

The Newsletter of Willington Parish

Welcome to the Winter 2024 Newsletter

Dates for your diary.

Wednesday 10th April 2024 – the Great Willington Spring Quiz 2024 at 18:30 at Willington Hall

Thursday 6th June 2024 – D-Day Commemorations (Beacon and Fish & Chip supper); at The Boot

Sunday 9th June 2024 – Village Picnic on The Green

Sunday 7th July 2024 – Village Treasure Hunt

From your Parish Council Chairman

Happy New Year, I hope you enjoy reading the first newsletter of 2024.

At the beginning of December we held our annual Carols on the Green event and despite the cold and sleety weather it was well supported. A big thank you to all the helpers who made the event possible....heating and serving the mulled wine and mince pies, and providing the music. A special thanks to Santa for visiting Willington and giving presents to the children.

We hope you enjoyed the lights and the new Christmas tree on the Green. Thank you to Rob and Wendy Merrick and family for setting the lights up and taking them down again. We are also grateful to Jane Platt and James Abbott for providing the power. A great all-round village effort.

Can you help with storing our gazebos?

The Parish Council has agreed to buy two collapsible gazebos for use at village events. However we need a volunteer who can store and look after them please. They fold down to a very compact 22cm x 22cm x 185cm. If you can help, please contact the Clerk or any of the Councillors.

Have you considered becoming a Parish Councillor?

One of our councillors plans to stand down from the Parish Council in May 2024. We are therefore seeking another person to serve on the council.

This is an opportunity for you to help shape the future of Willington. Maybe there is something that you are passionate about that you would like to help us to achieve for Willington.

We meet once every two months at Willington Hall. Beyond attending meetings, how involved you get and the time you commit is entirely up to you. All that you need is enthusiasm and interest. You will be well supported by your fellow councillors and the Clerk, and training sessions (usually an hour long online sessions) will help you to understand the role. If you are interested, please contact the Clerk or any of the other Councillors.

Andrew Nicholas - Chairman

Willington Parish Council website and Facebook page – important changes

Communication is vital in our day-to-day lives, and here at the Parish Council, we are committed to finding new and better ways to connect with all members of our community. We are thrilled to announce the relaunch of our Willington Parish Facebook page – **Willington Parish Council Cheshire**. This page will complement our existing website, willington.org.uk, providing another platform for us to engage with you.

Our Parish Clerk will use the Facebook page to share regular updates about events, issues, and information received from various authorities. We encourage all residents and visitors to look us up and follow us on Facebook to stay informed and engaged with what's happening in our community. Meanwhile, our website will continue to serve as a repository for formal Parish information as required by law.

In addition to our official Parish Facebook page, we are pleased that one of our residents, Helen Ingram, has created and will manage a residents' Facebook Group - **Willington Villagers Group**. This group is open to anyone from Willington Parish and is not operated by the Parish Council. However, updates shared on the Parish Council Facebook page will be reposted in this group to ensure everyone stays updated. To join the Willington Villagers Facebook Group, please search for it on Facebook and request to join. We believe this group will serve as another valuable platform for communication and community engagement.

Finally we want to remind you that the very active Willington Neighbours WhatsApp group will continue to run in parallel with our Facebook platforms. This group has been a fantastic avenue for residents to connect, share information, and support one another.

Thank you for your continued support and participation in our community initiatives. We look forward to connecting with you on Facebook and continuing to strengthen our community bonds.

Highways

Reduction in the speed limit on Willington Road to 30 mph and compliance actions – we are sure you are pleased that this was finally implemented on 27th November 2023; it took many years of effort to get it in place!!

We are very grateful to our speed watch volunteers who regularly monitor vehicle speeds on Willington Road and Chapel Lane, and report speeding vehicles to our Police Community Support Officer. Their presence alone should be a deterrent, however there are a few motorists who are happy to ignore the speed limit signs and warning letters, and who continue to speed through our village. At the November 2023 meeting of Town and Parish Councils with the Police and Crime

Commissioner (John Dwyer), our Chairman raised this issue. The question was taken by the Police Superintendent who promised that action would be taken. At the next meeting we will be holding him to account!

On the 20th December 2024 the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, John Dwyer, visited Willington to see for himself the work that is being done and to hear about the issues we are facing. It gave us the opportunity to thank him for his financial support that helped fund the reduction in the speed limit on Willington Road. He agreed to install a temporary 'black box' on Willington Road to monitor traffic speeds and confirm the busy periods; this has recently been installed on the 30 mph post outside Pebble Cottage. If the evidence shows we have a problem with speeding, the traffic police will get involved. In addition, our PCSO will occasionally be on Willington Road with his 'official' Trucam speed camera and will be following up with persistent offenders.

