about having a box at the school.

Action: Anna

17.3 Defibrillators

Keith reported that all Ellesmere Port Councillors had contributed towards defibrillators after someone collapsed at a planning meeting. All schools have now been contacted to see if they are interested in having one. Anna said that this had been brought up at the PTA meeting as they don't currently have one in Willaston. Rob agreed to check if the surgery has one.

Action: Rob

17.4 Average Speed Cameras

Leanne wondered if any consideration had been given to average speed cameras through the village. This has not yet been discussed.

17.5 Fishing Ponds

Vicky commented that as well as the fishing pond on Benty Heath Lane, there is also one on Heath Lane which costs £8 a year. It was also noted that there is one on Damhead Lane.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

Dates for Committee Meetings in 2013:

Mondays 29th April, 1st July, 2nd September, 4th November.

All in the Memorial Hall at 7.15pm.

Date of the Annual General Meeting: Friday 27th September 2013