

WILLOUGHBY PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2013 /2014

Your Council has pleasure in presenting its report for the year 2013/2014. The Council held 9 meetings during the year and it is from the Minutes of these meetings that this report has been compiled.

The Parish Council Meetings were well attended by the Councillors with County Councillor H Roberts attending 2 meetings and Rugby Borough Councillor R Hazelton attending 5 meetings.

ROADS/VERGES/FOOTPATHS & STREET LIGHTING

Speed Aware Signs – “Speed Awareness” digital display signs were placed at the entrances to the Village at a cost of £600, however, after a 6 month trial period they were found to be ineffective and removed.

The Speed Aware sign on the A45 from the Dunchurch direction is still not working despite efforts by County Councillor H Roberts and the Parish Council to have the defects corrected.

Fox Covert – The bridge fencing and sides on the Fox Covert Bridle path have again been damaged with the additional problem of farmers ploughing the fields right up to the path edges and in some cases vehicles could not pass. The Parish Council has raised this with Grandborough Parish Council and the County Highways Department and repairs have been promised.

Moor Lane – Moor Lane was resurfaced and widened (1/2 metre) by the Highways Department, but the road edge repairs were shown to be inadequate. The Contractors were called back to repair again the edges, but this repair has also proved to be inadequate as traffic forced on to the verges is ripping up the fillings.

The drain in Moor Lane just past “Old Pastures” has been cleared by jetting with high-pressure water and surface water is now running freely into the brook.

The wooden fence on Moor Lane in front of the Moat has been replaced.

A45 Footpath – The footpath from the Old Railway Bridge up to the Northamptonshire border on the Braunston side of the A45 has had the verge edges cut back and cleared.

A45 Rubbish – The Parish Council has been informed that any rubbish on the A45 road verges will not be cleared and collected in future due to labour shortages. The Highways Department will only deal with specific cases of fly tipping.

Road Markings – The road markings at the entrance to Main Street from the A45 have been re-marked, however, other barely visible road markings in the Village await attention.

Main Street (outside Nos: 15, 17, 19) - Despite bringing to the attention of Warwickshire County Council the poor state of the trench which had been dug some years ago by the Electricity Board the Highways Department has decided that no remedial work will be carried out.

Willoughby Garage – Your Council continue to raise with the Police, Rugby Borough Council and the owner the continual parking outside Willoughby Garage on the cross-hatched area which causes a reduction of visibility when turning right out of Main Street onto the A45.

Lower Street – At the request of the owner of No: 1 White Barn Close the verge in front of this property is no longer strimmed by Mr S Harwell on his fortnightly cuts. The owner is strimming the area himself

Hedgerow Removal – Shrubbery Footpath – Quotations were received for the removal of mixed species hedgerow growing alongside the footpath at its entrance to Lower Street. The Council decided against the hedgerow removal at this time.

Sunken Drains – The sunken drains in Main Street and the BT Grid on the footpath in Main Street have been filled and made safe.

Speed Checks – Speed checks have been carried out in the Village but Councillors believe that they were carried out at the wrong time of the day. It is also the belief of the authorities that the presence of speed signs is enough in itself from the “fear factor” alone.

Gritting Routes – The Parish Council requested the addition of Woolscott Lane (from the Cricket Club up to Woolscott) to be added to the gritting route as this is a School bus route.

Sawbridge Road – A vote of thanks was received from Grandborough Parish Council for the Parish Council’s support in helping to reduce speeding along Sawbridge Road.

PLAYING FIELD & OTHER OPEN SPACES

Playing Field – ROSPA Inspection – Once again the Parish Council has received another excellent ROSPA Safety Report with only several minor concerns raised – these have been addressed by Mr G Rigby so as to rectify these concerns.

The Council is to look at alternative surfaces under the swings to try and avoid the continual expenses of replacing the bark.

The Playing Field hedge has been cut back with the hedge on the Shrubbery footpath perimeter cut back on both sides.

Transfer of Land – The Council continues to pursue the transfer of land alongside the Playing Field from Mrs Brailsford. A draft transfer document has been submitted to Mrs Brailsford’s Solicitor and a response is awaited.

Willoughby Educational Foundation Grant – The Council has received a most generous grant of £1000 towards the maintenance and upkeep of the Playing Field. This grant will enable the Parish Council to help maintain the standard of the field and equipment the condition of which is much envied by other Villages.

PLANNING

R13/0817 Willoughby Lodge Farmhouse – Planning permission granted for a waiver of condition (agricultural occupancy). Parish Council raised no objections.

R12/2185 – Parish Council had raised no objections to Planning permission given for the continuation of use of land for the siting of a static caravan and its use as a dwelling.

Plot 5C Moor Lane – Parish Council had been advised that although Planning permission had been granted for the erection of a Barn on Plot 5C (the Parish Council had objected to the application) the owner of Willoughby House had a covenant on the land preventing the building of any buildings. It was however up to the owner of Willoughby House to enforce this covenant.

Land in and around Willoughby – A Planning consultation was received for a proposal to re-build current 11kv network supported on wooden poles on the same route and height as existing poles and install 2 new poles. The Parish Council had raised no objections.

R13/1567 Barn at Manor Farm – Conversion of Barn at No: 1 dwelling house and the erection of an associated detached Garage (amended scheme to that approved under Planning permission R12/1620). Parish Council had raised no objections.

R13/1965 – Navigation Farm – Planning permission granted for erection of workshop/store for agricultural equipment. Parish Council had raised no objections.

R13/2126 – The Lodge Willoughby House – Planning permission granted for the erection of a replacement dwelling with an attached Garage (amendment to Planning permission R11/0031) Parish Council had raised no objections.

