

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 7th January 2013 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

1. Jen Williams and Les Davis attended the meeting to raise issues about problems parking in Old Farm Close. Cannell Court has now dropped its minimum age to 40 and the majority of residents are younger people with cars and there are not adequate parking facilities. They expressed particular concern about access for emergency vehicles and also noted that it appears that two businesses are operating from Cannell Court.
Myles commented that in the past he has had meetings with Adactus Housing, who manage Cannell Court and agreed to set up a joint meeting with Adactus, residents of Cannell Court and residents of Old Farm Close. He also noted that there appears to be a permanent 'To Let' sign on the premises which breaches planning regulations and that businesses are not allowed to be run from the premises. Action: Myles
Jen and Les were also advised that if cars are causing an obstruction, they can ring the non-emergency number 101 to report them.
2. Jen also raised an issue about post for The Green going to the wrong houses and requested a sign on the Little Green to make it clear which houses have the address The Green. Action: Myles
The Chair thanked Jen and Les for their useful contribution.
3. Barbara Morris attended the meeting to raise an issue about the footpath behind Pollards being churned up by horse riders and bikes. Jane commented that this is not a bridleway but owners of horses who are in the fields nearby have private rights of access for their horses. Barbara suggested a gate may be helpful and Jane agreed to include a question about this in the village plan consultation. Jane also took her details to let her know who she should contact in the Council about this issue. Action: Jane
4. Barbara also raised the issue of parking on the Green and commented that there was a car with a flat tyre there throughout the Christmas period. The committee assured her that they are aware of this issue and looking at time-limited parking.
The Chair thanked Barbara for her useful contribution.

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, Eileen MacDonald, Pam Irving, Hilary Morris, Madeline Hughes, Rob King, Leanne Kershaw, Vicki Spraggon, Carol Savage Myles Hogg.

1. Apologies for absence - Received from Glenn Ayres, Roger James, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Ray Dent and Margaret Smyth.
2. Declarations of Interest - No declarations were received.
3. Minutes of the Meeting held 5th November 2012
The Minutes were accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting.
Proposed by: Keith Butcher Seconded by: Hilary Booth.
Appreciation was expressed of the new summarised version.
4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (5th November 2012)

4.1 Implementation of parking restrictions on the Green (5.1) – Myles reported that he had met the Highways Authority who are drawing up an order which will include one disabled spot if it goes ahead. Myles checked with the committee that it was appropriate to go ahead with this in advance of the community plan and the committee agreed that it should.

4.2 The alleyway between Old Vicarage Road and Hadlow Road – tree and footpath clearance (5.2) – Chris reported that he wrote to the residents of the Old Hall and within a few days the trees had been cut back. He also wrote to thank them for their prompt action. It was noted that the alleyway is classified as a highway and is maintained by the Council.

4.3 Funding lighting improvements in the alleyway between Old Vicarage Road /Hadlow Road (5.3) - Myles is discussing the maintenance of any lights with the council before taking the application for funds to Project Rural Matters. Jane commented that the environmental group for the Community Plan has suggested that down lighters would be appropriate. Action: Myles

4.4. Cutting of trees (5.5) – Sarah had put together a list which Myles has forwarded to the Council. It is believed that some progress has been made.

4.5 Noticeboards (7.1) – Sue has been making sure that they are kept tidy and inappropriate notices are taken down. Eileen has put together some rules which will be kept in Martins with the key and also on the village website. Action: Eileen/Chris

It was agreed that a village diary was not necessary but people should be encouraged to use the Diary pages on the village website.

4.6 Grass cutting on A41 (18) – Myles had fed in the issue to the Council

4.7 Drop down kerbs (18) – Myles has fed in the issue to the Council and it is on a list.

5. WRCS Issues

5.1 Delegated Authority to Members – Chris explained that there are times when a decision cannot wait until the next committee meeting. The following proposal was suggested by officers:

‘The committee delegates authority to Officers to agree and action any points that they consider not to be controversial that require resolution prior to the next full committee meeting. At least four officers should agree for this delegated authority to apply. Any action by officers should be ratified at the following committee meeting.’

