

Willaston Residents' and Countryside Society (WR&CS)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 15th November 2015 in the Memorial Hall

Residents' Issues

Stephen Bazely and Michelle Swan attended the first part of the meeting and committee members introduced themselves. Michelle had previously expressed concern about sale of land along Hooton Road. Barry had been in contact with her to explain that this land is on the Green Belt so even if signs say that it has potential for development, this is unlikely to happen.

Stephen had come to introduce himself as vicar for Christ Church. He has been in post since February. Stephen thanked everyone for what we do in the village and commented that he keeps updated by the minutes. He felt that he is still finding his feet as there is a lot going on in the village. For the time being, Jean will continue to represent the church but his involvement may change. However, if there are any issues affecting the church, he encouraged people to get in contact – his phone number is now on the sign outside the church.

Chris commented that the first 15 minutes of the meeting is for any resident to raise any issues with us. He explained that all village organisations are asked to put a representative forward so that issues can be discussed at group meetings and brought back to the Society if necessary.

Committee Meeting

Present: (Officers): Chris Hampshire (Chair), Vicky Spraggon (Vice-Chair), Sarah Shannon (Secretary), Barry Vowles (Planning), Hilary Booth (Treasurer), Sue Unsworth (Publicity), Jane Townsend (Footpaths); (Committee Members): Rob King, Debs Jerrett, Jean King, Lyn Jackson-Eves, Myles Hogg, Sheila Smith, Annette Troake, Hilary Gould, Fiona Ennys, Paul Janvier and Madeline Hughes

The meeting opened with a minutes' silence to remember people who died three days earlier in Paris.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Leanne Kershaw, Hilary Morris and Margaret Smyth.

Phil Leach will no longer be the representative for the PTA and they are not able to send a regular representative at the moment.

2. Declarations of Interest

Chris Hampshire declared an interest in item 7.2 as Chair of Friends of Hadlow Road Station.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st September 2015

The Minutes were proposed by Lynne, seconded by Sue and accepted by the Committee as a true record of the meeting. Jane and Hilary Gould abstained as they were not at the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the previous Minutes (21st September 2015)

There was discussion on the following items, other items being completed:

4.1 Play area (item 4.2 and 5.1)

Martin was not available to report whether fundraising for the play area had been raised at the School Governors meeting. Action to be carried forward. **Action: Martin**

Myles reported that no decision was made by the Recreation Ground committee on the money in the allotment pot.

Sarah confirmed that she had asked if there was a form of sealant that could be put over the path and has been told that there is nothing available.

4.2 Post Office (item 4.3)

Chris had contacted the Post Office and had been told that they thought that the disabled entrance had been done. They agreed to action this work. However several weeks later, no works had been done and when Chris asked for an update, he received no response. Hilary Gould confirmed that she had heard nothing from the staffing side of things. Myles proposed and Paul seconded that we should give them another week to respond and then write to the Planning Department. This was agreed by all present except Hilary Gould who abstained due to her position as a staff member.

4.3 Library (item 9.3)

Myles had been in contact with the Library Service about the proposed provision of a mobile library. The library will visit every three weeks on a Monday afternoon and will stop in front of the Memorial Hall. The date for implementation is not yet confirmed. Sheila commented that a few new books had arrived at the current library and staff were unaware of the plans.

5. Play Area Working Group

Sarah reported that the play area fund has been boosted by a donation of £1000 from the Festival Society.

There has continued to be issues with the path. Three people have reported lumps of glass on the path which appear to have been put down during the construction of the path. Sarah has walked around with the Council officer and picked up several pieces. This is being investigated by the Council.

The Council are seeking to fund the Landscape Architect's fees for stage two. There is a willingness to do this but it still needs to be determined which pot of money this will come out of. Until these two issues are resolved, we are not able to hold the public consultation on stage two.

Currently the sand is being raked on a weekly basis by the Council at the same time as doing their inspections. Therefore, it has not been necessary to set up a community group but this will become necessary when the inspection regime changes to monthly.

