

The Newsletter of Willington Parish Council



September 2025 #40

Dates for your diary.

Remembrance Sunday – Sunday 9th November on the Green at around 11:00 pm.

Carols on the Green - Sunday, 14th December afternoon on the Green (time to be confirmed).

From your Parish Council Chairman

Welcome to the September 2025 Parish Council Newsletter, the warm summer weather is probably over and we can look forward to the cooler days and change of colours as Autumn approaches. We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter, and join us for the events planned towards the end of the year.

It is wonderful to see the produce exchange being actively used and enjoyed by our residents – plants, vegetables, fruit and even some jams have been swapped over recent months.

We also recently completed our bird box installation initiative, with Councillor John Lindsay and our building partner installing a number of boxes at resident's homes; the installations were completed in a single day in August. We hope this encourages a few more feathered residents to choose Willington as their home.

Apologies for the reversion to a more basic Word version of the newsletter....our Canva skilled editor has had to stand down (many thanks for the past few high-quality newsletters). If anyone is able to help with the editorship (Canva training is available) please let the Clerk or one of the Councillors know.

Finally, I am sure you will join the Parish Council in expressing your thanks to Janet Smethurst for all her hard work during her time as a Parish Councillor. Janet was instrumental in improving the Council's communications, notably the new website. Thank you, Janet.

Stuart Ingram – Chairman

Changes to the Parish Council

Following Janet Smethurst's resignation from the PC in May 2025, the formal Council co-option process was started to appoint a replacement as soon as possible in order to maintain our Council at its full quota of five.

Matt Bloxham put his name forward, and after completing the formalities at an extraordinary meeting of the PC on 8th July 2025, Matt was appointed as a Parish Councillor.

Matt has lived in the village since 2022 but has fond memories of visiting the area with his family as a child.

Matt runs his own headhunting business, working with lawyers and connecting them with new in-house positions in the financial services, real estate and tech sectors. Prior to that, Matt was a successful professional actor in London for many years.

He can be contacted on 07900 692209 or via e-mail at matt.bloxham@willingtonparish.gov.uk.



And following the annual meeting of the Parish Council in May, **Stuart Ingram continues as Chairman, with John Lindsay assisting him as Vice-Chairman.**

Willington Produce Exchange

A quick reminder that the Produce Exchange (on the back of the bus-shelter) is open for business. Despite the name, you don't need to bring anything for exchange to benefit, just go along and take what you need.

Amongst the 'donations' to date we have had figs, tomatoes, damsons, runner beans, chillies and cucumbers...please keep donating as your Autumn produce ripens. The contents of the exchange are looked at regularly but it would be good if you could check any perishable items you donate, and discard them if they are past their best. The process of letting the village know of your donations to the exchange via the Willington Neighbours WhatsApp group seems to be working OK...please keep using it.

Many thanks to all those who have donated; we all need to play our part in reducing food waste, eliminating packaging and chemicals, and reducing food miles.

Road Safety – speed monitoring in Willington

You may have noticed our new Speed Indicator Device (S.I.D) at various locations around the village since it was purchased by the PC in June.

If all you do is drive to and from (or through) our village, but don't walk regularly on the narrow Willington Road pavement, or walk/cycle/ride on our lanes without any pavement at all, then you may think there isn't much of a problem with speeding here. But there is.

The Willington Community Speed Watch group used to stand close to the Boothsdale junction for one hour per month and note down the speed and vehicle details of excessive speeders.

Unfortunately, 'offenders' only received warning letters from the police, which didn't prove to be much of a deterrent. Most drivers slowed down when they saw the Speed Watch Group hi-viz

jackets, but those that were on their phone, eating, drinking or peeling a banana probably didn't even notice them.

