

## ***Willingham News***

### **Report for Annual Parish Council Meeting - May 2025**

After a relatively calm second half of 2024, the new year started badly for *Willingham News* as several of our regular advertisers pulled out for 2025 but, as a result of an appeal for donations and a drive for new advertising, the magazine is now on a firmer financial footing and can look forward to a more serene second half of the year. However, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels and over the summer we will be exploring ways to avoid a similar situation arising next year. See under 'Financial Position' below for details.

For the last year, we are pleased to have produced and delivered *Willingham News* every month to all households in the village. As ever, the magazine is also available in colour at:

[www.willinghamlife.org](http://www.willinghamlife.org).

In terms of personnel changes, long-serving proofreader for the magazine, Jane Dowle, stepped down at the end of 2024 after 20 years of service. She deserves a huge vote of thanks and a well-earned rest. Mike Bird has replaced Jane in the role and Jane remains in touch with the magazine, acting as back-up proofreader on occasions that Mike is unavailable.

Teresa Weston and Rebecca Drewnicki share the responsibilities of Advertising Coordinator, crucially cooperating at the time of advertising renewals in October when the great bulk of the funds financing the magazine comes in.

David Young continues as Distribution Coordinator, now in his second year. Thanks as always go to David and his team of volunteer deliverers for ensuring the magazine arrives by the start of every month in each household in the village.

The team of Editors is at full strength, made up of Liz Cosford, John Lawrence, Frances and James Watts and Trevor Weston.

The Directors of Willingham News Ltd continue to be Jane Miller and Val McKee.

#### **Financial Position**

At the beginning of 2025, *Willingham News* had lost 11 advertisers, compared to December 2024. This constituted a potential reduction in advertising revenue for 2025 of around £2500, bringing potential losses for the year to upwards of £4,000. With the agreement of the Parish Council, we immediately launched an appeal for donations while pursuing a drive for new advertising. The appeal ran for two months and raised over £1,000 towards funds. The advertising drive yielded eight new advertisers worth roughly £2,500 for the year.

We believe we now have a well-balanced magazine with 16 pages of editorial content and 8 pages of advertising. We are not currently seeking more advertisers. However, we are keen to find out how best to retain the advertisers we now have and how to optimise their contribution. One possible option is to offer advertisers full-colour advertising at a higher rate than currently. Some of our new advertisers have mentioned this. Currently we have one page available for colour advertising (the back page) and four regular advertisers each take a quarter page for the year. We will canvas our advertisers over the summer to find out how many of them are interested in colour advertising and whether they are prepared to pay the higher rate. Depending on how many advertisers wish to take

up colour advertising, we will look at introducing more colour pages, (eg inside front and back covers) without necessarily committing to more extensive colour at least at the early stages.

The team is grateful to the Parish Council who kindly underwrites any annual losses, provided these do not exceed £5,000, and for 2024 we would like to request a grant of £2,418 from the Parish Council. For 2025 we do not expect a seriously deteriorating financial position as was at one point in prospect.

(Draft accounts supplied)