Bulb planting has been done with children from Willaston Rangers, Willaston Beavers and the Methodist Church Create group. There are more bulbs to be planted and we have vouchers remaining to buy plants for community activities, which are available for any group.

A seat has been donated in memory of Marjorie Jones. The bench donated by the Festival Society has been removed for the time being as it is not fixed and needs renovating. When this has been done, we will ask the Council to put both benches in suitable positions.

6. WR&CS Business

6.1 AGM

Chris congratulated Vicky on being elected Vice Chair and Sarah on being re-elected Secretary. He thanked Debs for buying the cheese and wine at the AGM. It was noted that fewer people attended than in the past two years and there was a discussion about the reasons why. Generally, it was felt that people got more information than in the past because of the newsletter and find it easier to raise issues with us. Therefore they are only likely to attend if there is a 'hot issue'. It was agreed that in future we would stick to a formal AGM with business matters only and no cheese and wine. There would be a speaker if there is a 'hot issue' but we should also consider ad hoc general meetings if something comes up at a different time of the year.

There was also a discussion about the meeting being open for the first 15 minutes as this sometimes feels uncomfortable when people have to go. Vicky proposed, Sue seconded and it was agreed unanimously that we should make the meetings open to anyone but the first 15 minutes were for the public to raise issues. After that, they attend as observers only and cannot participate in the meeting. It was also agreed to put a bigger 'Have Your Say' sign on the noticeboards. **Action: Sarah**

Sarah reported that we got a webmaster from the AGM, Brett Hoare, who has coped with a lot of new information that needed to go on the site recently, as Christmas activities are being advertised.

7. Financial Matters

7.1 Financial Report

Hilary Booth circulated the financial report. On 27th October, the current account had a balance of £863.44, of which £352 is for newsletter printing and £49.29 for footpaths. The lottery account has a balance of £2196.60 and over 150 tickets have now been sold. The play area account has a balance of £1060.08.

It was noted that there is money that needs to be paid from the Lottery Account into the current account. Chris asked for a projected balance to be done for the next meeting so that a discussion can be had about what to do with any surplus funds.

Action: Hilary Booth

Chris thanked Hilary for the work she has done on the accounts and particularly for getting so many people to sign up to the Lottery.

7.2 New Homes Bonus

Chris explained that the New Homes Bonus is a sum of money available to parishes from CWAC based on the number of houses built in the area. There is a £4,798 to apply for in 2014-5. At the last meeting, it had been agreed that the priority was for a new noticeboard on the Green. Myles had spoken to the Council but they had problems finding a suitable wooden one. Annette agreed to speak to a local joiner to get a quote for a slightly bigger one than currently with two locks at the back and weatherproofed.

Lyn had approached the Horticultural Society but their initial reaction was that they did not think that there would be enough people to maintain planters/hanging baskets if funding could be found to provide them. However, the committee will discuss it and Lyn will check on the results of the discussions.

Action: Lyn

Jane commented that Pat James had suggested resurfacing the enclosed section of FP29 (between the Recreation Ground and Mill Lane). A formal request has not been received and it was not thought that this is a priority for the funding. The decision made at the previous meeting that after the noticeboard, any remaining funds should go to the play area appeal and Friends of Hadlow Road was endorsed. Myles suggested that if more than one person supported the request for footpath improvement, he could look at it from his budget.

Myles informed the committee that it is possible that the New Homes Bonus payments by the Council to local organisations may cease as there is currently a consultation on this. The funds will remain centrally with the Council if the proposal is passed. Myles also commented that his Councillors' Fund is likely to be reduced from £10,000 to £5,000. It is therefore important to spend all the money available before the end of the financial year.

8. Planning Applications, Decisions and Appeals

8.1 Willaston Planning Applications

Barry reported that the application for a new dwelling between Alma Cottage and Merton Cottage on Neston Road has been rejected as the plot is too small for the proposal. An application to build a summerhouse in the garden of Ashtree Farm may also be rejected for not complying with the regulations.

