

**The Willingham British School Trust**  
An Educational Charity Registered Number 311393

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Report for the Annual Parish Meeting, for the year ending 05<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

The Willingham British School Trust will have been awarding educational grants to benefit the young people of the Parish, either through individual or institutional funding applications, for 45 years in its next year of activity. The Trust's Scheme of Regulation was originally approved by the Charity Commission in March 1979. As was the case for many of Willingham's community groups the Trust benefited from the gratefully acknowledged contributions made by Bill Kirkman. He helped to introduce important principles, procedures and processes which continue to guide the Trust's current activity.

There has been change in the Trustees in the past year with the retirements of David Smith and Ruth Weeden. Both have made valuable contributions to the Trust's activities over many years. Emma Wake has been welcomed as a replacement Trustee and it is planned to appoint another Trustee in the coming months.

The Trustees are grateful for the collaborative support provided by other Willingham groups and organisations. Dates of the Trust's upcoming meetings, held every January, April and October, and meeting reports continue to be placed in the Willingham News. For the past year the Trustees have met at the Willingham Youth Trust. To encourage the number of applications received from young people starting their undergraduate university and apprenticeship programmes notices of the Trust's funding are sited in the Library and the Bushel Box Farm Shop.

Most unusually, in the past year the Trust has received no applications from undergraduates about to commence their university programmes. A new approach to address this is being piloted with one of the local six-form colleges, which has agreed to circulate a short briefing note about opportunities for Trust funding to potentially eligible applicants who live in Willingham. Depending upon results this approach may be offered to other local colleges in the future.

In this last year one individual award has been made to support attendance at the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea later this year.

A robust demand for Trust funding from village groups continues. Institutional grants have been made to Willingham Primary School, St Mary and All Saints' Church and Willingham Youth Trust. These grants have either contributed to innovations in the school's curricula, the re-launch of the Church Sunday Club or support the development of new Youth Trust activities.

It has been usual to observe some variation in the source of funding applications. In past years approximately two thirds of the funds distributed by the Trustees have been awarded through institutional applications whilst in 2022-23 there was a re-balancing of funding with awards being distributed almost equally between individuals and institutions. The past year has been unusual in the weighting of applications for support from village institutions.

The Charity Commission is now adopting a more pro-active role in its relationship with charities. Individual administrator accounts are being introduced and tailored support and information 'to help run the charity better' is promised in the coming year. The Trustees continue to comply with this changing regulatory environment, completing successfully the Trust's Annual Return to the Charity Commission. The Trust's audited accounts, a copy of which is attached, are instrumental in this activity.

Potential individual or institutional applicants for grants to support general educational costs or travel associated with education are always advised to approach any of the Trustees with an early enquiry. The appropriateness of any funding request can then be given proper and prompt consideration.

Ray Croucher  
Secretary, Willingham British School Trust