Finally, as part of our Speed Compliance Action Plan we have:

- arranged to borrow the VAS 'smiley face' speed warning sign from CWaC in March
- asked neighbouring Parishes to make their residents aware of the new 30 mph limit on Willington Road
- purchased a mobile 30 mph sign for random deployment
- bought a stock of yellow A4 '30 mph for a reason' bin stickers.....

You can help by attaching the 30 mph stickers to the side of your waste bins (one for recycling week and one for 'grey bin' week perhaps) or somewhere suitable by your property. If you would like some stickers, please contact the Clerk who will arrange delivery or pickup.



Finally, we need additional volunteers for our speed watch team as the new speedwatch volunteer policy requires there to be three people present (previously two were fine) when monitoring. Speedwatch usually takes place once a month, first thing in the morning or late afternoon for just one hour each month. **Please contact our Clerk if you are interested; full training will be provided.** It would be a great shame if we were unable to continue this important work.

Speed Reduction on Willington Road to Oscroft - Tarvin Parish Council have started the process to reduce the speed limit between the end of the 30 mph zone on Willington Road and Oscroft. The 'default' will hopefully become 50 mph, and the limit outside Pryors Hayes Golf Club will become 40 mph. This is a very welcome development; unfortunately, if our experience with Willington Road is anything to go by, it is likely to take two or three years to be implemented.

Willington Taskforce



Please contact John Grimshaw if you would like to join the Task Force.... 01829 752177 or e-mail grimmers3@grimmers3.plus.com

There will be plenty of activity this Spring.....tidying the Green, clearing road gutters and so on.

Little Switzerland – CWaC have recently agreed to fix the Little Switzerland ladder steps where the top section is showing rotten areas. They have also agreed to take a closer look the dry stone retaining wall sections that have collapsed with a view to obtaining quotes for repair.

Willington Rd (to Kelsall) - you may have seen some orange markings along the pavement on Willington Road between Willington Corner and Green Lane. We have been told that the markings identify areas of kerb that will be repaired or replaced early in March.

Red Phone Box – the Task Force will of course provide both skills and effort to remove and dispose of the current KX 100 phone box, and install the refurbished K6 box in March (see article below).

Clerk's Notes February 2024

2024-2025 Parish Council Budget and Precept.

The budget for April 2024 to March 2025 was approved at the meeting of the Parish Council on 30th January 2024. Our overall projected spend for 2024/25 is £20,134 which will include some of:

- day to day running costs of the Parish Council
- £500 to support Willington Rd/Lane Speed limit reduction compliance strategy implementation
- £4000 Chapel Lane speed limit reduction (2025-26?)
- £800 for village green maintenance initial works e.g. tree surgery
- £1000 for a planter on the Green/Triangle
- £500 for produce exchange project
- £1500 for power on the Green

This will be funded from the 2024-25 precept and previously accumulated reserves.

Your Council has set the precept (the money we ask Cheshire West and Chester Council for to enable us to run the Parish Council) for the coming financial year at £6589, an increase of £254 over the 23/24 precept. In 2023/24 the Band D households charge was £41.71 per annum. **The 2024-25 charge for Band D households will be £42.48 a small 1.8% increase of £0.77 per annum or £0.07 per month.**

After funding the speed reduction project and other projects, our reserves will still meet prudent and legal levels. The 2024-25 budget details are published in the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 30th January 2024 (available on the Parish Council website or the Notice Board).

Willington Corner - Project Red Box



As promised, we're back with an update on the exciting project we reported in the August Newsletter last year! You may recall our plans to replace the existing Willington Corner telephone box with a traditional red box which houses one of the three AEDs within the Parish. While we've encountered some delays along the way, we're thrilled to share some good news with you all.....**we've finally received confirmation that our new phone box is on its way! We expect its arrival in early March 2024.**

Our dedicated, highly skilled Task Force team is poised to spring into action as soon as the new box arrives. They'll be working diligently to remove the old telephone box and seamlessly transition to the refurbished one. Please stay tuned as the project progresses. Keep an eye on this space, Facebook or WhatsApp for further updates as we move forward with the installation on site!

iTRAVEL – an on demand bus service

itravel is a pilot, on-demand rural bus service that can be booked online, using an app or phone call. It allows a resident, or group of residents to request a bus for a specific journey. There is no fixed route or timetable, which puts you in control of your journey.