This was proposed by Keith Butcher, seconded by Eileen MacDonald and agreed by all present.

5.2 Website update – Chris said that the website continues to be popular with an average of 120 visits a day. The most popular pages are the walking leaflet and map, the District Community Plan minutes, the WR&CS minutes and the lottery application form. He reminded people to make use of the diary pages for their events. It was agreed to put a new card about the website onto the noticeboards. Action: Hilary Booth
Chris also reported that Barbara has agreed to continue to be the webmaster.

5.3 War Memorial – Chris reported that he had written to thank the group for their fundraising for the Memorial Hall plaque and had received a letter back from Richard Berry.

6. Play Area

There was no information from Ray or Glenn about developing a group to fundraise for the play area. Myles said that the priority for the Recreation Ground committee was first to make it safe by rolling the ground and secondly to get prices for additional equipment. It was noted that this needs to be done in consultation with parents. Myles has some money in his 2012/13 budget that could be used but time is short as it has to be used this financial year. Sarah agreed to contact Ray and offer support with identifying what equipment could be provided and Leanne offered to help consult with the playgroup.

Action: Sarah/Leanne

It was also noted that some of the boys in the village really would like somewhere they can skateboard safely but at a cost of £60k this was unlikely to be progressed in the short term.

7. Village Litter

Barry expressed concerns that litter in the village has increased recently, particularly before Christmas. It was noted that shutters on the new kerbside collection are not always put down which may be adding to the problem. Myles said he had recently been to a meeting and understands that different areas are designated as different priorities for litter collection by the Council and agreed to ask for a copy of the map explaining this. He has also asked for a meeting with Streetscene to discuss progress on this issue.

Action: Myles

It was also noted that the autumn leaf fall has still not been dealt with and the recycling centre by Hooton Station is a mess again. Myles said he had arranged for it to be tidied but very quickly a lot of bags had again been dumped there. Myles agreed to find out if there is a telephone number that can be contacted to report badly littered areas.

Action: Myles

8. Financial Matters

8.1 Bank Account Consolidation – Hilary reported that the money management account has now been closed and the money in it transferred to the current account. A new account has been opened for the Willaston Community District Plan and she has set up the new mandate for the current account.

8.2 Treasurer's Report

The current account balance now stands at £710.99 but we still have to pay £592 for the kissing gate so the funds available are £118.99. The Lottery account now has a balance of £1262.44. An extra winner was drawn for December as we are only allowed to keep 40% of the income.

8.3 100 Club

Winners for November were Mark Klienhorn, Hilary Morris and Jill Lessels. Winners for December were Barbara Ingram, Hilary Morris, Brian Marland and Pat Jones.

9. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

Barry had already circulated an update. It was agreed that in future he should circulate monthly updates which would also be displayed on the noticeboards and the website given the high level of interest in aspects of some applications.

9.1 Advertising Sign on Heath Lane- It was noted that planning permission has been refused but the sign is still there and a new application submitted. It was agreed that we should continue to object. Action: Barry

9.2 Goss Moor – Planning permission was refused but they have appealed. Myles explained that anyone who has written in will be notified of the appeal. The original comments sent will be considered in the appeal but if we wanted, we could respond with comments related to the grounds of the appeal. Barry will monitor this and respond if necessary. Action: Barry

9.3 Church Hall – it was noted that the site is now being cleared. In the absence of Ray, it was the committee's understanding that the builders will keep very close to the original agreed detailed plans.

10. Local Councillor's Report

10.1 Licencing Act – Myles drew the committee's attention to a consultation on the Licencing Act 2003 which is open for comments until 6th February. Information on how to respond can be found at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/consultations.

10.2 2011 Census – initial county-wide results have now been published. There are 329,608 people living in the Cheshire West and Chester area. Ward by ward results will be published soon and Myles will let the committee know the details when available. Action: Myles

10.3 Benefits – Myles drew the committee’s attention to large changes that are due to come to the way the benefits system operates, particularly for tenants. He drew members’ attention to a guide published by the Muir Group.

