

The Newsletter of Willington Parish Council



September 2021 Newsletter No. 25



Welcome

Your September newsletter is a fantastic edition that includes updates on our village task force, village events, climate change village strategies, fly-tipping prevention, updates from our local MP Edward Timpson, and very exciting news on our new village calendar and the winners of the photo competition!

**Recent Taskforce Activities - article written by
Councillor John Grimshaw**

Back in July, the task force volunteers worked on the footpath up Little Switzerland to clear it of vegetation.....it is now a lot easier to use the path.

A weed and feed has been applied to the Green by a professional contractor, dead leaves removed and the grass cut ready for the village picnic on Sunday 5th September.

Forthcoming Activities:

- Trim back the hedges, and remove grass and weeds from the gutter along Willington Road.
- Check the cleanliness and visibility of the village road signs, and carry out any remedial work. Clean the finger signpost and re-paint it as required.
- Remove the weeds from the Green parking areas.
- Re-seed bare patches on the Green with shade-tolerant seed.
- Clean the benches, picnic tables, and bus shelter.
- Remove encroaching vegetation from the footpath between Gooseberry Lane and Boothsdale.

If you would like to join the task force (it is only a couple of hours a month), please contact John Grimshaw.

E-Newsletter



Your Parish Council would like to deliver as many of these newsletters via email as possible.

The E-Newsletter contains a wealth of bonus articles and colour pictures.

Your newsletter has been put together by our editor, Jeanette at Badgers Gate.

We welcome all contributions to our next newsletter, please forward them by 5th November to the Clerk or you may post your articles into the council post box which is situated on the council notice board at the Village Green. Articles may include book reviews, recipes, gardening and housekeeping tips, Willington history, Willington wildlife etc.

Events for Autumn



Article written by Councillor Beverley Crossley.

It's been a challenging year for us all and one of the many things we have missed is the opportunity to meet up and gather as a village. It would have been so lovely to have a big village event this Autumn and although restrictions have been lifted it was risky to organise too much in advance in case we were put forced to cancel.

Hopefully, by the time you are reading this, we have been able to hold the Village Picnic on the 5th of September, and that those of you that attended enjoyed it. Looking ahead, we are already in contact with Santa's agent and things are looking good for a Christmas gathering – watch this space and the WhatsApp group for more information. We are confident that Carols on the Green will happen and with a special visit for Santa!

By next year the Events Team planning will be in full swing – we are looking forward to an Easter Event and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June....to name but two. We have formed a team of residents to help with the planning, ideas, and execution for these events. If you wish to join the team it's not too late – please just let Bev Crossley know – whatever your skills and time limits your help would be much appreciated, so please come along. As always, we will keep you posted in the Newsletters and on the WhatsApp group; let's hope words like "Social Distancing" and "Please Wear a Mask" are soon things of the past!!

Never miss a date again! Willington Calendar 2022

We are very excited to announce the launch of the very first Willington Village Parish Council Calendar.....for 2022 obviously!

Each household will receive a free calendar delivered to the doorstep. The calendar has a Willington scene for each month chosen from those entered into the photographic competition (see the article in this newsletter) and others collected over the year from those of you who have shared pictures. The photographs are amazing, and it has been difficult to choose a dozen or so from so many excellent ones received.

We hope that you will be so pleased with the calendar that you will want to order more for work, or as Xmas presents for friends and family; there will therefore be extra copies available for sale. Thanks to Roof Plus for sponsoring the calendar, we really appreciate their support, and we will donate any profits from the sale of the additional calendars to a local charity chosen by them – St Luke's Hospice.

The calendars will be distributed by the end of October 2021.

Making a positive difference IN Willington and FOR the world



Article written by Councillor Donna Okell

The Climate Crisis is the greatest threat we have ever faced. I think we can all say we are now beginning to see the serious effects of climate change not just across the world, but on our own doorsteps.

The good news is that the lovely people of Willington can and want to help. Thank you very much to those of you who have offered to support our plans in making a positive impact on the environment.