Barry has responded to an application from Pollards saying that there is no objection in principle but the plans seem to overwhelm the listed area of the building. Normally in this situation, the Council will work with the owners to amend the plans so that they are more appropriate.

8.2 Traveller site on Heath Lane

The travellers have put in two appeals against the rejection of their application and against the enforcement notice. The deadline for comments has now passed and the hearing will be on 16th February 2016.

8.3 Willaston Meadow

Barry had been approached by Hilary Morris and then contacted the Planning Officers as the developers at Goss Moor had fenced off part of the Meadow which is Council property. CWaC will be following this up.

9. Local Councillor's Report

9.1 Spar delivery vehicles

Myles had written to Spar about delivery vehicles some time ago and not received a response. The committee confirmed that this is still an issue, along with parking outside the designated parking spaces so that the road becomes very narrow. Myles agreed to write again to Spar. **Action: Myles**

9.2 Funding

The Rural Support Fund is open for applications for capital based projects of between £4,000 and £20,000 where there is 50% match funding. The deadline is Friday 18th December. More information can be received by ringing 01244 977475/01244 973165 or emailing ruralsupport@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk.

9.3 Police

The Willaston and Thornton PCSO has now resigned. A new PCSO will be assigned to us and in the meantime the work is being covered by other resources.

9.4 Dog Poo Campaign

There is a dog called Mabel who helps educate people about collecting dog poo. Unfortunately the school is not able to take part in a campaign. Myles asked that this is put on the agenda for the next meeting. He also noted that the Council won a RSPCA Gold Award for the way it deals with stray dogs. **Action: Sarah**

9.5 Neston Neighbourhood Plan

This plan is now at the public stage and is being voted on. If 50% or more voters back it, it becomes part of the planning documentation used to determine outcomes of planning applications.

9.6 Village Green

Myles has confirmed that the beech tree needs some work done on it. This will be undertaken by the Council. The bus stop has new signs.

9.7 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The JSNA brings together information about the health and wellbeing of local residents and wider determinants such as the local economy, deprivation and education. It is a useful source of statistical information at a ward level. The JSNA webpages have been revamped and can be found at www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/jsna.

9.8 Snow Boxes

Myles has provided two snow boxes from his funds which are now installed in the village.

9.9 Quarry Road

There were mixed views on the committee about the current one-way system affecting Quarry Road. Myles had not heard when it was likely to revert to two-way.

9.10 Parish Council

Chris asked about the discussions that the Council were having about the provision of Parish Councils across CWaC. Myles said that the parished area consultation had been completed, with some boundaries changing but he had not heard anything about proposals for consultation with unparished areas.

10. Footpaths and Bridleways

10.1 Footpaths

Jane reported that most of our footpaths and bridleways are passable. A dead branch overhanging FP 32 (behind Pollards) has been cut down at her request. Volunteers are needed to help with trimming FP31 (between Benty Heath Lane and Hooton Road) as this is not on the Council's strimming list.

Jane has enquired about the cost of improving the surface of FP 32 (behind Pollards Inn) in two places. She has got an estimate of £2,700 to raise the surface of path and enclose it with boards and membrane and is seeking funding for this. In addition, Myles has provided funding for a metal platform by the pond. The Council has agreed that the work will be done when the metal has been galvanised.

There are still open trenches alongside part of FP30 (between Mill Lane and Hooton Road) but these are now marked with red and white tape.

Please email willastonfootpaths@outlook.com if you see any other problems with our Willaston footpaths.

10.2 Bridleways

The Council has been reminded about cutting overhanging branches and filling in hollows on the bridleway between Street Hey Lane and Benty Heath Lane.

10.3 Willaston Walks Footpath Signs

No progress has been made about the sign to go on the lamppost in the centre of the village. Myles thought permission had been given and agreed to check this with Andy Raynor. Jane is also waiting to hear from BT to ensure that we don't dig up cables elsewhere. **Action: Myles**

Pete Atkinson personally erected some way-mark signs around the village. Other signs are low on the Asset team's priority list.