10.4 Bus Stops – Myles had received an email from Leanne about bus stops. Leanne expressed concerns that there are now no direct buses to Arrowe Park hospital, that there is no seating or shelter for some stops and that buses stop at places where the pavements are very narrow. Some stops seem to have been moved without any village consultation. It was agreed to include this as a main agenda item at the next meeting. Action: Sarah

10.5 Speed cameras - Myles has received a note from Linda Conway, the PCSO asking for new volunteers to help with speed camera checks. Her contact is 01606 362530.

10.6 Broadband - European funding has been approved for rural broadband and the Connecting Cheshire Partnership aims to deliver more than 90 per cent superfast coverage in the area. They will be appointing either BT Openreach or Fujitsu as their partner in the Spring and this company will be providing matched funds. People can campaign for better broadband by registering at www.connectingcheshire.org.uk.

10.7 General permitted development rights - The government has been consulting on general permitted development rights for householders and businesses. This consultation has now come to an end and it affects all areas outside conservation areas, including green belt.

10.8 Excess winter deaths – The rate of excess winter deaths in Cheshire West and Chester is higher than the average for the North West and the council has been successful in applying for £252,798 towards nine projects. Those operating in our area are:

- Spread the Warmth (Age UK) who will distribute winter warmth packs, install cold weather alarms and run road shows. Contact 01606 305030;
- Emergency Warmth (Warm Zone) who will source energy deals, deliver advice and facilitate installation of energy saving measures. They will also give small grants to help with fuel bill debt where vulnerable people are in fuel poverty. Contact 0800 0337873.
- Shopping Service (Ellesmere Port Living at Home) who will provide shopping for elderly people with health needs in Ellesmere Port and Neston area during severe cold weather. Contact 0151 357 3873
- Warmth over Winter (Mears) who will provide an enhanced handyperson service to support vulnerable people living in cold housing by installing low level and secondary insulation measures. Contact 0151 355 1313.

10.9 National Tree Week – there is a new interactive mapping of trees that have a Preservation Order on them at www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/preservationorders. Anyone can find out if a tree in your garden or elsewhere has a preservation order on it and whether you live in a conservation area, for which all trees have the same planning rules.

10.10 Collective Energy Scheme – Cheshire West and Chester has joined with 11 councils across the UK to create a Collective Energy Scheme where people combine their purchasing power and bulk buy energy as a group to reduce costs.. You can register to be part of this by going on www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk and looking for ‘Ready to Switch’. Free registration is only open until January 28th with no commitment to purchase.

10.11 Scams – People have reported receiving a call from an automated service, claiming to offer a cash reward linked to pensions. You are advised to hang up immediately. There has also been calls from people saying they can solve a problem you have with your computer. The caller may claim to be from Microsoft. You should not do what they request, which includes giving remote access to your computer. Information about similar scams should be reported to Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 08454 04 05 06 or Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.

10.12 Dog Fouling – the Roadshow will visit Willaston Recreation Ground on Wednesday 16th January from 7am to 10am.

10. Footpaths and Bridleways

10.1 Kissing Gate funding. It was agreed to accept the legal terms for Cllr Hogg's funding for kissing gates. Proposed by Keith Butcher, seconded by Sheila Smith and agreed by all present. This gives us funding for kissing gates on the walk from Mill Lane to Street Hay Lane. In addition, we have secured an extra gate from Greenspace for free. Jane asked people to contact her with suggestions as to where this could go.

10.2 Footpath signs. Jane said that we are still waiting for the signs to be installed. She had looked into making our own but this is difficult and she suggested either a simple round sign to go on posts to mark the village walks or posts with colour coding to match the walks. The latter would need about 20 posts. Myles agreed to give Jane a contact for Mersey Forest to follow up. Action: Myles

It was also agreed to get an estimate for this work and then seek funding, possibly by approaching local businesses for sponsorship with their name on the signs Action: Jane

10.3 Willaston Walks – Jane reported that the Willaston walks leaflet has now been added to the website, along with guidance to the law on footpaths and bridleways and a link to the interactive site for Cheshire which gives footpath numbers. It was noted that the Willaston walk notice on the Memorial Hall needs to be renewed as water is now seeping in. Action: Jane

11. Community Reports

The following reports have been received from community groups:

11.1 **Christ Church** (Submitted by Ray Dent)

The Hall has been demolished and we are confident that the construction of the houses will be in accordance with the Planning Permission. We will shortly be formulating the Faculty Application (legal church agreement) for the refurbishment of the interior as previously stated.

