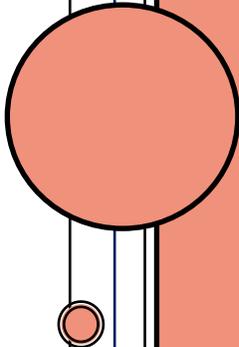


WILLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020



PARISH COUNCILS – WHO ARE THEY?

Parish and Town Councils are the level of local government closest to the needs of local people. Parish and Town councils are created in law and are required to act within the laws by exercising the powers and functions which have been conferred on them by Acts of Parliament. However, these laws give the Parish and Town council a wide remit within which to improve the lives of their local community. The Council collects a precept each year (a sum collected with the council tax each year from the householders in the parish) specifically intended to maintain and improve facilities and services for local people. The precept for 2020/2021 is £130,000 an increase of slightly over 1% per household.

Parish and Town Councils are the least bureaucratic and the cheapest form of local government in existence. All sums collected are invested in the needs of the Parish itself. They are elected bodies and as such are responsible and responsive to their local electorate.

WILLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Willingham Parish Council is made up of 15 Councillors all of whom are volunteers. The period of office of a Councillor is normally 4 years, but if they have been co-opted or elected at a bye-election, they will serve until the next normal election time which at the moment is May 2022.

The Council currently employ four part time members of the staff:

The Clerk – Mandy Powell

The Compliance Administrator – Annika Osborne

The Finance Officer – Sarah Rutherford

The Litter Picker – Mark Mumford

You can contact the Parish office by email or phone:

Clerk@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

01954 261027

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Writing this report was not how I expected to end this year. A decision made in late 2018 to remove the “set-aside” community use status from a field behind the recreation ground meant the loss of a treasured dog-walking facility. Despite strenuous efforts by the council, no specific equivalent replacement could be found. Although there are still many paths and bridleways available, some dog-owners continued to search for an alternative. However, the subject became very contentious, acrimonious, and, regrettably, personal. Several councillors, including the Chair, preferred not to continue under those conditions and resigned.

So it was that since September 2019 I have had the unexpected privilege to be the Chair of Willingham Parish Council. I was Vice Chair for only 5 months, which is usually the “apprentice” post for at least a year, but I have been a Councillor since September 2012 and chaired the Planning Committee from January 2013 until taking up the Parish Chair. I could not do this without the excellent support of the Parish Office and particularly our very capable and knowledgeable Clerk, to whom I give my thanks. We currently have a full Council with no vacancies, and I also wish to thank all the Councillors who freely give their time and expertise to keep the village running smoothly.

This has been a busy year and we have been working on many initiatives. These include:

Highways

- After many years of campaigning, the 30mph limit on Station Road has been extended down to Westfield.
- To reinforce this change, the Council purchased a portable speed warning sign. This can be moved between sites and records traffic numbers and speeds in both directions.
- A minor highways improvement bid to put in a 40mph buffer zone into the village on the Earith Road was unsuccessful, but we will be reapplying in the future.
- We have apparently been successful with a grant application to the A14 Legacy Grant Fund for a footpath to run from the end of the existing one on Earith Road down to the orchard entrance. Progress on this seems to have stalled while the A14 team concentrated on finishing the road.
- We worked with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) to try to stop construction vehicles which are not supposed to come through the village. Signs have been put up at the Northstowe site and north of the village to remind Northstowe vehicles that they are not to come through Willingham. ANPR cameras will be installed at Northstowe to check the direction vehicles leave and are travelling in. This data will be passed to SCDC enforcement officers if necessary. This obviously will not remove all heavy vehicles from the village but will hopefully reduce the numbers.
- We worked with the school to complete a successful minor highways improvement bid for time limited parking and yellow lines around the school. This should reduce congestion and the risk of injury to pedestrians.
- Signs warning drivers to slow down on West Fen Road where children are playing have been ordered and will be installed.

