

## Willington Parish Council Annual Report 2020 – 2021

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (by the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Andrew Nicholas).  
This was the 6th year of Willington Parish Council.

Welcome to Willington Parish Council's Annual Report for 2020/21. The following pages contain details of the Council's activities throughout the year, financial statements and other relevant Council information.

Our lives have continued to be dominated by Covid-19 restrictions. However, Willington has been fortunate in that we have suffered no known cases in our community and now we are beginning to emerge out of a second national 'lockdown,' aided by a remarkable vaccination programme. Summer is on its way, bringing brighter and longer days, increasing our sense of optimism.

Due to the Covid restrictions we did not hold our usual annual village meeting during May 2020. It is unlikely that the meeting will be held in 2021 either.

We live in a special, beautiful little parish and one positive that we can all take from the pandemic is that it has strengthened our sense of community spirit. We see this demonstrated in the work of our task force, speed volunteers, litter pickers, Zoom events such as the quiz, arts and photo competitions and the village events like the Christmas lights switch-on at 'The Green', 'Santa' and 'Easter Bunny' walks and the distribution of sunflower seeds. We also have good and informative, neighbourly communications on the WhatsApp group.

Our thanks go all of those who have given their time and support and not least to a growing number of kind sponsors who have made donations. Also there are a number of unsung heroes in our community who provide support to neighbours or who take it upon themselves to perform a good deed. These people do not wish to be named or publicly thanked; however our gratitude is extended to them also.

### Main Achievements

- We now have a volunteer Website Manager. The website is now kept relevant and up to date.
- We have a volunteer Newsletter Editor. The newsletter is now available in printed form and via email in colour and with extra content. Parishioners are encouraged to submit articles. We are actively encouraging as many residents as possible to sign up for the email version.
- Beverley Crossley was co-opted as a Councillor.
- Speeding vehicles have been recorded by our Speedwatch volunteers and details forwarded to our Police Community Support Officer who issues warning letters to the offending motorists.
- Speed gun purchased (full cost funded from Cheshire Crimebeat grant).
- We have continued to loan and deploy a S.I.D. (Speed Indicator Device) or LED Smiley Face' sign.
- Defibrillator batteries changed and new adult pads ordered. They will now last a further 5 years.
- Litter is regularly collected by our litter picking volunteers.
- Roughly 11 metres of the road between the entrances to Willington Hall have been resurfaced.
- Cheshire West and Chester Highways (CW&C) have agreed to install new road signs warning of horses and S-bends on Roughlow.
- A mirror was installed on the blind bend just above the 'German Wall' on Roughlow. This was kindly paid for by a resident.
- The original noticeboard was renovated and made accessible to the public for general use.
- Little Switzerland steps replaced by the Task Force and two redundant kissing gates relocated to near Tirley Garth
- Road gullies along Willington Road cleaned out.
- Christmas lights on 'The Green', Santa Walk and Easter Bunny events.

### Speed Limit Reductions

- 40mph to 30mph on Willington Road.

We continue to press CW&C Highways for costs and for implementation of this measure. However having accepted that we will meet the cost and obtaining police approval for this reduction, we are now waiting for a questionnaire from Highways that will be distributed to all residents who live along the effected stretch of road. We require to achieve greater than 50% agreement before CW&C will implement the change. We hope that we will receive a high and favourable response?

- Chapel Lane 30mph

We are also still waiting for costs for a fixed LED V.A.S. before we make a decision on this measure. As an alternative we may consider purchasing our own S.I.D. which can then be deployed between Chapel Lane and Willington Road. Also at our recent on-site meeting with Highways we requested a review of our road speeds and the suitability of reducing the limit from 30mph to 20mph on Chapel Lane as it is a children's route to school with no pathway.

### Planning

We have commented on eighteen planning applications, everything from a small porch extension to a complete remodelling. We endeavour to put forward a careful and balanced view, and our comments have resulted in some applications being modified or withdrawn.

If you have a concern regarding any development it is important that you make your views or objections known to the council promptly. There are short time limits for us to submit our comments.

We have had one potential breach of planning conditions that we have reported to CW&C Planning Enforcement and the Environment Agency. We are awaiting site visits and reports.

### Financial Matters

The parish precept (the funds that CW&C provide to the Parish Council) for 2020-2021 was £4690. This resulted in an average charge to (Band D) households of £31.80 a year.

The Council spent £5444 during the financial year April 2020 to the end of March 2021.

### **Statement of Accounts.**

	Year ending (£)	Year ending (£)	
	31/3/20	31/3/21	Notes
Balances brought forward	5880	5052	
(+) precept	4505	4690	
(+) other receipts	1407	702	Includes CW&C grant, donations and VAT repayment
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>5912</b>	<b>5392</b>	
(-) staff costs	3433	3126	
(-) all other payments	3317	2318	Includes printing, insurance, subscriptions, purchase of speed gun and mirror, task force materials, councillor & Clerk training. *
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>6750</b>	<b>5444</b>	
(=) balances carried forward	5042	4990	

\* Further details of financial transactions with explanations can be found on the Willington Parish web site.

#### Parish Council Meetings

We held six virtual Council meetings via Zoom, during the year. The agendas for these meetings are posted on the village noticeboard and on the website, as are the minutes. Our website address is [www.willington.org.uk](http://www.willington.org.uk).

We have been encouraged by members of our community attending some of these meetings and participating in the open forum. Borough Councillors John Leather and Harry Tonge regularly attend our meetings and keep us up to date with developments in Cheshire West and Chester.

- All Parish Council meetings are open meetings and members of the public are very welcome to attend and listen to the debates.
- The first 15 minutes of each meeting is a public forum where anyone can address the council on any local matter.
- If you want to come along to a meeting but don't want to stay until the end you may leave when you wish to do so. All we ask is that you come and go quietly.
- Scheduled meetings are normally held on the 4th Tuesday evening of January, March, May, July, September and November, at Willington Hall (or virtually via Zoom during the pandemic)

Finally, I would like to thank all Councillors and our Clerk for their hard work and contributions to our debates.

*J.A. Nicholas,*

**John Andrew Nicholas, Chairman. 3rd May 2021.**