11.2 **Friends of Willaston Meadow** (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

The very muddy conditions did not deter the children of Year Three when they planted young bushes in the Meadow. Volunteers have lightly pruned the older apple trees in the orchard. Tidying of overgrown brambles and preparation of the planting area for annuals will continue through the winter.

11.3 **Guiding Organisations** (Submitted by Carol Savage)

All the Guiding units were well represented at the Remembrance Day Parade, including the Rainbows who joined because of the unveiling of the new war memorial plaque. The girls were very well behaved and all enjoyed the refreshments kindly provided by the British Legion ladies.

Christmas celebrations began at the end of November with a Craft and Disco event for all age groups held in the British Legion Club. The previous weekend had seen some of the units taking part in "Christmas Cracker" at Hadlow Fields, much enjoyed despite the very cold, wet weather. Separate Christmas parties were held by the units before finishing for the holidays. This new term will see visits to the panto and the older girls moving up into the next units.

11.4 **Hadlow Green Singers** (Submitted by Margaret Smyth)

HGS 'Fantasia of Christmas Carols' held on 13th December 2012 in Christ Church was a great success and everyone enjoyed the Christmas refreshments served in the Memorial Hall afterwards. A busy season was then rounded off with us singing at our last wedding of the year on Saturday 29th December. As our reputation grows so several wedding bookings are already in the diary for 2013, if any one is planning a wedding and wants a choir in attendance get your booking in quickly. We resume on Thursday 10th January 2013 preparing for the Easter concert. New members always welcome, especially male voices as we do need more of those. No experience necessary, no auditions, if you think you would like a new hobby for 2013 then come join us for lots of fun!

11.5 Hadlow Green W.I. (Submitted by Eileen MacDonald)

Carols on the Green was a great success. This has now run for 43 years.

11.6 Horticultural Society (Submitted by Pam Irving)

Mike Kennedy has retired as Chair.

11.7 Johnston Recreation Ground (Submitted by Roger James)

There was a meeting scheduled to be held on 28 November. The agenda was as follows:

- 1 Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October
3. Matters arising
4. Maintenance
 - 4.1 Care of Pavilion and Play Area
 - 4.2 Recreation Ground
5. Any other business.

Request from Willaston District Community Plan Environmental sub-committee to know if we have any particular plans for Johnston Recreation.

Minutes of the meeting are awaited..

11.8 Memorial Hall (Submitted by Keith Butcher)

Since the last Residents' meeting there has been one Memorial Hall meeting. The main issue was a general concern that organisations, including the Residents were using the hall for longer than they had booked and for which they had paid. I have already raised this matter with the Chairman of the Residents.

11.9 Scouting Organisations (Submitted by Dave Kendall)

We finished the Christmas term with visits to the Bowling Alley at Bromborough by the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts (though not all on the same night!) . The Explorers had a pizza night for their Christmas party.

The Scout Post was successfully run again and we are grateful to all the help given to deliver the cards by the current parents of the members and also all the friends of the Group who come back year after year. At the time of writing, we are waiting to hear how much the scheme raised for charities across the Wirral and also how much the Group will receive for their involvement.

The Group is currently enjoying significant growth with 12 new members invested last term (and similar numbers between now and Easter). The Cub Pack is now practically full with spaces reserved for Beavers moving-up as they become of age.

11.10 Sporting Organisations

No report received

11.11 Willaston District Plan (Submitted by Paul Janvier)

The Willaston District Community Plan sub group leaders are meeting on Tuesday 8th January to commence the process of moderating questions prepared by each of the specific topic sub groups and to agree the layout of the questionnaire which will be delivered to all households in Willaston in March.