Environment

- Fifty oak trees, in memory of everyone on the War Memorial, have been planted on the Meadow Road site to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Poppy seeds have also been sown and additional Silver Birch trees will also be planted on the site.
- There are 16 SCDC owned streetlights in the village, which will soon be changed to LED fixtures. Responsibility for the provision and payment of electricity was recently passed to the Council. We have chosen a supplier which provides renewable energy. (The majority of streetlights are under the remit of Cambridgeshire County Council and are already LED.)
- The Council applied for a Zero Carbon Initiative grant to improve the Ploughman Hall heating to be more efficient. This initial bid was unsuccessful, but we will continue to seek funding.

Social and Wellbeing

- The Parish Council fund 14 community lifeline units for residents who need them.
- We are working on adding a third defibrillator in the redundant phone box on the High Street to complement those at the Pavilion and Library.
- We made improvements to the Orchard so that it can be used by dog walkers.
- We currently donate £3,000 per year to Over Day Centre which supports many of our elderly residents.

Community

- We provide free use of the recreation ground and pavilion for the youth football teams.
- Community Groups are given one free booking in the hall each year to help them raise funds for their groups.
- The Council has a grant budget each year which is allocated to applicants on a case by case basis in line with their grant policy.
- We provide financial support to Willingham News so that it can continue its excellent job of providing the magazine to every household each month.

We have finished the year under exceptional circumstances with the coronavirus lockdown. The Halls, Pavilion and QEII playing field have been shut, although the Recreation Ground remains available for walking and exercise. Parish meetings are being held remotely and virtually, including the Annual Parish Meeting. We were advised by Government that we need not hold an Annual Meeting and that all Councillor posts would be extended by a year without re-election. We have lost rental income, but most of our outgoings have remained the same. This will obviously have some financial impact, but we are currently hopeful that our reserves are sufficient.

I hope that all parishioners are aware of the Willingham Hub, organised and operated entirely by volunteers, who are helping those villagers who are vulnerable or isolating. The Council has helped where it can with clerical support and some financial assistance, but the Hub is an independent initiative and one for which we are extremely grateful.

Derek Law
Chair

LEAD COUNCILLOR REPORTS

CEMETERY

Business has continued as usual throughout the year.

The grassed areas and hedges have been well maintained , and the fallen leaves removed as they accumulated during the Autumn.

We responded to the Social Club for the trees overhanging their property to be pruned. The tree crowns were lifted, and large branches pruned back.

At the same time two other diseased trees were removed, along with large dead branches in another tree.

Due to the current lockdown, other works to prune low branches and shrubs along with the removal of brambles is on hold.

Work on the main Cemetery gates and pillars started a few days before the lockdown and is currently on hold.

We should like to thank Councillor A. Cook for resolving a problem with a hinge on the small gate on Lane Stile. It now functions correctly.

Brenda Mansfield
Cemetery Lead Councillor



GREEN AND BOUNDARIES

Meadow Road

The site is gradually improving with any voids being filled as they appear. This will be an ongoing problem for several years due to the history of the site. The fly grazing of horses continues and is difficult to deal with as the horses are of very little commercial value and the costs of removing them are considerable. It is also difficult to find a local livestock haulier willing to do it and almost impossible at the moment due to the virus lock down.

A double avenue of 50 English Oak trees has been planted to celebrate the seventy fifth anniversary of the ending of the Second World War. It had been intended to have a simple ceremony on site to mark the occasion, but this was also cancelled due to the Corona 19 virus regulations. Poppy seeds were sown in the autumn in the hope that there would be a field of

poppies in the summer. While the plants are bitter and unpalatable to horses, they may trample them down.

The Green



The Christmas tree and lights were again put in place and thank you to all who helped. A tree had to be purchased this time as the supply of large trees from the Continent was made difficult by concerns over Brexit. Many hauliers were reluctant to commit to bringing loads to the UK in case there were traffic jams at the ports. The trees on the Green are inspected regularly and any dangerous branches cut back or removed. The pump is inspected and the electrical power box.

Community Orchard

The provision of a public footpath to the Community Orchard remains ongoing and the Parish Council is continually trying to facilitate this. Some additional fencing was erected to allow dogs to be exercised on the site with less danger of straying onto the road.

