

The Newsletter of Willington Parish



May 2024 #35

Welcome to the Spring 2024 Newsletter

Dates for your diary.

Tuesday 21st May 2024 – Annual Village Meeting 18:45 at Willington Hall

Sunday, 19 May, 2.00pm – 4.00pm - Willington Plant Swap on the village green.

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

Sunday 9th June 2024 – Village Picnic on The Green

Sunday 7th July 2024 – Village Treasure Hunt

October - date to be conformed – Countryfile Ramble for BBC Children in Need

From your Parish Council Chairman

I hope as many of you as possible can come along to the **Annual Village meeting on Tuesday 21st May at Willington Hall at 18:45 – refreshments will be provided from 18:30**. It is an opportunity to hear from your Parish Councillors about our activities over the past year and those planned for the coming year. You will also have an opportunity to ask questions or raise any issues. In the meantime, here is my annual report.

Chairman's Report 2023-24

This was the ninth year of Willington Parish Council. In 2023-2024, we had a new team of Councillors and I would like to begin by thanking all of them for their hard work, contributions to our meetings and their leadership on various projects. We are governed by a Code of Conduct and all Councillors have conducted themselves courteously and with respect for me and for each other. This has made my role as Chairman easier to fulfil.

Sadly, Councillor Rob Merrick is standing down after our May meeting. Rob has made significant contributions to our discussions and can always be relied upon to put forward very sensible points of view, particularly on planning issues. Rob will be greatly missed. However, he has promised to maintain his involvement with our Christmas events; we are very grateful to him for doing so. Christmas in Willington would not be the great community celebration that it is without the selfless contribution from Rob, Wendy and their family.

We now need to co-opt a new Councillor to fulfil our quota as soon as possible. It would be great if one of our ladies were to take up this role. Previously we have had a balanced council gender-wise and in my view, a female perspective creates a better council.

I will be stepping down as Chairman in May but will remain as a Councillor. I have enjoyed fulfilling this role for the last four years. I believe it is time to let someone else take the lead and as there is no shortage of talent in our council, I know the Chair will be in safe hands.

Parish Council Meetings

Seven Council meetings were held during year. The agendas for these meetings are posted on the village noticeboard and on the website, as are the minutes. We were pleased to welcome ten members of the public who attended our meetings and spoke to the council during the Open Forum on a number of issues. New Borough Councillors Tom Cooper and Ted Lush attended some of our meetings and kept us up to date with developments in Cheshire West and Chester. We are grateful to them for their support.

Village Events

We held a number of events during the year; the village picnic, open gardens, poppy display and Remembrance Day gathering, Santa walk and carols on The Green. We are grateful to our events team for all their hard work organising and planning these enjoyable events, all were a great success.

Achievements - during the year the Council has:

- Purchased and installed a King Charles III Coronation Bench and a Willington Interpretation Board on The Green.
- Purchased an LED Christmas Tree to add to our festive lights on The Green.
- Achieved the implementation of a 30mph speed limit on Willington Road and implemented a speed compliance action plan.
- Renovated the finger post at Willington Corner.
- Amended the CWaC boundary details which incorrectly showed three properties in Waste Lane as being in Kelsall rather than in Willington.
- Started a new PC Facebook Page for sharing information and maintained our website to meet with legal requirements.
- Worked with CWaC Public Rights of Way who have appointed a contractor to fix the steps and handrail at the top of Little Switzerland and repair the sandstone walls lower down.
- We are continuing to progress projects such as ownership of The Green, the replacement telephone kiosk at Willington Corner and super-fast fibre broadband for Willington.

Planning and Enforcement

We commented on eleven planning applications and raised a number of issues with CWaC Planning Enforcement. CWaC Planning have a backlog of applications and have been terribly slow to make decisions. However, they have recruited several new planning officers to address this situation.

Newsletters

We continue to publish four newsletters during the year. Many thanks to all our contributors and Ian Armstrong for his editing and designing of our newsletter editions.