The Memorial Hall village walks sign needs to be updated. Members suggested that Jane goes to the picture framers in Neston for advice and agreed that black and white pictures would be better than colour.

11. Organisations' Reports

The reports below were circulated in advance.

11.1 Christ Church (Submitted by Stephen Bazely)

We have had a number of significant services over the last month or so, our Memorial service for the bereaved and our Remembrance service, which were both marked by a sense of hope from God's love and compassion. We've launched a new Discipleship Team to help us to get to know Jesus more deeply and live for him in every part of life. The team will also be thinking about how we can meet together socially and for support. We are also creating other teams to look at caring for the church building, church yard, Services and how we can serve the community.

11.2 Friends of Hadlow Road Station (Submitted by Chris Hampshire)

Weeding and tidying up of the platforms continues with alternative Saturday/Sunday dates set for the next few months. If you feel able to assist, even if only very occasionally, then please do come along.

A very successful inaugural Signal box opening event was held at the end of September with nearly 200 people attending although we were very lucky with the weather! Many thanks to those involved in the detailed planning and delivery of this event.

Detailed planning for Santa's grotto on the afternoon of 13th December in the signal box is well underway with mince pies and mulled wine available in the waiting room accompanied by a band, music and singers. Tickets cost £3 per adult and child but only adults get mulled wine and only children get to see Santa and come away with a present. Very kind donations of a Christmas tree, two sets of Christmas lights and various Christmas decorations have been received.

A meeting with various Departments of CWaC Council has been held as progress on a contract for FHRS has been put on hold. The meeting established that one department has vacated Hadlow Road Station whilst the Ranger Services currently continue to occupy the building. If the Ranger Services vacate, other Council Departments are offered the building as office accommodation and only if there are no Departments interested will other options be considered. We are working closely with CWaC to try and ensure the building remains a community asset and is not sold off for commercial opportunities. Meanwhile CWaC are going to establish what, if there are any, restrictions in the title deeds for the building and the access road.

A visit was undertaken by a number of FRHS Officers to Whitegates station near Winsford who have been very successful in developing their old station building (also owned by CWaC) into tea rooms predominantly.

11.3 Friends of Willaston Meadow (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

The September working party achieved the scything and clearance of the perennial wildflower area, with the help of the Wirral Countryside Volunteers. A thorough review of both necessary and desirable work with the ranger from CWaC Greenspace has allowed us to assess which work can be tackled by volunteers, and which needs input from professionals. The central area was mown in September by CWaC contractors, with the grass removed for use by farmers, and the paths have been mown regularly. In addition, CWaC staff have used mechanical equipment to clear several parts of the outer meadow of coarse grass and brambles. It is part of the management plan that these areas are cut in rotation, but not all of them every year, and we are

very grateful that this heavy work has been done for us. It will be interesting to see how regeneration occurs. As usual the Orchard has had some good crops, and there have been more pears and damsons this year. The school was invited to use apples for pressing, and some were also taken to Apple Days.

11.4 Guiding Organisations

No report received

11.5 Hadlow Green Singers

No report received

11.6 Horticultural Society

No report received

11.7 Johnston Recreation Ground (Submitted by Sue Unsworth)

This report is copied from information received as I was unable to attend the meeting on 25th September.

Andy James has replaced Hazel Barber as the Council Representative. He is in charge of allotments/ playing fields and parks. He is called the Environment Officer. Office number 0300 123 8123. He is to meet with Peter Costello (allotment representative) to discuss allocation/payments/repairs etc.

The mole problem on the whole of Johnston area will be looked in to There is one spotlight on the pavilion which has been mended but one has been removed. The container has not yet been removed.

The pavilion has had a leak and part of the ceiling in the lounge area has collapsed. It was discovered that there was asbestos in it so the pavilion has been closed for the removal of this. New locks were fitted to stop accidental entry and also signs warning of danger.

A "NO PARKING" sign is to be fitted to the main entrance gate to enable allotment entry to the allotment users.