The Willington Climate Action Plan is designed to support the commitment to climate action from Cheshire West and Chester. You can find out more from this web address: <https://bit.ly/2TSrKfU>

Our initial plan asks that we all follow these three simple steps:

- 1.** Understand where we are now: measure your household's carbon footprint. Please use this fabulous free tool designed by the Stockholm Environment Institute. <http://reap-petite-uk-prod.herokuapp.com/>
- 2.** Make at least one pledge to improve your score across: Power, food, travel, shopping, and activities. So that's at least five commitments in each Willington household. That's over 700 in our village! Even small improvements can make a big difference.
- 3.** Work together, share our scores, and help each other to improve

At the end of the year we will record our progress; see how many of us have registered our footprint, how many pledges we've made, and encourage you to share your stories of how you are making a difference. We appreciate that not everybody may have access to a computer and/or would like some help. Please contact Donna Okell at donna@cheshireforgood.com or call her on 07739 799722 if you would like help or have any questions. Your support will make a difference IN Willington and FOR the world. We'll learn a lot, have some fun, and make a difference. Thank you.

Wildflowers on the Green

It's fabulous to hear so many of you talking about wildflowers and encouraging more wildlife in our gardens. From RSPB Birdwatch to No Mow May, and sharing pictures and news of local wildlife, it's like having our very own Willington Countryfile! We're pleased to let you know that John Grimshaw and Donna Okell have recently met with a member of CWaC to discuss the possibility of developing a wildflower meadow on part of our Green. As we have discussed in the WhatsApp group conversations, it is important that the space on the Green is available for a wide range of uses and that it continues to be accessible for all. CWaC has a Wildflower and Grasslands strategy. It's a very interesting read: <https://bit.ly/3inpuH2>.

We are going to explore how we may develop a 'strip' of wildflower meadow, which would leave the majority of the Green still available for events and other uses. We're awaiting further updates from CWaC once they have their budget allocated for the strategy. We will then be able to see what's possible and what resource is required – both financial and in terms of maintenance. It is likely we would work in partnership with CWaC to maintain the meadow. We'll keep you informed of progress.

Flexible Bus Service

Following a successful bid for government funding, the CWaC has launched a survey to hear your thoughts on rural transport. Please complete it here: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CZ2M16/>

Willington, Kelsall, Tarvin, and Oscroft are NOT currently included in the plans. We need to complete the survey and let CWaC know if we would like to be included. Access to a reliable and flexible local bus service would also support our Climate Action Plan.

A Message from Edward Timpson MP

A Message from Edward Timpson MP

I trust you have had a more expansive (and probably expensive!) summer than last year, and have been able to enjoy our beautiful countryside, coastlines, and coffee shops that seem to be around every corner these days. Work here in Willington and across Eddisbury continues too, including on many serious issues that can affect us all, such as:

Rural Crime

Rural crime is a problem for large areas of the country, including Eddisbury parishes like Willington, but it tends to go unreported. It can impact insurance premiums, food prices and damage local communities. Sometimes it can be hard to know whether something is a crime, and whether to contact Cheshire Constabulary or another charity or organisation. Rural crime tends to fall into one of four categories: agricultural, equine, wildlife, or heritage. It can also fall under environmental crime, which covers the scourges of illegal waste dumping, fly-tipping (a real issue for our area, worsened during the pandemic), polluting watercourses and land.

I would like to reassure you that I understand the high importance of this issue to those of us in our part of Cheshire, and I was pleased to be elected on a manifesto in 2019 which included a strong commitment to using additional police resources to tackle rural crime. To that end, I have met with the Chief Constable and leading officer of their Rural Crime Team to impress upon them the need to tackle rural crime right through from prevention to prosecution. Furthermore, John Dwyer—the Conservative candidate recently elected as Cheshire's Police & Crime Commissioner for the second time—reassured us recently:

"I'll hold the Chief Constable to account to reduce the amount of crime being committed and to increase the number of crimes detected. I'll also be asking him to develop strategies to address key issues in our communities including anti-social behaviour and rural crime. "I know that police visibility is important to Cheshire residents, and over the coming years I am committed to recruiting 240 more frontline police officers, taking our establishment to 2,320 by 2024."

The first cross-government rural proofing report has now been published. This report sets out the various innovative ways in which rural needs are being successfully identified and met, and I welcome that it specifically recognises the importance to rural communities of tackling rural crime. I am assured by this report that my ministerial colleagues remain committed to protecting the public, and are determined to drive down crime in both rural and urban areas.