R13/2271 The Barn Woolscott Road – Planning permission granted for the conversion of a redundant brick agricultural barn to a three bed roomed dwelling – Parish Council had raised no objections except for access onto Moor Lane.

R13/2327 Navigation Farm – proposed extension to existing hay/straw and fodder storage barn. Parish Council had raised no objections.

R14/0033 – 14 Main Street – Planning permission granted to remove existing projections to rear and side and replace with single storey extension and one and a half storey extension. Parish Council raised no objections.

R14/0034 – 16 Main Street – Planning permission granted for the erection of single storey rear extension, front porch extension, conversion of existing garage, erection of canopy to rear and extension of existing dormer window to rear. Parish Council had raised no objections.

R14/0130 – The Parlour Manor Farm Barns – Planning permission granted for the insertion of two roof lights into the northeast roof slope. Parish Council had raised no objections.

OTHER MATTERS

Tree Survey – The Council has carried out the remedial work highlighted by the tree survey conducted by Councillors T Thomas and B Hallam. In addition Mr E Baker has been asked to carry out work along Brickhill Lane.

Walnut Tree – a Tree Preservation Order has been placed on the Walnut Tree on the verge outside White House Farm Main Street.

Village Photograph – Villagers were invited by Rugby Borough Council to submit a photograph of Willoughby Village for display at the Town Hall, regrettably no photographs or drawings were submitted.

Hanging Baskets – The Parish Council needs to contact the Parks Department of Rugby Borough Council if they require planted Hanging Baskets similar to those in Rugby and Dunchurch.

Mobile Library – Warwickshire County Council have confirmed that despite earlier assurances the Mobile Library service will be removed from Grandborough and Willoughby.

National Flood Forum – Following a drop in session by the Warwickshire Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder Project Team in the Village Hall, twelve members of the Village signed up to be involved in helping in a flood/emergency situation until the Emergency Services arrive. The Chairperson addressed the Dunchurch Division Community Forum on progress made in Willoughby in supporting the Willoughby Flood Forum Committee.

Phone Box – Following a request for volunteers in the Willoughby Monthly the Parish Council is to provide paint/brushes for the painting of the Telephone Box outside the Rose Inn.

National Spring Clean – The Council was unable to carry out its annual Spring Clean during March due to the lack of volunteers.

Verge Outside WEF Garden – The Parish Council is to plant a tree on the verge outside the WEF Garden.

Moor Lane Brook – The Highways Department has promised to clear out the vegetation in the brook between Barberry Cottage and the Pumping Station Bridge during the first week of April.

Over 60's Christmas Meal – The Parish Council was able again to arrange the Over 60's Christmas Meal in the Rose Inn thanks to a most generous donation of £510 from the Willoughby Charity – without this donation the event could not take place.

Life buoy – The Parish Council has decided against purchasing a life buoy for the Village pond.

Chestnut Trees – The Chestnut trees kindly donated by Mr & Mrs Vessey have been planted in Haywards Lodge.

Council Houses – The Parish Council has established that the policy criteria adopted when allocating Council Houses in Willoughby is for local needs first followed by anyone with local connections and then outside people. It follows that anyone in need in Willoughby must ensure that their name is on the Housing List at Rugby Borough Council.

Housing Survey – Midland Rural Housing are funding and conducting an Affordable Housing Survey in Willoughby to fulfil the Council's obligation of conducting such a survey every five years. A covering letter will accompany the Survey Questionnaire.

Parish Plan – The Parish Plan has been accepted by Rugby Borough Council and is available on the Willoughby Website or RBC Website. The Plan has been distributed to all households in the Village.

Neighbourhood Watch – Members are still receiving up to date information via the internet from our Co-ordinator (Councillor R Settle). This is a valuable means of keeping Villagers aware of incidents in our area.

Dogs – Dog mess continues to be a nuisance around some parts of the Village – it is the recommendation of Rugby Borough Council and Willoughby Parish Council that Dog owners whose dogs offend should be reported to the Dog Warden for action to be taken. This can be through the Parish Council if necessary.

Social Events – The Village once again held its Annual Scarecrow Sunday and Willoughby Weekend events – these were enjoyed by all Villagers who attended, but thanks to all the people who helped and assisted either in organising or on the day without them it would not be possible.

Emergency Plan – A flyer in the Willoughby Monthly looking for volunteers to help in an emergency and fill the vacancies required for the duties detailed was disappointing. The Parish Council, however, continues to work towards producing a viable Emergency Plan.

Land outside the Village Hall – The Parish Council has established from Warwickshire County Council that the land outside the Village Hall is owned by them and part of the Highways.

Boundary Stones – The Clerk and Councillor Hallam have walked the Village boundary and located a number of the Village boundary stones. The stone identified in a garden in Woolscott is to be up-lifted and replaced in its original position.

Village Design Statement – in preparation

Leader Funding The Parish Council has been advised that the Leader Project has now ceased, it is not known if future funding from the European Union in 2015 will be available.

Allotments – The allotment project goes from strength to strength with the formation of the "Willoughby Jubilee Allotment Association" whose efforts at the allotment site are now clearly visible.

The Parish Council has during the year provided a new fence between the allotment site and the adjoining field, cut back the hedge on the opposite site and prepared the ground for the allotment holders to start work.

A water supply on to the site is in the process of being installed and it is hoped to lay the foundation for a wooden hut (kindly donated by Councillor T Thomas) to be laid in due course.

A 10-year Tenancy Lease agreement has been agreed with the Association.

D E Neville
Parish Clerk

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