

WILLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**A QUICK GUIDE TO WHO WE ARE AND WHAT
WE DO**

Updated March 2022

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 2022/2023 is £156,000

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 2025.

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

WILLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL ASSETS

Cemetery

Recreation Ground and Pavilion

QEII Playing Fields

Ploughman Hall and Youth Trust Facility

Public Hall

Community Orchard

Meadow Road Site

Long Pond

Landing Ground

The Pound

Village Green

Open green space Pyrethrum Way

Barton Field – Black Pick Drove

In addition to managing and maintaining the Council's assets the Council also act as consultees for planning applications within the Parish and liaise closely with other bodies including the Police, District and County Council.

HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE WITH PARISHIONERS?

The Council endeavours to keep parishioners up to date via various routes:

Council Website – The website contains minutes, agendas, events, news articles, details of councillors, accounts and some policies etc www.willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Facebook – This page is for information only and the Council post information relating to Council business, road closures etc. regularly.

Village notice boards – These are located at the public hall and the library and will have copies of agendas and notices placed on them. The library also keeps a copy of Council minutes for anyone who wishes to access them this way.

Parish Office – The office is open 4 mornings a week, Monday – Thursday 10am to 1pm for parishioners to call in whether it is to seek advice or raise a concern.

Willingham News – The Council submit an article for the magazine each month which is then distributed to all households.

Monthly meetings – The Council meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month, in the Octagon (or where necessary remotely via Zoom). Parishioners are all welcome to attend and have the opportunity to speak under the public forum item.

Surveys – Where appropriate the Council ask Parishioners to take part in surveys or similar schemes to ascertain their views on forthcoming plans and initiatives such as the MUGA, the Parish Plan and the QEII Playing field.

Parishioners can also either call the office or Councillors directly and their details can be found on the website and in the Willingham News.

WHAT HAS THE COUNCIL BEEN WORKING ON?

HIGHWAYS

Some of the initiatives that they have implemented or are currently working on include:

30mph limit extension on Station Road - The 30mph limit has been extended down to Westfields and a portable flashing speed sign has been put up to remind vehicles of the speed limit.

40mph buffer on Earith Road - The Council have applied for a minor highways improvement bid to put in a 40mph buffer zone as you approach the village on the Earith Road. If this application is approved, it is planned to install the newly purchased interactive speed sign on that stretch which will not only remind drivers of the speed limit but will also record data relating to the speed of traffic.

Footpath to the Orchard - The Council successfully submitted 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. It is hoped that this work will start in the first half of 2022, making it safer and easier for residents to gain access to the orchard.

Construction Vehicles through the village - The Council have been working with South Cambs District Council to try and ensure that construction vehicles which are not supposed to come through the village do not do so. Signage has been put up at the Northstowe site and approaches to the village to remind Northstowe vehicles that they are not to come through Willingham as well as on the B1050 at Earith Lock. ANPR cameras have also been installed at the Northstowe site to check what direction vehicles are travelling in. This data will be passed to South Cambs enforcement officers if necessary. This obviously will not remove all heavy vehicles travelling through the village but will hopefully reduce the numbers.

Parking improvements around the school - The Council worked with the school to complete a successful minor highways improvement bid for time limited parking and yellow lines around the school area to reduce congestion and the risk of injury to pedestrians.

West Fen Road

The Council have recently installed signage on West Fen Road warning drivers to slow down as children are playing.

ENVIRONMENT

Tree planting on the Meadow Road site. Fifty oak trees have been planted to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day and poppy seeds sown. It is hoped that additional Silver Birch trees will also be planted on the site.

Street lighting. The Council has taken over the provision and payment of electricity for the SCDC street lights it is responsible for in the village. (The majority of lights are under the remit of CCC.) The supplier which the Council has chosen to use is a provider of renewable energy. It is also anticipated that over the next year or two the lights will be changed to LED lights.

Lights in the ploughman hall. The Council has had the hall lights converted to LED.

Floodlights on the Rec. These have also been converted to LED.

Ploughman Hall Heating – The Council made a successful bid to SCDC’s Zero Carbon Grant. This was used to install a much more efficient infrared heating system.

SOCIAL AND WELLBEING

Community Lifelines – The Parish Council fund 14 community lifeline units for residents who need them.

Defibs – There are currently three in place funded by the Council, one at the pavilion, one at the primary school and the other at the library. The Council are currently working on providing a fourth in the phone box on the High Street.

Community Orchard – In 2020 the Council made improvements to the Orchard so that dog walkers can use it, following the loss of the set aside field.

Over Day Centre - The Council currently donate £3,000 per year to Over Day Centre which supports many of our elderly residents

Barton Field – Black Pit Drove

This area of land was donated to the Parish Council and is an area of approximately two acres of open recreational space for residents to enjoy. Access is on foot only and is via Black Pit Drove.

Playpark Facilities

We have recently installed two new table tennis tables for the enjoyment of all and will shortly be installing cycle parking next to the pavilion for those parishioners who wish to access the facilities by bicycle.

COMMUNITY

Youth Football Teams - The Council provide free use of the recreation ground and pavilion for the youth football teams.

Free Bookings to Community Groups - Community Groups are given one free booking in the hall each year to help them raise funds for their groups.

Grant allocation - The Council have a grant budget each year which is allocated to applicants on a case by case basis in line with their grant policy.

Willingham News - The Council provides financial support to Willingham News so that it can continue its excellent job of providing the magazine to every household each month.