Landing Ground

The planned tree pruning and fencing of the Landing Ground has been delayed as it is not essential and there are many other more urgent expenses making this delay a prudent option.

Long Pond



Long Pond



This belongs to the village but is maintained by the District Council as part of an Awarded Watercourse. The Council do far more than merely carrying out their responsibility of ensuring that the water flows through it. Despite the heavy rain this winter there have not been any problems though the levels were unusually high.

Village Pound

The Pound is maintained free of charge by the house owner adjacent to it. The grass is cut regularly, and the bulbs planted in the sward make a colourful show in spring. The Parish Council appreciate this asset being so well looked after on behalf of the village.

Village Seats

The Parish Council own many seats around the Village, and these are inspected at least once a month and any repairs needed are carried out. If a seat is beyond economical repair, then the Council will make a decision on whether or not the cost of replacement is justified by the amount of use.

Pyrethrum Way

The Parish Council own the first and the second Green and the trees on them. The trees overhang the footpath and require regular cutting back for public safety. There is also a submerged pumping station owned by the Parish Council in the Second Green.

Byways

Although not a Parish responsibility the various byways around the Village are inspected every month and any problems are reported to the District Council or the County Council. There are numerous and increasing amounts of fly tipped refuse on these tracks thus making more work and costs to the District Council. The gates to prevent winter usage of these track ways are frequently damaged which is a huge cost to the County Council who are becoming reluctant to continue to repair and replace them. There is also on-going damage to the surface of the roads. A joint meeting between the Parish, District and County Councils was held to investigate how joint working and good practice might improve this. The agreed suggestions will be implemented over the next few months.

Ray Manning
Green and Boundaries Lead Councillor

LEISURE AND AMENITIES

We were forced to close the QEII field to the public on government advice in the last week of March, due to covid 19, but I am pleased to say that the recreation ground has remained open and well used (with of course appropriate safe-distancing), by older residents looking for somewhere safe to walk, joggers, and families and children playing football etc. We will reopen the QEII field as soon as possible.



West Fen Road 'Children playing' signs

Users of the QEII field and the rec have become increasingly concerned by speeding traffic along West Fen Road, which bisects the site and so is used by many pedestrians, many of them children. To provide visual speed reduction, we investigated the erection of white 'gates' on either side of

the road, like those seen at the entrance to many villages, incorporating 'children playing' signs. This was ruled out by County Highways. As a second-best option the Council applied in August under the Private Local Highways Improvement scheme to erect the more standard children playing signs. At the time of writing we have had an informal indication that this will be allowed.

QEII Field

This continues to be a very popular and well-used facility, and on fine (and not so fine) days there are usually many families enjoying the space. The trees planted by WAG are beginning to mature and look very attractive.



It has been a quiet year, with just some minor repairs needed to a couple of pieces of equipment, following the annual ROSPA inspection. Quotations have been sought for repairs to the areas in the surface of the toddler area which have sunk slightly. As these areas are relatively small and stable, it was decided repair them, rather than go for the very expensive option of lifting the whole surface and putting a proper stone base under it.

Willingham Youth Trust's community café in the Youth Building was open during many weekends in the summer, and many thanks are due to the Youth Trust and WAG volunteers who gave up their time to man it. As well as supplying refreshments, this also allowed their toilet to be available for users of the QEII field and the rec. Following requests from parishioners, the Council had looked at making the toilets in the Ploughman Hall or pavilion available for use by the public, but it was decided that difficulties in isolating them from the other facilities within these buildings, and in particular the high cost of monitoring and cleaning while they were open, made this impractical.

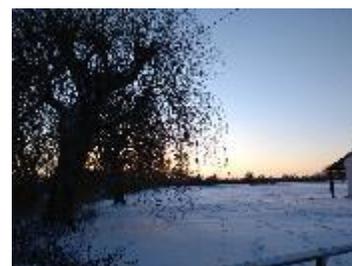
Pavilion

I am pleased to report that the severe problems we had last year with vandalism to the building and substance abuse in the surrounding area have not recurred, possibly due to the enhanced CCTV coverage.