Roads

It has been a long and slow process but we have finally managed to achieve the new 30mph speed limit on Willington Road and are pursuing speed limit reductions to 20mph limit on Chapel Lane, Rough Low and Gooseberry Lane. Tarvin Parish Council are representing us for a speed reduction on Willington Road from Lilac Close to the golf course at Oscroft.

We installed a traffic mirror opposite the junction of Boothsdale and Willington Road to improve visibility of traffic approaching from the direction of Kelsall.

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?

As mentioned in the Chairmans' report, Councillor Rob Merrick plans to stand down from the Parish Council this month. We are therefore looking for 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. All that you need is enthusiasm and interest. You will be well supported by your fellow councillors and the Clerk, and online training sessions will help you to understand the role. If you are interested, please contact the Clerk or any Councillor.

Andrew Nicholas - Chairman

Parish Council: Financial Matters for Financial Year April 2023 - March 2024

	Year to 31st March 2023 £	Year to 31st March 2024 £	Note Number
Balance brought forward	8,208	21,268	1
Plus Annual Precept	6,235	6,335	3
Plus Other Receipts	17,138	4,485	4
Less Staff Costs	3,012	3,632	5
Less Other Payments	7,301	10,365	6
Balances Carried Forward	21,268	18,131	2
Fixed Assets	8,726	13,669	7

Summary: The Parish Council's finances are, as in previous years, in good health.

During the financial year, our major sources of income were £6,335 from CWaC for the precept, a £950 VAT refund and a much appreciated donation of £3240 from one of our residents to fund the refurbished phone box.

We have a healthy bank balance despite having funded the traffic mirror at the bottom of Boothsdale, and the Information Board and Coronation bench on the Green from reserves. Note that we have not yet had to make use of the funds set aside in the year to cover the £3833 CWaC costs for the implementation of the 30 mph speed limit on Willington Lane.

We will maintain at least £3000 in general reserves by carefully managing the spend on Special Projects. This is 47% of the 2024-25 precept which is well within the 25-50% tolerance recommended by the National Association of Local Councils.

Our general reserves are reviewed at each Parish Council meeting to ensure that Council does not build up an unnecessarily high bank balance or allow funds to fall below an acceptable level. The funds ear-marked for Special Projects are not considered to be part of general reserves.

Special Projects to be funded in 2024-25 include:

- installation of the replacement (red) phone box at Willington Corner @ £1800
- Willington Rd/Lane Speed limit reduction implementation @ £3833 (funded from previously accumulated reserves and £2500 P&CC Office grant).
- £500 to support Willington Rd/Lane Speed limit reduction compliance strategy implementation
- £4000 Chapel Lane speed limit reduction (may not be required until 2025-26)
- £800 for village green maintenance works e.g. tree surgery
- £500 for the produce exchange project.

Notes:

1. **Balances brought forward means**....the funds held in the Council's current and business savings bank accounts at the start of the 2023-24 financial year (1st April 2023).

2. **Balances carried forward means**....the funds held in the Council's current and business savings bank accounts at the end of the financial year April 2023 to March 2024. This number is also the balance carried forward to the 2024-25 financial year (1st April 2024).

3. **Precept** is the money the Parish Council receives from CWaC (via the Council Tax paid by our residents) to perform its duties. The 2024-25 precept (paid in April 2024) was increased to £6589 resulting in an increase of £0.77 per annum (1.8%) or £0.07 per month for a Band D house.

4. **Other Receipts** covers all other income received by the Council. in 2023-24 we received.....

- a precept of £6335 from CWaC
- Bank interest of £259
- VAT refund of £950
- a donation of £3240 to cover the cost of the refurbished K6 phone box
- insurance policy refund of £22.