The commitment made by the Prime Minister to put more officers back on our streets is an important step forward. Boris Johnson made it clear in his first speech on the steps of Downing Street that making our streets (and fields!) safer is a key priority. I hope that you will agree that the recruitment of 20,000 new police officers shows the Government's determination in this task. You may be pleased to know that nearly 9,000 police officers have been recruited since the Government launched its 20,000 new officers (by March 2023) recruitment drive.

While it is an operational matter for our Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable to decide where and how police officers are deployed, I know that rural forces across the country are working hard to maintain capacity in respect of rural crimes—not just here in leafy Cheshire.

A Message from Edward Timpson MP - Continued

I also understand too that the National Rural Crime Network highlights the main issues that affect rural communities and rural businesses, and works to achieve greater understanding of the impacts of rural crime. The Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Home Office also work closely with the National Rural Crime Network, as well as the National Police Chiefs' Council Wildlife Crime Network, to help identify and tackle rural crime issues.

If you want to find out more about rural crime, how it affects Willington and the surrounding countryside, and what you can do to help protect our town, farms and rich agricultural land, please visit: edwardtimpson.com/ruralcrime, where you'll find links to all sorts of information and advice, including a copy of the Cheshire section of the Countryside Alliance's 2020 crime survey, and links to the organisations and documents mentioned in this article, amongst others!

You will also find my Rural Crime Survey, through which you can give me your views on rural crime. Whilst you're at it, you may also wish to fill in my quick rural broadband and mobile phone survey at edwardtimpson.com/broadband! It's important that I have the weight of your opinion and the facts behind me when I go in to bat for Eddisbury in Whitehall.

Including... Fly-Tipping!

As mentioned above, fly-tipping, in particular, is a scourge of town and country alike, and deeply depressing. It's also very expensive to clear up. I see it regularly when I'm out running and cycling in our area, and I always report it. It did seem to become worse during the Covid-19 lockdowns. Although there are severe penalties for those found to be responsible, it is often hard to trace them. The best way to tackle it in the long term is through education in schools; accessible and cost-effective alternatives for recycling; and regular bin collections. Cheshire West & Chester Council recently held a consultation on reducing bin collections, and I'm glad so many people made their disagreement known. I have long supported the Keep Britain Tidy campaign and recently went litter picking with a local school group. If you want to get me out in Willington too I'd be happy to help!

Back to Nature

I have written before about the environment in the Willington newsletter, and am really pleased that the parish takes such an interest in all things green at a local level. It's disappointing to note that we have lost more than 90 percent of our meadows over the last 100 years in the UK. I'm happy, though, that the Government is taking action to reverse those losses by managing designated sites, providing incentives for habitat management and creation, and forging strong partnerships with landowners, communities like yours, and conservation bodies. Indeed the plan for the Sandstone Ridge to be reclassified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is being actively pursued by Natural England.

Keep in Touch

Members of Parliament can help their constituents by advising on problems (particularly those that arise from the work of Government departments) and representing the concerns of their constituents in Parliament. So if you need to get in touch, on this or any other matter, please visit edwardtimpson.com/contact to email me and sign up for my Eddisbury Report e-newsletter. You can also call my constituency office on 01829 733385, or write to 58A High Street, Tarpoley CW6 0AG.

AND REMEMBER TO FILL IN MY RURAL CRIME SURVEY ONLINE AT:

<https://www.edwardtimpson.com/ruralcrime>, AND MY BROADBAND & MOBILE PHONE SURVEY AT <https://www.edwardtimpson.com/Broadband>.

Highways and Byeways



Reduction in the speed limit on Willington Road – although progress is still very slow, we have cleared a couple of hurdles. Firstly CWaC delivered a consultation letter to all residents impacted by the reduced speed limit....100% of the 34 respondents were in favour of the change which is a pretty overwhelming result. Secondly, we have obtained a grant from the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioners Office for £2500 to fund the changes required to implement the scheme (new signage, road markings and so on). This is excellent news. The next step is for CWaC Highways to provide us with a full set of costs for the scheme, and once these are agreed on, there will be a second consultation period of three weeks via a notice in the local press. Implementation can then begin!! The costing exercise has been dragging on for quite a while but we continue to push for the numbers.