The pavilion has been open for over 10 years and the render on the outside is in need of repair and repainting. A considerable time was spent during the year ascertaining how to treat the existing anti-graffiti paint in order to get good coverage of the new paint, and by the time a firm quote had been agreed it was too late for this financial year. The work is due to take place in May/June of 2020.

Recreation Ground

The rec was once again used for a very well-attended children's football festival in June, organised by the Willingham Wolves, and it



was disappointing that it took place on one of the few wet days in an otherwise dry period. In July the Willingham School Association organised the annual Fen Gallop - a chip-timed 10 k route plus a family-friendly 4 miler. There was also a children's race. Stalls from various village organisation plus a beer tent made this a very festive occasion. In November the Scouts held their usual fireworks display.

There has been some vandalism, with the cricket nets regularly getting pulled down and damaged. Also, the tree stump in the middle of the rec was yet again set on fire, so it was removed, and the area grassed over.

Following the loss of access to the 'dog walking field' beyond the recreation ground owing to a change in regulations around the set-aside scheme, further requests were made by dog owners to allow dogs on the recreation ground or a temporarily fenced-off area of it. The Council reaffirmed its view that use of the rec by children playing was incompatible with allowing dogs.

Parking Area

The parking area on the left of West Fen Road is in a poor state, with many potholes. All that County Highways has been able to offer is several loads of road planings, which have been spread over the site by Willingham Wolves volunteers. But the planings are soon pushed out of the holes by traffic, leaving the area as bad as ever.

MUGA

Following the council's agreement last year to prioritise the provision of a multi-use games area (MUGA) for the S106 Open Space Provision money, a MUGA working party organised a consultation of all village residents in the summer of 2019. A questionnaire was available online on the Parish Council's website, Willingham Life website and village Facebook page, and paper copies were available at various points around the village. We were delighted to receive almost 200 responses, covering a wide age range.

A report on the findings is available on the WPC website or from the Office, but in summary 97% of respondents were in favour of a floodlit fenced all-weather MUGA being located on the recreation ground. The vast majority already participated in sporting activities, and roughly 50% of them travelled to neighbouring villages or Cambridge to use all-weather facilities. 87% said that if a MUGA was built in the village, it would encourage them to participate in sporting activities there. The following were the main sports requested: Tennis (30%), Football (28%), Netball (21%), Hockey (11%), Basketball (6%).

Based on these survey results, an artificial sand dressed grass surface is proposed of size 37 m x 34 m, in an area to the west of the Bowls Club. It will include a five a side football pitch overlaid with two full sized tennis courts and two full sized netball courts. This surface will allow safe play and good rebound properties for tennis and football, and whilst not an approved surface for league netball will allow recreational netball games and training to take place.

Efforts are now concentrated on obtaining planning permission. With the invaluable input of local resident Ian Ross, head of Sport and Recreation for Cambridge City Council, a comprehensive draft

design statement has been produced, and was presented to the Parish Council in January. Before submitting to SCDC we are awaiting a flood risk assessment, required by the Environment Agency as the rec is in a high flood risk area. Some puddling on the site during the unusually wet December and January has underlined the need for the MUGA to be raised, and the FRA will set out how this can be compensated.

We have set up an informal group of MUGA users, and also had a preliminary meeting with Tim Arthur, Chairman of the Cambridge LTA.

Clubs

The recreation ground is regularly used for football, cricket, hockey and bowls. Sadly, all these activities are currently on hold due to the covid-19 outbreak.

The Willingham Wolves football club has continued to grow, with currently around 200 members. This year a new men's team was added to children's teams covering ages 6 to 16, and a girl's section started in July. The under 10's team reached the final of their League Plate knockout, a great achievement, so it was very disappointing that the final had to be cancelled.

The bowls club has also been active, and membership currently stands at 21. Last year they had a much better year than for a while, improving their league position, and were able to increase the number of teams they put into the league by fielding a men's team as well as a mixed team.

Over the course of the winter the rec has been used by a new village running club, the HI Runners, who have used the floodlights for training in the dark evenings.