5. **Staff Costs** are the total costs of employing the Clerk of the Council. These costs were £620 greater in 2023-24 than 2022-23 due to the applying the national pay award and paying PAYE for Jan to March 2024 in March 2024 (i.e. in FY 2023-24). The Councillors are all volunteers and do not receive payment for their work.

6. **Other Payments** cover all other expenditure incurred by the Council. Full details are available on the Parish Council website.

7. **Asset Register** – the increase in the Parish Council’s assets to £13669 ex-VAT (from £8726) is a result of the purchase of the refurbished phone box, the information board and bench on the Green, the mirror at the bottom of Boothsdale, and the LED Xmas tree.

Rob Winterbourne - Responsible Financial Officer Willington Parish Council

Highways

Reduction in the speed limit on Willington Road to 30 mph and compliance actions

As part of our Speed Compliance Action Plan we have:

- purchased a mobile 30 mph sign for random deployment...you will have seen it in a couple of locations on Willington Road
- 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.



Our speed watch team was out and about on the morning of 24th April on Willington Road, by the junction with Boothsdale. They recorded 7 vehicles out of 54 travelling above 35mph heading in a northerly direction towards Kelsall and 9 vehicles out of 69 above 35mph heading south away from Kelsall. One vehicle was travelling at 50 mph!

The details of these vehicles have been passed to our PCSO who plans to get in touch with them.

Willington Taskforce



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

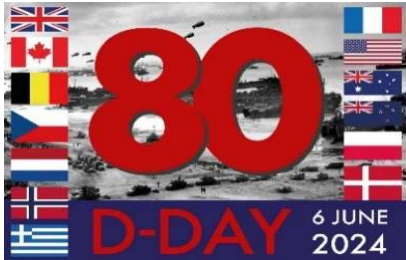
There has been plenty of activity this Spring..... for example, the bins and furniture on the Green have been cleaned, the Willington sign on Willington Rd to Oscroft was 'straightened', the Kelsall finger post at the Common Lane junction was repaired and all the road signs cleaned.

Little Switzerland – CWAC have confirmed that orders have been placed to renew the rotten section of the Little Switzerland wooden staircase, and repair the collapsed sections of the path lower down.

Upcoming Tasks...kill off weeds on the Green parking areas, remove weeds and grass by the kerbs on both Willington roads, pave in front of the Information Board and the remaining metal bench; both areas have become very muddy due to (very welcome) visitor interest.

And finally, **the wooden Sandstone Trail finger** post by Rock Farm has rotted at the base and CWAC have yet to repair it. As it is otherwise in quite good condition, the Task Force may reinstate it rather than it be replaced by the standard CWaC galvanised pole.

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.

Beacon Lighting - Everyone in Willington is invited to come together at the Boot Inn for the **lighting of the Willington Beacon at 9.15pm.**

Fish and Chip Supper - To mark the occasion, as part of National Fish and Chip Day, a **Fish and Chip Supper** is available at the **Boot Inn. Tickets are £12.50** and must be purchased in advance. **Food will be served from 7.00pm – 9.00pm.**

You can buy tickets from:

Heather Bailey	07903 263380
Helen Gill	07525 491962
Susan Janes	07951 000114

Jane Lowthion	07525 061360
Isabel McIntyre	07779 468322
Jill Walker	07792 155980
The Boot Inn	Please ask at the bar

WWII Memorabilia - There will be a WWII memorabilia display at The Boot as part of the commemoration. If you have any items you wish to share, please contact Chris Hely at cjmhely@gmail.com.

We need your help:

To provide combustible materials for the beacon e.g. pallets, fencing, gates, long branches etc.

A trailer/horse box will be on the Green on Saturday, 1st June from 10.00am to 12 noon for you to place any materials in. We will also collect any wood from the front of houses along Willington Road, Chapel Lane and Boothsdale.

Volunteers – late May/early June to help with:

- Preparing the paddock at The Boot
- Building the beacon bonfire
- Marshalling the event
- Cleaning up the paddock afterwards

Help with fire safety

We welcome the loan of:

- Fire extinguishers
- Fire blankets
- Watering cans

Please label/mark any items with your name

Please contact John Jeffries at j.jeffries101@gmail.com if you can help with any of the above.