The itravel pilot serves towns, villages and railway stations in the north of the Borough. Unfortunately for Willington this only covers an area incorporating Frodsham, Sutton Weaver, Acton Bridge, Cuddington, Delamere, Elton and Helsby. As a village completely devoid of access to any public transport, your Parish Council feels strongly that Willington should be part of this pilot.

At the meeting of the Parish Council on 30th January 2024, Borough Councillor Tom Cooper agreed to talk to CWaC see if Willington can be incorporated into the scheme. **Watch this space!**

Museums and Libraries Consultation

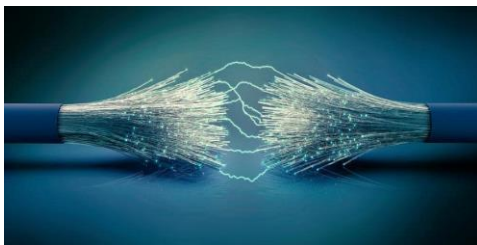
CWaC is consulting on the future of Libraries and Museums Services in Cheshire West and Chester. A number of principles and proposals are being put forward about how the services are managed and when they open. The consultation will run from 5 February to 2 April 2024.

CWaC wants to understand the views of service users, residents, and stakeholders on the principles and proposals for the libraries and museums services. What you tell us will be used to help shape future plans. **You can find out more, review the consultation documents and complete a survey on the CWaC website: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/librariesandmuseums**

Parish Council Meetings.... please come along – your Parish Council meets at least six times a year at Willington Hall. The meetings are usually on the last or penultimate Tuesday of the month **starting at 19:30**. Please consider popping along for all or part of the meeting to see what we talk about and (during the public session) raise any issues or make any comments you have. You are most welcome.

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 26th March 2024**.

Fast Fibre to Willington – Update



At our Village meeting in May 2023, we provided an update regarding bringing Fibre to the Property (FTTP) (also known as Full Fibre solution) to Willington Parish. We promised to keep you informed with any developments; we appreciate your patience as we navigate this process.

Unfortunately, we were unable to take advantage of the UK Government Gigabit voucher scheme as initially hoped. Instead, Willington Parish was included in the recent procurement program by Building Digital UK (BDUK), scheduled for the second half of 2023/early 2024.

Currently, BDUK is in the process of reviewing the submissions from contractors....we expect to receive a detailed update in April 2024. As soon as we get this information, we will share it with you.

We understand the importance of reliable, high-speed internet connectivity in today's digital age. Thank you for your understanding and continued support as we strive to improve our community's infrastructure to provide a more connected future for Willington Parish.

D-Day 80th Anniversary



Thursday 6th June 2024 marks 80 years since D-Day, the largest seaborne invasion in history, and the beginning of the liberation of Western Europe. Across the country, communities are being encouraged to commemorate the day through local events and activities. This includes the lighting of beacons **at 9.15pm on the 6th June** and a fish and chip supper.

Everyone is invited to come together at The Boot for fish and chips, watch the beacon and hear the International Tribute.

Fish and Chips - tickets will be available nearer the time for your fish and chip supper. This will be provided between 7.00pm and 9.00pm.

Beacon - we need your help with this including providing:

- Combustible materials for the beacon e.g. pallets, garden materials
- High visibility jackets
- Fire extinguishers
- Fire blankets
- Watering cans
- Car and trailer to take materials up to The Boot (end May)

If you can provide any of the above, please contact John Jeffries on j.jeffries101@gmail.com.

WWII Memorabilia - there will be a WWII memorabilia display at the Boot as part of the commemoration. **We would like anyone in the community with memories or memorabilia to get involved** with putting the display together. Please contact Jane Lowthion on jane.lowthion@btinternet.com.

Save the date and we look forward to seeing you on the 6th June from 7.00pm at The Boot.

Home improvement grant for homes not heated by mains gas

A Home Upgrade Grant scheme, to improve the energy efficiency of homes not heated by mains gas, is open for applications from West Cheshire residents now. This grant offers a range of energy efficiency measures including, for example, insulation and heating system upgrades, all of which will help lower energy bills.

Grants are available for those with a lower annual combined household income of £31,000 (gross) or less, and/or receiving specific benefits, and living in an 'off-gas' property with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating from Band D to G.

Applications can be made online at: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/homeenergyhelp or by post. To request a paper copy please call Cheshire West and Chester Council's Contact Centre on 0300 123 8 123 and ask for a Home Upgrade Grant application form from the Climate Change Team.

Please note as part of the application process evidence of a household's combined annual income is required. This will include, for example, copies of a resident's last three months' pay slips, three months' bank statements, benefit letters, pension statements etc.