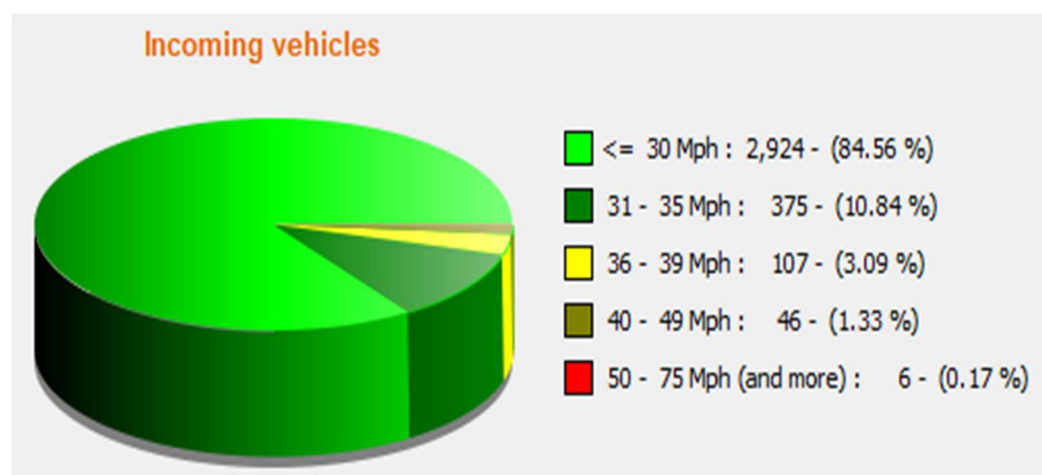


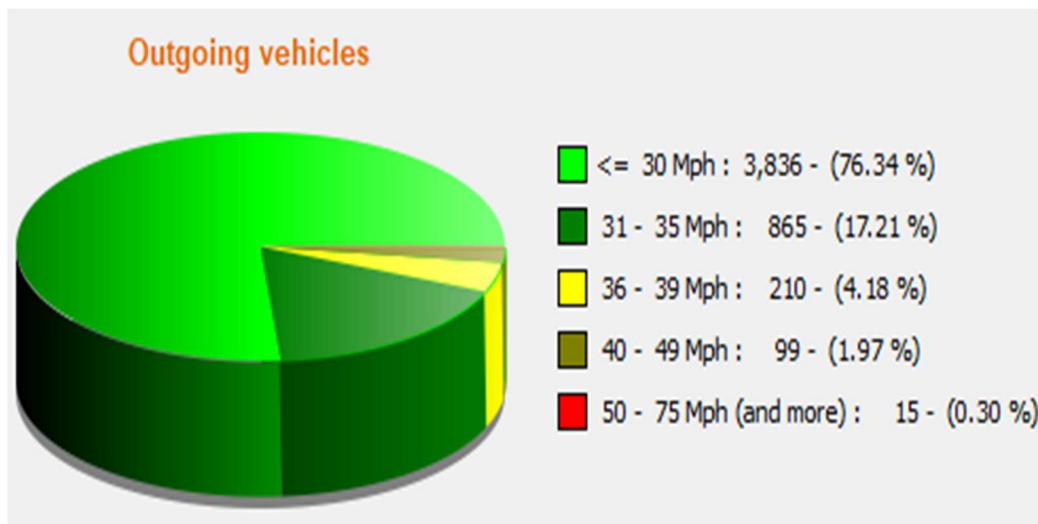
The S.I.D. however, records the speeds of vehicles 24 hours a day and shows that excessive speeding is routine throughout the day, but especially between 3pm and 6pm, when speeds up to 74mph have been recorded along Willington Road between Boothsdales and the Green, and up to 64mph on Chapel Lane at around 3pm on a school day.

The software supplied with the S.I.D. allows the data to be output as various graphs and tables. Analysis of the data shows that drivers are 2 to 3 times more likely to drive below 36mph when the speed indicator is visible to them (called 'Incoming' vehicles); often slowing to 30mph as they get closer. The reverse of the S.I.D. also records the speeds of traffic approaching from the other direction without the display of their speed. Designated as 'outgoing'

The pie charts below are for one recent week and show that most drivers stay at or below the 30mph speed limit in both directions. But a significantly higher percentage of 'outgoing' vehicles travel at greater than 30mph.

Overall speed breakdown for both directions combined are: 80% at 30mph or below, 14.5% at 31-35mph, 5.5% above 35mph, with up to seventy-two excessive speeders per day recorded.





Our Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) has recently attended with the official police speed gun (Trucam) and caught a handful of speeders. But word spread on the local WhatsApp groups and when combined with flashing of headlights to warn drivers, means that speeders got away with not being formally educated in the dangers of their speed. The PCSO will be back quite often, now that extremely high speeds have been recorded.

Be extra careful when walking, riding a bike or emerging from your driveways and side roads. A vehicle travelling at 70mph covers over one hundred feet in a second.

Huge thanks to John Jeffries for all his work in the set-up, installation, data gathering and reporting associated with our S.I.D. If you would like to see more of the data, please contact the Clerk.

Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) – Update

Following on from the information we shared at the Willington Village Meeting in May 2025, we can now provide an update on progress with the **Local Plan** and **Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)**.

Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) have prepared an outline programme for the update of their Local Plan which starts with the draft **Land Availability Assessment (LAA)**. Consultation launched in June 2025. CWaC aim to publish the new LP for consultation in Autumn 2026 before finalisation and adoption in Autumn 2027. In the meantime, the existing Local Plan will be challenged due to the increased housing targets imposed by the National Planning Policy December 2024 from Central Government.

So what is an LAA? According to the CWaC website it,

‘... identifies potential development sites and broad locations as an audit of available land. It is not constrained by the level of need identified in a plan or strategy. It does not in itself determine whether a piece of land should be allocated for development, it is the role of the Local Plan to determine which of those sites are the most suitable allocations to take forward. A broad range of sites will be needed to help meet development requirements in the borough, for a variety of different land uses.’

The LAA shows potential development plots, which are made up from land plots submitted by owners following a “call for sites” from CWaC, opportunist landowners, and existing planning applications.

The Parish Council has joined a working group with Kelsall Parish Council representatives to update the current NDP for Kelsall and Willington. Two, well attended, walk-in information events were held on 17th July 2025 at Kelsall Community Centre focusing on the CWaC LAA and Local Plan programme. The different CWaC LAA options were displayed and discussions ensued covering amongst other things recent planning applications; comments were noted and passed onto the CWaC team.

Next steps will focus on the NDP including holding a consultation session on the new neighbourhood plan with Kelsall and Willington Parish residents – date and time to be confirmed.

Climate & Nature (CAN) Working Group - Installation of bird boxes in Willington

A dozen bird boxes were successfully installed on 20th August. Many thanks to all of you that were willing to share your houses with our struggling feathered friends. Thanks in particular to James Newman who took a break from his gardening business to scale the heights of our (sometimes very high) residences to complete the installations.

We focused on those species most at risk - particularly our summer migratory visitors. Thus six swift nesting boxes and five double house martin boxes have been installed, together with one blue tit box - as a higher position necessary for swifts and house martins wasn't available in the bungalow location.



Whilst residents purchased their own nest boxes, the Parish Council covered the cost of installation. We will send a reminder next Spring, and if there is sufficient interest, we will run a similar programme. Many of us remember our childhood when the summer skies were full of swifts, swallows and house martins. Of course other bird species would always welcome a helping hand (sorry no magpies 😊).

Anyone fancy installing a hedgehog house....keep an eye open for news from CAN.

Willington Open Gardens 2025 - a brilliant sunny afternoon in June.



Many thanks to all of you who supported the Open Gardens event back in June. Six gardens opened and the Green hosted a refreshments stall, a plant sale, a raffle and bug 'hotel' building. All the proceeds, which amounted to an **excellent £377**, were donated to the Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

A new bench at the top of Little Switzerland - update

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the Parish Council has agreed with the landowner at the top of Little Switzerland that we can install a bench at the top of the path

The bench (made from recycled materials) arrived at the end of July and we have been designing and planning its installation since then. Initial groundwork is complete; we hope to have the bench ready for use in the next few weeks.

We hope you enjoy the bench and the fabulous landscape.



Willington Taskforce

Willington Taskforce is a small group of volunteers who get together a few times a year to complete tidying and maintenance jobs around the village.

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



U3A Tarporley – September, October and November 2025

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 25th September 2025 - My Life in Crime. Not a criminal but a criminal barrister – Simon Michael. Simon is an author and is a member of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple – The Bar. He was a barrister for 37 years working at the Old Bailey and other criminal courts defending and prosecuting murderers, armed robbers, con artists and other assorted villains. This as an hour of 'Tales from the Bar'.

On October 23rd October 2025 - Keeping the Faith, The History of the Royal British Legion. Ray Hoerty is one of our well-known speakers and will tell us the story of the British Legion.

The month of October seems to be exactly the right moment to think ahead to our National Sunday of Remembrance – this year it is on 9th November, how it became an important fixture in our year, and the role of the Royal British Legion in planning and organising services, march pasts and all that the National Act of Remembrance entails. We have much to thank the Royal British Legion for in preserving the memory of veterans, and current servicemen and women in all the Armed Services.

On Thursday 27th November 2025 - The Three Wise Men and the Star of Bethlehem. Roger King is a local astronomer with a vast knowledge of the night sky as we discovered back in January of this year when he talked to us about the ‘Wonders of the Heavens’

Roger returns with a seasonal tale – a scientific analysis of the story of the ‘Star’ from the gospel of Matthew, Chapter 2. The night sky has fascinated ‘star gazers’ for millennia, who crucially recorded their observations for posterity and enabled astronomers to chart the former movements of heavenly bodies and understand some of the events of the past.

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@willingtonparish.gov.uk
- Cllr Stuart Ingram (07534 459528) -- email: stuart.ingram@willingtonparish.gov.uk
- Cllr John Lindsay (01829 751057) - email: john.lindsay@willingtonparish.gov.uk
- Cllr Matt Bloxham (07900 692209) - email: matt.bloxham@willingtonparish.gov.uk
- Cllr Andrew Nicholas (01829 752029) –email: andrew.nicholas@willingtonparish.gov.uk
- Rob Winterbourne (01829 751266) - Clerk - email: clerk@willingtonparish.gov.uk

Parish Council Meetings

Our next Parish Council Meeting is on **Tuesday 23rd September 2025** at Willington Hall starting at 19:30. All are invited to come along and contribute to the open forum, or just sit and watch the proceedings. You are all very welcome.

The date for the final meeting of 2025 is Tuesday 25th November.

Your Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) 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