Clerk's Notes February 2024

Willington Corner - Project Red Box



While we had hoped to showcase photographs of the fully installed box in this newsletter, we encountered a minor setback with the power supply to the existing BT unit. However, we've been working with Scottish Power to address this issue, and we're pleased to inform you that we've agreed a solution for the additional works necessary to safely remove the existing box once the power is temporarily isolated.

The new box is ready for delivery, and we're in the process of coordinating its installation alongside the works being carried out by Scottish Power.

We appreciate your patience and understanding throughout this process. The safety of our Task Force is our top priority, and we're committed to ensuring a smooth and successful installation. We encourage everyone to stay tuned for further updates as the project progresses and the details of the grand opening.

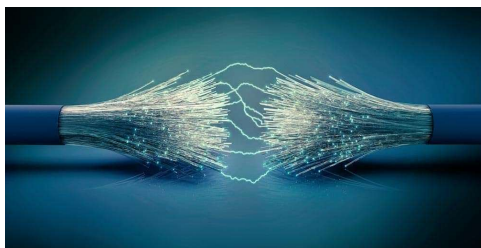
Willington Villagers Group – Cheshire Facebook Page

Set up by resident Helen Ingram recently, this Facebook group now has more than 80 members. The purpose of it is to share local information for our residents and those living close by; it is intended to supplement the very successful neighbourhood WhatsApp group. There are regular updates on what is going on in and around our village, covering anything and everything from new cafe openings to mental health initiatives.

Please support the Page by posting items of interest, or email Helen if you prefer on fromdrabtofab@gmail.com and she will post on Facebook for you.

The Willington Parish Council Facebook page is also active, and the Parish Council Clerk will use this to post any updates and information relevant to our Residents. This is normally reposted onto the Villagers Group page to ensure you have all of the information at your fingertips!

Fast Fibre to Willington – Update



Unfortunately there has not been any real progress since the last newsletter in February. We expected an update in March regarding supplier selection and funding. We will continue to press CWaC for a proposal and will let you know as soon as we have any

Willington Plant Swap 2024

Have you grown too much, have any spare seedlings or plants, or are looking for new garden plants?

Then come to the Willington Plant Swap on Sunday, 19 May, 2.00pm – 4.00pm on the village green.



If you are donating plants, please bring them **to the Green from 1.30pm – 2.00pm**. Clearly label them and add any growing tips or advice. Any plants left over will remain on the Green until Saturday, 25 May. They will then be taken away and composted. If you have any queries, please contact Helen Gill 07525 491962, 01829 751266.

Willington Gardening Group

The gardening group continues to meet regularly to chat about all matters horticultural. It is 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 U3A Programme June & July 2024

The meetings will be held at Tarporley Community Hall. **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.



On Thursday 27 June 2024 - Ray Hoerty's hilarious talk about the history of our monarchy.....**Kings, Queens, Bones and Bastards.**

Ray is a registered tour guide based in the north-west and as such, he knows where lots of the royal – and sometimes not-so-royal - bodies are buried, although who they really are is occasionally a mystery. It's an astonishing and informative journey through the history of the – almost oldest – monarchy in the world.

On **Thursday 25 July 2024**, Totie Driver describes her fascinating career in **Theatre Set Design**.

Totie is a theatre set designer and a senior lecturer in Theatre Set Design at Nottingham Trent University. She has recently worked on the re-design of 'Oliver' for Cameron Mackintosh.

Her presentation shows us how theatre productions come together, bringing all the disparate, constituent parts of a play or musical together, into a coherent whole.

The highs and lows, the trials and tribulations, the meltdowns behind the scenery and the triumphs in front of the curtain - are legendary.

August is holiday time – and so u3a will not hold a meeting.

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.

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