RNLI Quiz at The Boot in January 2024

A water-themed quiz, raffle and hot-pot supper in aid of the RNLI (did you know they get no public funding at all??) was held at The Boot on 23rd January arranged by Pat and Gwyn Tyson-Jones. There was an excellent turnout which raised over £700.00 – a splendid result.



Many thanks to Mike at The Boot for hosting the event, and all the local businesses who provided raffle prizes.

Willington Spring Quiz Wednesday 10th April 6.30 pm at Willington Hall



Tickets are now on sale for our light-hearted quiz with a bit of fun thrown in for good measure. Please order your tickets and give your team name and number of people in your team either **via the Willington Neighbours WhatsApp group** or **email Donna Okell at donna@btinternet.com**. Payment for your tickets will be on the door on the evening.

Tickets are just £5 per person, with all donations going to Team Edward Labrador Rescue. <https://www.team-edward-labrador-rescue.co.uk/>.

You can have up to 6 people per team, and of course friends from beyond Willington are welcome to join your team. Tapas platters are available at a cost of £25 per table. To order food **please contact Willington Hall directly** with your name, payment, and any dietary requirements.

Your quiz hosts Matt & Joe, Janet & Colin, Donna & Mark (yes, there are six of them!) are really looking forward to seeing you all 😊

Willington Open Gardens 2024 – postponed

It has been decided to not hold an Open Gardens event this year. We hope to hold the next open gardens event in the Spring of 2025.

Willington Gardening Group

Following the success of last October's get together, our gardeners met in January for a couple of hours at Weetwood Brewery Tap to share ideas and experience over a cuppa and some biscuits.

Included in the wide range of topics covered were building compost heaps, managing raised vegetable plots, annual garden calendars and produce sharing and exchange. All very informal and friendly. Outside the meetings, the group is using WhatsApp to continue to share information.

If you are interested in coming along or joining the WhatsApp group, please get in touch with **Helen Gill** on 01829 751266 or 07525 491962, or e-mail Helen.gill13@btinternet.com

Tarporley and District u3a March, April and May 2024

U3A General Information - Doors open at 09.45 and there is time for tea, coffee, biscuits and a chat before the meeting begins at about 10.15 with a few announcements, followed by the talk at about 10.30 and questions to the speaker at about 11.15. The meeting closes around 11.30. You can find out more from the u3a website at: <https://u3asites.org.uk/tarporley/home> where the monthly newsletter is available, as is information on how to join the u3a.



On Thursday 28 March 2024 - Ken Wood takes us on a **photographic journey through the Gobi Desert**. Ken is a traveller who as a boy was fascinated by the Great Khan of the Central Asian Steppes and – fast forward several years - some travelling and some inspiring books led to a decision, which many have made, ‘to work on the bucket list’ and that led him, finally, to Mongolia. Ken takes us on a photographic journey through the Gobi Desert, to the Flaming Cliffs of Khongoryn Els and overhead huge eagles.

On Thursday 25 April 2024 - The Bentley Boys; The Playboy Racers. Bentley Motors is locally based in Crewe, and David Skillen, who will take us on a tour starting from the time in 1919, that Walter Owen Bentley built his first motor car and signalled the beginning of one of the most charismatic marques in motor racing.

On Thursday 23 May 2024 - The Rise, Fall and Renaissance of Liverpool, a World Class City. Ken Pye takes us through the rise, fall and renaissance of this great port city.

About Your Parish Council

You can contact Willington Parish Council by e-mail, phone, post or by coming along to a council meeting. To contact us by post, please write to the Clerk, Rob Winterbourne, at 1, Lilac Close, Willington, CW6 0PL, Tel: 01829 751266

To contact the Parish Council via e-mail or phone please use the details below:

- Cllr James Abbott (01829 751187) - email: james.abbott@willington.org.uk
- Cllr Stuart Ingram (07534 459528) - email: stuart.ingram@willington.org.uk
- Cllr John Lindsay (01829 751057) - email: john.lindsay@willington.org.uk
- Cllr Rob Merrick (01829 458387) - Vice Chairman - email: rob.merrick@willington.org.uk
- Cllr Andrew Nicholas (01829 752029) – Chairman - email: andrew.nicholas@willington.org.uk
- Rob Winterbourne (01829 751266) - Clerk - email: clerk.willington@willington.org.uk

Your Cheshire West and Chester Borough Councillors

Cllr Ted Lush 01829 741468 or email at: edward.lush@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Cllr Tom Cooper email at: tom.cooper@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk