

Willingham News

Report for Annual Parish Meeting - May 2022

For the last year, despite the ongoing pandemic crisis, we are pleased to have produced and delivered *Willingham News* every month to all households in the village without a break. The magazine is also available in colour at www.willinghamlife.org.

Enormous thanks go to our outgoing distribution coordinator, David Clarke who, until December 2021, continued to collect the magazine from the printers and do all the counting, weighing, labelling and packaging of the magazines on his own. In January 2022, we were very pleased to welcome Dean Cullum as the new distribution coordinator. Dean immediately got to grips with the role ensuring a smooth transition, organising back up for deliveries and liaising with the printers. Thanks also go to his team of deliverers for ensuring the magazine arrives in each household.

We are also pleased to welcome Jane Miller as a Director of Willingham News Ltd, joining Jane Dowle and Val McKee.

Financial Position

The lockdown period did result in savings on printing. However, we still had to pay for typesetting during that period for the online version and a longer-term effect was the loss of advertising revenue due to a smaller magazine circulation. Advertising income has further been affected by online technological changes as increasingly, local businesses rely on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to promote their goods and services. We have lost a page and a half of advertising but are starting to see signs that, as the economy improves after the effects of COVID-19, other businesses may choose to advertise in *Willingham News*.

We received less copy for the January 2022 issue, as always happens due to Christmas, but along with the reduction in advertising it meant the magazine was reduced in size by four pages. We were interested to see if this would reduce printing costs but disappointingly it only made difference of a few pounds. Editors will continue to monitor this as well as considering other cost-saving measures.

As the village continues to grow the numbers of hard copies produced and distributed has met demand. Latest figures are:

- January 2021 1,945
- December 2021 2,008
- March 2022 2,015

From April 2022, printing charges will go up by £38 per issue (an increase of 4%) and we are expecting an imminent rise in typesetting charges as well.

The whole team at *Willingham News* is made up of volunteers. The magazine is non profit making with the publishing costs being largely covered by advertising revenue which, as explained above, has decreased. *Willingham News* is an important part of village life, and we need to maintain the quality and size whilst catering for an increasing circulation.

The team is grateful to the Parish Council who kindly underwrite any annual losses, provided these do not exceed £3,000 and this year we would like to request Parish Council support in order to meet the shortfall of £2,919.

The amount of £3,000 was agreed in 2016 and, as a result of rising costs as detailed above, we would like to request that this amount be increased for future years.