Managing Speeds in the Village – since the last newsletter, our Speed Watch volunteers have been out in June and August with our speed gun. The June exercise identified only one speeding motorist who was travelling at 47 mph on Willington Road. The August session was far more disturbing; in the period between 07:20 and 09:00 on one day, 28 motorists were clocked at greater than 40 mph on Willington Road, and of those, ten were reported to our Police Community Support Officer for doing speeds up to 49 mph. These drivers will receive a warning letter from Cheshire Police. We have also had the opportunity to borrow the smiley face speed indicator device (SID) from CWaC in July. It was deployed on both Chapel Lane and Willington Road hopefully to good effect.

Roughlow (installation of 'bends' and 'horses' signs) – the signs have now been installed!

Potholes – we will continue to report and re-report the assorted potholes and damaged road surfaces in the village to CWaC but see little remedial work. We think our persistence is paying off somewhat; some repairs have recently been made to the road surface near the entrance to Willington Hall (although the passing places still need clearing out), and the long-standing sink hole on Chapel Lane has finally been fixed.

Footpaths - following a number of comments regarding the hedge encroaching on the footpath between Kelsall Cycles and Green Lane, we have written to Kelsall Parish Council asking them to fix the issue. We received a very positive response from the Clerk at Kelsall and it looks like some action was swiftly taken. It is worth reminding everyone that it is the responsibility of the owner of hedges that form a boundary with highways and footpaths to keep the paths, and any signs or streetlights clear of vegetation. This topic is covered in more detail elsewhere in the newsletter.

Finally if you witness a traffic incident in the village, we encourage you to inform the police of the incident via the 101 phone number or online at: <https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/>. And you can report any road or path issue (and other things such as blocked or damaged drains and grids) directly to CWaC using 'Report It' online at: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/report-it/report-it.aspx>. Or you can contact the Council - General enquiries 0300 123 8123

U3A

Tarporley & District u3a will be holding their next general meeting on Thursday 23rd September at Tarporley Community Centre from 10 am (doors open at 9.45 am) and via zoom from 9.45 am. Speaker begins shortly after 10 am following a few notices. The meeting ends by 12 noon. Speaker is Paul Robbins, a presenter, historian and author, talking about Great British Eccentrics. You can find out more from their website at: <https://u3asites.org.uk/tarporley/home> where you will be able to read our newsletters and find out how to join.

Fly-Tipping

Article written by Councillor Vice Chairman Rob Merrick



The above graphic probably sums up people's thoughts on Fly-tipping but the cartoon caption really is no laughing matter. I was recently travelling home from work and was horrified to see three separate instances of fly-tipping on my short journey along our Cheshire country lanes. One was on Shay Lane on the approach to Oscroft (heading from Tarvin) and the other two were on Morley Lane (near Manley). Not only does this present a potential financial burden for all concerned but a great deal of stress for those impacted by this crime. It is important to be aware that:

- Fly Tipping costs Cheshire West and Chester circa £3.1million per annum (source CWaC).
- Farmers are the most impacted by this activity with 67% having been affected (source NFU).
- It is a criminal activity that can cause serious pollution of the environment, can be a risk to human health and can harm wildlife and farm animals.
- It spoils our local neighbourhoods and quality of life.

Unfortunately, we are not immune from this activity in Willington with fly-tipping a few weeks ago at the Dell on Roughlow and more recently on Willington Lane.

Fly-Tipping - Continued

Article written by Councillor Vice Chairman Rob Merrick

What to do if you come across Fly-Tipping?

If you do encounter or witness this activity, this is a checklist of what to do.

- Before you do anything make sure it's safe to do so. Remember that fly-tippers are doing something illegal – they are unlikely to welcome people observing them; do not put yourself at risk.
- Some waste can be hazardous so do not open bags or drums.
- Piles of soil maybe contaminated or hiding dangerous material.
- If you find or witness fly-tipping, safely record as many details as you can
- Report the fly-tipping to CWaC at...
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/report-it/fly-tipping.aspx>
- If appropriate report the incident to the Cheshire Police via 101 or their reporting website.

What is the Punishment?

An important to be aware that anyone who produces waste has a duty of care under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to ensure that it is disposed of properly. A person maybe guilty of an offence if their waste has been found to be dumped even if the dumping has been carried out by someone else. This duty applies to both businesses and householders.

If enforcement action is taken, the fines can be up to £50,000.00 and 5 years imprisonment.

What is our Obligation?