The new recreation ground "RULES" will be put up and the wording is correct.

The allotments rental monies now total £2107 and this is for the use of the whole area of the "REC"

A new notice stating "NO HORSE RIDING" will replace the damaged one.

An A.G.M. cannot be held until the Council have advertised for new members of the Committee but the next ordinary meeting will be held in the Church at 7:30 P.M. on 25th November. All Welcome.

11.8 Memorial Hall

No report received

11.9 Scouting Organisations

No report received

11.10 Sporting Organisations

No report received

11.11 Willastonhey W.I. (Submitted by Hilary Morris)

In September we celebrated the centenary of the national WI with our own event, which was a tea party in the hall, with entertainment provided by the Burton Ukulele Band. As well as some interesting monthly talks on subjects as diverse as the history of Thornton Manor and the experiences of a policeman, visits have included theatre trips, an evening meal at the Nag's Head and our usual walks. We shall be hosting the Soup Lunch on 14 November, and organising the Carols on the Green on 22 December. Future plans include visits to a mosque and the Liverpool Medical Institution museum, and a carol concert in Chester Cathedral. November sees our Annual Meeting, followed by a workshop where two members will guide us in making Christmas decorations.

11.12 Willaston Methodist Church (Submitted by Sheila Smith)

Thank you to all who supported the recent Shoe Box appeal. We joined with our sister Methodist Church in Greasby and, between us, collected 120 filled boxes and £440 in donations!

Please come and join us for our forthcoming Christmas services;

DECEMBER 6th --- TOY AND CHRISTINGLE --- 10-45a.m. A special service focusing on children.
DECEMBER 20th --- NATIVITY SERVICE --- 10-45a.m.
" " CANDLELIT CAROL SERVICE --- 6-30p.m.
CHRISTMAS DAY --- SHORT MORNING SERVICE --- 10-45a.m.

11.13 Willaston CE School PTA

No report received

11.14 Willaston Royal British Legion

No report received.

11.15 Willaston Royal British Legion Services Club

No report received.

11.16 Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club (Submitted by Debs Jerrett)

Xmas light switch on - Friday 4th December. Parade leaves Willaston C of E school after their Christmas Fair @ 16:45 led by Santa on his sleigh for switch-on on The Green @ 17:00 Carols courtesy of Willaston school choir (weather permitting) Mince pies & mulled wine courtesy of Willaston & South Wirral Rotary.

Santa & his sleigh will be visiting the village on Tuesday 8th December & Tuesday 15th December between 18:15-20:30. Please see WR&CS website for approximate timings & schedule

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

Bridgewater will have been managing Willaston Surgery for 20 months and overall the evidence we have from various sources is that the majority of patients are still pleased with the level of service they receive. There have been significant staff changes with both nurses and many administrative staff having moved on. Dr Meyer's surgeries have not been fully replaced and for those of you who are not already aware, Dr Diane Taylor retires at the end of this year. I am sure you will all wish to join with us in wishing her a long and happy retirement. **A collection is being organised for Dr Taylor. Any donations for her retirement gift may be placed in the box at the village Pharmacy where there is also a book for any messages.**

The pressures on General Practices, both workload and financial, are challenging and for Bridgewater, the staffing situation has involved significant use of locum doctors and agency staff to fill current administrative vacancies all of which is a drain on what was a tight operational budget set by NHS England at the time of the tender to take on the Practice.

Interviewing two potential doctors for the Practice takes place on the day of our forthcoming committee meeting and I have been invited to be involved in that process from a patient perspective. As soon as I am able to let you know the outcome I will do so.