The chairman and one member of the steering group met with the head teacher of Willaston Primary School to discuss the Willaston Community Led Plan and to see if the school would like to participate. The head teacher expressed a positive interest in the school participating in the project and believes the staff & children will be keen to take an active part by researching and producing their own questionnaire, the results of which to be included in our main report.

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

There was no formal meeting in December, although a large group enjoyed a Christmas meal at the Nag's Head, and members attended a carol concert in Chester Cathedral. Events in January include a talk on Autism and a fund-raising Bridge Drive with afternoon tea.

11.13 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

We would like to thank all those who supported our Christmas activities and services, which benefitted those less fortunate than ourselves, as well as being enjoyable occasions for us all. The unusual and varied Nativity sets from all over the world, displayed for a weekend at the beginning of December, attracted many visitors, and comments. The Rainbows, Brownies and "Create" children crafted their own lovely displays. Rainbows also participated in the "Toy and Christingle" service on the Sunday, the donated toys well received by the Charles Thompson Mission for underprivileged children. The busy weekend was completed with the magical "Candlelit Carol Service" in the evening.

We had a "Nativity service with a difference", then went Carol singing round the village, proceeds of £300 for the N.C.H. Action For Children. Our Christmas services culminated in the Christmas morning family celebration service.

We wish you all a Happy New Year.

11.14 Willaston PTA

No report received.

11.15 Willaston Royal British Legion Branch

No report received.

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

In Mid December the NHS West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (WCCCG) formally announced that it had received full authorisation without any attached conditions. WCCCG will be responsible for funding of Willaston Surgery with effect from April this year. It is one of the first CCG's to have received authorisation and in particular without special conditions being attached. A member of WCCCG is scheduled to speak at our next meeting on 29th January 2013 which will be held in the Memorial Hall commencing 7.30pm. Full details will be advertised in due course.

At a more local level the Surgery continues to experience problems with some patients making appointments but failing to attend without notice. This is a trend which needs to be reversed as it is a complete waste of resources and can be depriving other patients with a greater need getting an appointment as early as they may like.

11.17 Willaston Village Festival Society (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

The Festival Society had its AGM on 17th November and Sarah Shannon was elected Chair. Many thanks were given to Joan Butcher who retired as Chair after two successful Festival. Thanks were also given to other retiring committee members – Sheena Chalmers and Jane Collingwood. At the AGM, a bench was given to the Chair of the Residents' and Countryside Society which has been installed on the little Green. Cycle racks will shortly be installed on the footpath to Elm Road.

The Festival is holding a dinner at the Royal Liverpool Golf Club on February 8th to celebrate the success of the last Festival and look forward to the next. Tickets are available from Sarah Shannon on 0151 327 5318.

It was noted that there had been little contact with the PTA recently. Sarah agreed to follow this up to see if a representative can be encouraged to attend future meetings. Action: Sarah

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Sheila reported that she has been revising the list of organisations and this is almost complete now.

12.2 Vicki expressed concern about Pollards' advertising of marquees for weddings etc. She commented that functions are noisy and residents on the Green are not always aware of events coming up. Myles said he had looked into this as other people had also commented but they are doing nothing against the law. It was agreed to send a letter requesting consideration be given to local s when these events are planned.
Action: Chris

12.3 Eileen raised concerns about the drains and their ability to cope in the wet weather. Myles said he had spoken to the gulley cleaner and they are doing their best in the circumstances.

12.4 Eileen pointed out that the pavement in Wallcroft is collapsing outside number 7. Myles agreed to report this.
Action:Myles

12.5 Jane asked for advice on organisations available to help older people on their own in the village. She was advised to speak to Pam Irving.

12.6 Sue mentioned that an empty premises on Atwood Terrace is looking very dilapidated. Myles agreed to look into it.
Action:Myles

12.7 Sue mentioned that there are trees overhanging the pavement at The Tap House on Neston Road. It was agreed to write to them pointing out the problem.
Action:Chris

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

Dates for Committee Meetings in 2013:

Mondays 4th March, 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