If you are disposing of garden, household or construction waste from your property and it is not being taken away by the local authority, you must ensure that the person taking the waste away is authorised (i.e. a registered waste carrier). If in doubt check their details on the public register of waste carriers or contact the environment agency (gov.uk).

Let's all do our bit to try and eradicate this serious and unpleasant crime.

Photo Competition

Article written by Councillor Chairman Andrew Nicholas

Thank you to all of you who entered our photo completion for our website front page. In the under eighteen category the winner was Oliver Whitney (age 6) with 'Poppy with Bee' congratulations Oliver and well done. In the Adult category we had joint winning entries from Robert Baxter with 'Trees Roughlow' and Jeanette with 'Tractor.' Very well done to both of you. All the other entries have been considered for our village 2022 calendar. A big thanks to Freda Markham for providing her advice, guidance, and judging skills for the competition.



Left - Oliver Whitney 'Poppy with Bee'



Above - Robert Baxter 'Trees Roughlow'



Left - Jeanette 'Tractor'

Our Village

An appeal from Willington Hall Hotel

We have received a request from the owners of Willington Hall Hotel for drivers not to use the private drive through the hotel grounds as an alternative route to the public highway along Willington Lane under the wood. Recently, a motorist driving at speed through the hotel grounds almost hit a three-year-old child and another motorist narrowly avoided hitting a parked car. If the problem continues, gates or barriers may have to be installed which would not be in keeping with a country hotel. Your co-operation is appreciated, please spread the word not to drive through the grounds unless you are using the hotel.

We are all aware that part of the problem is the state of the road between the two entrances to Willington Hall; the passing places are silted up with mud and the road surface is full of potholes. This has been reported to CW&C Highways on several occasions. We were informed in May that a job request had been issued to a contractor to clean up the mud before the road is repaired. During the week of 16th September, CWaC undertook some remedial work (jet-patching) but the passing places have yet to be cleared....we have chased this work again. If you are able to add your support to help stress the urgent need for this work to be actioned please raise a case on the CWaC Highways webpage:

<https://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/potholes-and-road-faults.aspx>. or call the CWaC switchboard on 0300 123 8 123.

Hedges - time to give them a cut!

We have been informed of two instances where hedges have put pedestrians using footpaths at risk of injury or an accident. Hedges are also obscuring speed limits and other road signs.

Our Speed Watch volunteers have recently recorded vehicles traveling through the parish at speeds around 50 mph! They are arranging for police enforcement visits, but what are the chances of getting prosecutions when the 40 mph signs are hidden by unkempt hedges? CWaC has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the highway is not obstructed. It is a requirement that anything overhanging a footway must be at least 2.3m above the footway or verge, and 5.3m above the road surface. CWaC can ask you to cut back your hedges giving you 21 days' notice. Failure to do so may result in CWaC doing the work and charging the cost to the owner; pursuing the cost through the courts if necessary.

Please check your hedges to see if they are obscuring traffic signs or street lights, or reducing the width of the pavement. If so, please cut them back as a matter of urgency. Thank you for doing your bit to improve road safety and to help reduce speeding traffic.

Your Council

About Your Council

Cllr John Grimshaw (01829 752177)
Cllr Rob Merrick (01829 458387) - Vice
Chairman
Cllr Andrew Nicholas (01829 752029) -
Chairman
Cllr Donna Okell (07739 799 722)
Cllr Beverley Crossley (07812 071633)

Next Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on: Tuesday 28th September at 19:30 at Willington Hall (subject to Covid restrictions). Parish Council meetings are open meetings; you are welcome to 'attend' and listen to the discussions.

To Contact Us:

Write to Rob Winterbourne, 1 Lilac Close, Willington, CW6 0PL, Tel: 01829 751266 or email at: clerkwillington@gmail.com

Your CWaC Borough Councillors are:

Cllr John Leather (01829 752558) or email at: john.leather@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Cllr Harry Tonge email at: harry.tonge@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk



Village Notice Boards

You may have spotted that the main village notice board by the bus shelter has disappeared. Unfortunately, a very clumsy and unknown driver totally destroyed in the early hours of Saturday morning a few weeks ago. We are working with potential suppliers and our insurance company to arrange a replacement but in the meantime, all Parish Council notices will be displayed on the 'community' notice board further up the Green towards Roughlow.