I would also like to mention the Willingham Diamonds Netball Club. Though they don't use Parish Council facilities (pre-MUGA!), playing at the Primary School in the summer and Swavesey Village College in the winter, they are an important part of village sport. It is a friendly local club which has been running for about 12 years, currently in division 4 of the Cambridge District Netball League, and was in 5th place before the season came to an abrupt halt in April due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Hiring

The pavilion and recreation ground are available for hire and this year the booking forms and fees were updated. Details can be obtained from me or the Parish Clerk.

Linda King
Lead Councillor, Leisure and Amenities

HALLS

Both the Ploughman Hall and the Public Hall continue to be very well used. The Ploughman Hall is booked out most weekday evenings as well as several daytime slots by regular users offering keep fit, dancing, yoga, badminton and many other activities for parishioners to enjoy. One off slots are also often booked for parties and other social events. The Public Hall is still primarily used by the Scouts who continue to build on their extremely popular sessions.

The Council has continued to carryout essential maintenance to the buildings and has also been looking at ways to enhance both spaces to ensure the popular use of them remains and develops in the future.

The Council has spent some time looking at ways to improve the Ploughman Hall's environmental impact and this year new windows have been installed and replacement doors have been ordered and will soon be in place. These will hopefully both improve the fabric of the building and also help reduce lost heat from the building.



We have also been looking at ways to overhaul and improve the very outdated and inefficient heating system in the hall and are hoping to replace it with a more effective and environmentally friendly system. To this end, we applied for South Cambs District Council's Zero Carbon Communities Grant but were unfortunately unsuccessful on this occasion. We continue to look for funding streams and ways to bring this project to fruition.

The Public Hall is an old building which could require major capital expenditure for its updating and improvement. Discussions have been ongoing with the Public Hall User Committee regarding both immediate maintenance issues as well as their long-term goals for its improvement.



Rhys Tassell
Lead Councillor, Halls

PLANNING

The Planning Committee met 17 times during the year and considered 49 planning applications, 12 less than the previous year.

Amongst these were 8 extensions, 5 dwellings and 3 small housing developments, 3 agricultural buildings, and sundry amendments and reserved matters.

The committee made no recommendation for 23 applications, recommended 17 for approval and 9 for refusal. SCDC agreed with all those recommended for approval and of the 9 recommended for refusal, 3 were subsequently approved and 3 refused by the District Council with the rest still “out for consultation”.

Neil Harris
Chair of Planning

GRANTS AWARDED 2019 – 2020

Grants have been awarded to the following groups during the last 12 months:

BENEFICIARY	AMOUNT
Willingham Library	600.00
Over Day Centre	3,000.00
Relate	550.00
First Responders	550.00
MAGPAS	200.00
Bobby Scheme	500.00
Willingham Cricket Club	700.00
Willingham News	1,264.70
TOTAL	7,364.70

The Council continue to provide free use of the Pavilion and Recreation Ground for the Youth Teams in the village as well as reduced charges for community and education groups using the Ploughman Hall. Local Groups also benefit from the reduced cost of using the Public Hall which is currently leased to the User Committee and at present is mainly used by the Scout Group and the renovated section of the Ploughman Hall which is leased to Willingham Youth Trust.

In addition to the above, the Parish Council also pay for the provision of fourteen community lifeline monitors from the District Council for residents who need them

ACCOUNTS 2019-2020

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 31 March 2020

INCOME RECEIPTS	AS BUDGET STAT	TRANSFER	ACTUAL
	£	£	£
Precept	123,275		
Green & Boundaries	5,724		
Leisure & Amenities	480		
Halls	18,795		
Cemetery	4,115		
Establishments	6,899		
Section 106	0		
Interest received	116		
	<u>£159,404.00</u>	£19,109	£140,295
EXPENDITURE			
Green & Boundaries	5,960		
Leisure & Amenities	13,037		
Halls	31,264		
Cemetery	11,382		
Establishments	27,811		
Salaries	44,615		
Insurance	5,301		
Willingham HUB	2,000		
General Reserves	4,899		
Section 106	12,210		
<u>Section 137</u>			
Piper lifeline	3,102		
Donations	7,365		
	<u>£168,946.00</u>	£19,909	£149,837
INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE			
	<u>-£9,542.00</u>	<u>£0.00</u>	<u>£-9,542.00</u>