At a lengthy meeting with management this week we discussed delays with the issue of some prescriptions. Some patients have experienced problems in getting the 24 hour turn around which they had been used to and for some time there has been a notice in reception saying that repeat prescriptions MAY take 48 hours. The local pharmacy has also been advising patients that they should allow 48 hours. Unfortunately there have been two factors accounting for the delays. The first is that there has been considerable use of locum doctors and not all deal with signing of repeat prescription thereby placing added pressure on those doctors who do. Secondly the introduction of the Electronic Prescribing Service (EPS) has caused some problems which are still being resolved. There can be a significant time lag between the doctor electronically signing the prescription and it then actually arriving at the pharmacy of choice. We are therefore taking this opportunity to notify patients that, **for the time being, 48 hours should be allowed for a repeat prescription to be ready** either for collection at the surgery or being dispensed at the pharmacy. We feel that it is far better to say it will take 48 hours rather than say it may be ready in 24 hours whilst the issues causing delays are being resolved. **We therefore ask patients to be mindful of this when needing repeat medication if they have not arranged for this to be done automatically via the pharmacy.**

From discussions with patients who approach me from time to time there are still some perceived problems over obtaining an **urgent same day appointment**. If you believe you need to have a same day appointment because of an acute situation affecting you then it is important, when you contact the Surgery, **to actually say**

you need an URGENT appointment. The staff are not mind readers and therefore it is your responsibility to actually say that you need an URGENT appointment if you believe that to be the case. Patients should be mindful that in some cases (eg sudden onset of chest pains) it may be wise to get someone to take you to an Accident & Emergency department or call an ambulance as valuable, in some instances, lifesaving time can be lost waiting for your appointment.

The Flu vaccination programme is well underway and over 700 patients have already been vaccinated. However, there are still patients eligible for vaccination who have not yet come forward. If you wish to have the vaccination you should make an appointment as soon as possible.

We have a Patient Group meeting on Tuesday 17th November commencing 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall. Two speakers one being Dr Richard Martin going through "A Doctor's Day" explaining all the things a doctor has to cope with in the course of a normal working day. We also have the Clinical Services Manager from Wirral Hospice talking about what they do for local patients and those close to them.

Diary dates for next year are Patient Group meetings on Wed 27th January and Wed 30th March 2016

Finally as we move towards 2016 we would to thank patients for the support they have shown during 2015 and it would help us if you could say what sort of topics you would like us to cover in the coming weeks and months.

11.18 Willaston Toddler Group (Submitted by Annette Troake)

Toddler group meet every Thursday morning and following discussion I will be the group's representative at the residents meetings. We are mums, dads, grandparents and carers who meet to let our children play and enjoy meeting others. We looked forward to the park being developed and although it is a vast improvement there are things we would still like to see there. Of course we are only a small group but we use the park regularly. I also use the park on a regular basis as I am a childminder and take children there after school.

11.19 Willaston Village Festival Society (Submitted by Sarah Shannon)

Following the successful Festival this summer, we were delighted to give £1000 to the Play Area fund and £1000 to Friends of Hadlow Road Station. We are retaining £8000 ourselves to help fund the next Festival.

Our AGM will be on Saturday 21st November at 11am at the Memorial Hall. At the moment we are not sure if we will be able to put on another Festival in 2018 as we currently do not have enough committee members. If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in joining us, we have the following roles available: Secretary; Services Manager; Exhibitions Co-ordinator; Community Event Co-ordinator. You will be expected to work extremely hard throughout the Festival weekend but the reward is seeing the community come together and have fun. For an informal discussion, please ring me on 0151 327 5318.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Vicky Spraggon

Vicky said that she will be moving to Little Ness shortly but is happy to continue as Vice Chair.

12.2 British Legion

Hilary Gould said that she is resigning as treasurer of the British Legion. This means that the branch do not have sufficient committee members to continue. It is not clear what the implications of this are, particularly for the Remembrance Day parade. The Club is a separate business entity. It was noted that the Memorial Hall still needs a treasurer.

12.3 Parish Magazine

Rob noted that the parish magazine urgently needs a new editor.

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

Dates for future Committee Meetings:

Monday 18th January 2016

Monday 21st March 2016

Monday 16th May 2016
Monday 18th July 2016
Monday 19th September 2016
Monday 21st November 2016

AGM:
Friday 30th September 2016