PARISH COUNCIL ASSETS

Property and Land belonging to the Parish Council

Ploughman Hall- West Fen Road, Willingham, Cambs, CB24 5LP

Date Purchased: Year 2000

Purchase Price: £239,304

Unique Property Reference No: 10003188724

Map reference: E544872 N245256

Freehold

The Ploughman hall houses the Council office and the sports hall and the Youth facility. The sports hall is available for hire by both regular users and one-off bookings. The Youth facility is leased to Willingham Youth Trust on a 10-year lease. This lease is due for renewal in 2025. The Parish Office is open to the public Monday to Thursday 10am to 1pm

Sports Pavilion – West Fen Road, Willingham, Cambridgeshire CB24 5LP

Date Purchased: 1972

Purchase price: Not known

Unique Property Reference No: 10033035727

Map reference: E540185 N270670

Freehold

The Sports pavilion is a facility provided by the Parish Council in conjunction with a grant awarded by the Sports Council for the use of local clubs and other users and consists of a small meeting room, kitchen and changing room facilities.

The Old Recreation Ground/Community Orchard – Earith Road, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase price: Not known

Unique Property Reference No: Not known

Map reference: E540467 N: 271276

Freehold

The Old recreation Ground is situated on Earith Road and was transformed into a community orchard in 2015 in conjunction with Willingham Action Group.

The Recreation Ground – West Fen Road, Willingham, Cambs, CB24 5LP

Dates Purchased: Dec 1997

Purchase price: £26,271

Unique Property Reference No: 10003197804

Map reference: E540136 N270691

Freehold

The Recreation Ground is situated behind the pavilion and the various sections of it were purchased between 1898 and 1997. The Recreation Ground contains several football pitches,

cricket pitch and practice nets. The Recreation ground is available for hire by local groups and other users.

Jubilee/QEII Field – West Fen Road, Willingham, Cambs, CB24 5LP

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase price: £15,000

Unique Property Reference No:10091623511

Map reference: E540187 N270782

Freehold

The QEII Field sits behind the Ploughman Hall and hosts a large play area which was significantly upgraded in 2015. The Field was registered with Fields in Trust in 2014.

Meadow Road Site – Meadow Road, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: January 2015

Purchase price: £50,000

Unique Property Reference No: 100091654618

Map reference: E541884 N270840

Leasehold

The Parish Council purchased a 125-year lease in January 2015 for the site and it has been agreed to develop the site into a community woodland.

The Cemetery – Church Lane, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase price: Not known

Unique Property Reference No: 100091611368

Map reference: E540354 N270612

Freehold

The Parish Council own and operate the cemetery in Church Lane which includes a War Memorial.

The Pound – Pound Lane, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase price: Not known

Unique Property Reference No: Not known

Map reference: E540172 N270603

Freehold

The Landing Ground – Bridge Farm, Earith Road, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase Price: Not known

Unique Property Reference No: 100091420856 (Bridge farm)

Map reference: E540633 N273279

Freehold

The Green – Green Street, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase Price: Not known

Unique Property Reference No: 10090708791

Map reference: E540666 N270486

Freehold

The village Green is located on the junction of Green Street and Church Street. There is a village pump and a village sign located on the Green. The Green is the location for the fair during Feast Week in October.

Public Hall – The High Street, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: 1896

Purchase Price: Donated

Unique Property Reference No: 10003189029

Map reference: E540237 N270406

Freehold

The Public Hall is owned by the Parish Council and is leased on a 10-year lease to the Public Hall User Committee. The lease is due for renewal in 2025

Public Open Space Pyrethrum Way – Pyrethrum Way, Willingham, Cambs

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase Price: Not known

Unique Property Reference No: Not known

Map reference: E540617 N270120

Freehold

The Council adopted and maintains the public open space on Pyrethrum Way

Long Pond – Rampton Road, Willingham

Date Purchased: Not known

Purchase Price: Not known

Unique Property Reference no: Not Known

Map reference: E540874 N270081

Freehold

THE PARISH COUNCILLORS

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Clerk: Mrs Mandy Powell, Parish Council Office, Ploughman Hall, West Fen Road, Willingham
CB24 5LP Tel: 01954 261027 email: clerk@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

COUNTY AND DISTRICT REPORTS

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

The Annual Parish Meeting is a time to reflect on the things that have been achieved in the previous twelve months. Just a few short months ago, we would have been writing a different report to the one we are presenting today because Covid-19 has changed everything at the global, national and local level and it has pushed matters that were of primary importance into second place.

South Cambs has been playing an important role in supporting Covid volunteer groups across the district and providing communications between the County Council and the local volunteers. Willingham has a very well run and successful Covid volunteer group - The Willingham Love Hub – which is held up as one of the model groups in the district. We are very pleased to be able to help and support their excellent work and thank them for all their efforts.

The Greater Cambridge Local Plan will affect how we live, work and play over the next 20 years and beyond. Work on it started in 2019 and a formal period of consultation ended in February 2020. A request for potential building sites yielded a very high number of offers which are now being considered by planners. This is a very important priority and deserves your attention; we strongly recommend that you familiarise yourself with it - further information can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/sc593mv>

A Local Governance Review began in late 2019, prompted by the development at Northstowe and which may affect the position of Willingham parish boundary. The rationale for this is that the development at Northstowe will alter the spread of housing across the parishes of Longstanton, Oakington and Westwick and, with three centres of population, the current parish boundaries will no longer reflect a “natural settlement pattern”. Round 2 of the consultation process is currently underway, although it has been necessary to cancel several ‘drop-in’ sessions scheduled for dates in March, April and May due to Covid-19. As things stand, the final decision is due to be made in October 2020 but given the cancellation of the consultation events we should not be surprised if the timing of this is put back. Further information is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7ytp76l>

During the course of the year, Dawn and Bill worked with the Willingham Action Group to gather the evidence needed to allow the enforcement of planning conditions prohibiting Northstowe vehicles from using Willingham for access. In the end, it wasn't necessary to use the heavy hand of enforcement; we arranged a meeting with senior managers of all of the developers to discuss the evidence we had gleaned. We had a very positive response and, led by the main developers L&Q Estates (formerly Gallagher), it was agreed that a number of actions should be taken, including the erection of clear signage and the installation of an automated number-plate recognition system (ANPR) at the developers' expense. The signs were erected some months ago but Covid has delayed the installation of the ANPR cameras, but these are due to go in soon. Data from the ANPR system will be available for use by South Cambs Enforcement Officers. We are very pleased with this very positive outcome and thank the developers for their cooperation, especially L&Q Estates.

At the end of last year, Willingham Parish Council voted to become involved in the South Cambs DC Mobile Wardens scheme. The initiation of the scheme has been delayed by Covid-19, but we are hopeful that arrangements will be in place by the autumn. The scheme will give support to older people to live independently in their homes. The scheme will not duplicate or replace medical or social care services but will help to combat loneliness and social isolation and provide significant benefits to clients at relatively low cost.

In the last few weeks we have been speaking with small local businesses to make sure that they are aware of the grants that are available to help them survive the Covid crisis. We think that we have contacted all qualifying businesses in Willingham but any businesses that haven't should check the South Cambs website to make sure they aren't missing out. <https://tinyurl.com/yc42dhtj>. Businesses should also sign up for the South Cambs Business newsletter 'Open for Business'. You can sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/yazskddq>

Our Willingham surgeries have had to be suspended during the Covid-19 emergency, but they have been successful, and we will reintroduce them as soon as we can. When we do so, we will

hopefully be accompanied by a Parish Councillor and (occasionally) our County Councillor. We will advertise them as widely as we can when we are able to restart them. In the meantime, any parishioner can contact us using the details given below.

We hope that you stay safe and keep well.

Bill Handley and Dawn Percival, May 2020
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