

WILLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held in the Village Hall on 8th May 2014

Present: Cllr S Cannon (Chairman), Mrs D Wain, Mr D Edwards, Mr D Bingham, Mr S Webster, Mrs L Foreman, Mrs R Andrews, Mrs S Faull, Mrs R Sneath, Mrs S Worrell, Mrs M Brougham, Mrs G Hicks, Mrs H Hunt, Mr & Mrs D Cullen, Mrs L Kirk, Mrs B Jones, Mrs J Wilkins, Mrs L Brooks-Sleight and Mrs E Mann (Clerk to the Parish Council)

Apologies: Mr & Mrs D Bussey, Mrs D Cannon

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 9 May 2013 were circulated. It was proposed by Mrs D Wain, seconded by D Edwards and carried unanimously that they were a true record of the meeting and were duly signed.

2. Chairman's Report (presented by Cllr S Cannon)

- The chairman thanked his fellow councillors who had put themselves forward to serve their community. Syd Webster and David Bingham had been co-opted on to the council part-way through the year following two resignations and they were a welcome addition. Attendance at meetings by all the councillors was excellent.
- The major item to report was the successful outcome of improving the drainage along Cotgarth Lane, to prevent the flooding which had occurred there over recent years. Highways admitted partial liability for this flooding as a result of installing a lighting pole some years ago and so agreed to part-fund the project. Other grants were obtained from both West Lindsey and the County Council, and the residents also contributed. It is now hoped that this lane will be better both for the residents and the many people who walk it.
- The parish council had been successful in obtaining free trees from the Woodland Trust for one of the parish fields, some suitable for wetland areas, others to encourage wildlife. The Woodland Trust also provided additional hedging at the cemetery, to replace those plants that had died.
- There had been problems again with blocked drains on Highways land and Anglian Water have had to be called out several times. This is nearly always caused by wet wipes and fat.
- Highways came good on their promise to upgrade the footpath on one side of Stow Road all the way from the Park Road junction round past the church and up to Marton Road junction. This is a vast improvement. They have also resurfaced a section of the Stow Road footpath on the other side of the road.
- Highways were also asked to help with a solution to the parking problem on High Street during busy times. The parish council suggested reducing the width of part of the pavement opposite the village hall, where it is particularly wide. Highways don't have the money for that but are prepared to paint a white line along the pavement, indicating where cars might park.
- A litter pick was carried out back in November, with an excellent turnout of volunteers. 13 bags of rubbish were collected. Despite this only 3 months later West Lindsey had to be called out to do another litter-pick along Gainsborough Road.
- There has also been some fly-tipping at the entrance of Waterfurrows Lane along Marton Road. Any incidences of fly-tipping should be reported to West Lindsey.
- The parish council was able to give grants to both the Village Hall and the Playing Field to enable them to carry out some of their essential work. A small grant was also given to the WI to allow them to preserve a 1965 scrapbook and make two copies of it. This contains a lot of fascinating information about village life 50 years ago.

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- There was a change of Handyman at the start of the year, with Tim Berridge taking over, and he has also taken on the job of cutting the grass at the churchyard, cemetery and village hall. The parish council has taken over one of the small sheds at the back of the village hall for storing all its equipment.
- The Best Kept Garden competition saw yet another different winner, this time it was won by Sue and John Bingham at The Grange. This event will be taking place again in July.
- There were no Planning Applications for new dwellings. Applications were mostly for alterations and extensions to existing properties and the council was able to support these. An application by W Leaning & Sons (Haulage) on Gainsborough Road for a change of use to permit the siting of touring caravans for holiday use and the erection of an amenity building was also supported.

3. Financial Report (presented by the Clerk to the Parish Council)

- The year started with £4,984.47 in the bank. On the expenditure side, alongside the unavoidable costs (Clerk's salary, room hire for meetings, grass cutting, handyman, insurance, audit fees etc), financial support was once again given to both the village hall (£1,250) and the playing field (£1,750) to enable them to carry out the vital work they do in the village. The council also contributed £500 to the work on Cotgarth Lane. One of the old sheds at the back of the village hall was converted to store all the council-owned equipment used by the Handyman (£582.96).
- Total expenditure was £13,404.29.
- Income is mainly in the form of the Precept from WLDC and this was kept at £9,500. Other income is from cemetery fees, rental of the parish fields, help from the County Council for public footpath maintenance, repayment of VAT etc. This year the council also received £1,000 in grants from both WLDC and the County Council towards the Cotgarth Lane work, as well as donations of £3,000 from the Cotgarth Lane residents themselves. A grant of £330 came from the Community Chest towards the work on the shed.
- Total income was £15,206.73, so £5,706.73 from sources other than the Precept.
- Income this year was higher than expenditure by £1,802.44.
- The year ended with £6,724.92 in the bank.

The Clerk noted that councillors finalise their Budget plans at the end of the calendar year, but this meeting, the APM, is the place where ideas should start to be aired. Otherwise, ideas can be put to a councillor or the Clerk at any time during the year. Any very ambitious plans would result in the parish council having to increase its Precept, which in turn impacts on council tax, so that needs to be kept in mind.

4. Reports from Village Organisations

- **Sturton Guides** (Dorothy Wain on behalf of Jo Robinson). The Guides continues to be popular, with 21 Guides from a wide area around Sturton. They are currently looking for a new leader as Jo is leaving the area. Another exciting year included 10 Guides and 2 Leaders attending the Poacher 2013 event on the Showground last summer. The event also saw 6 Guiders and 1 Scouter from the local area run a Subcamp there of 900. Many other activities and visits were enjoyed during the year. The Sturton unit is 40 years old this year and they are celebrating with a special visit to their campsite in June. They are also celebrating the founding of the Brownies 100 years ago; 12 Sturton Guides and their leader will join with Guides and Brownies from the County on a visit to PGL in Caythorpe.
- **Friendship Club** (Dorothy Wain). Unfortunately Cindy Foskett had to leave in July when she took over the Stags Head at Knaith and there has been no leader since. A group of members agreed to run the club between themselves and have chaired the meetings, arranged speakers etc. There are about 20 members who have enjoyed a variety of events, from outings, to talks, to

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social events. They are still looking for someone to take over the running of the club. Meetings are every other Wednesday from 2.30pm in the Village Hall, except for July and August.

- **Willingham and District Relief in Sickness Charity** (Dorothy Wain). This charity was formed many years ago with the proceeds of the sale of “Southcote”, the house left for the District Nurse. It covers Willingham, Kexby, Upton, Heapham, Sturgate, Springthorpe and Corringham. It holds 4 wheelchairs and other Aids available to loan. The charity would consider any request for help. It provides magazines to Willingham and Upton Friendship Clubs and still gives a donation towards parties for the older people of the villages. It used to help with winter fuel to anyone who was ill before the Winter Fuel Allowance was set up. Like other organisations the charity is looking for a Secretary/Treasurer; it meets twice a year with some duties in between.
- **W.I.** (Sheila Worrell). The W.I. had a full and eventful year, supporting a wide-ranging and varied programme of talks, visits and entry into competitions. Monthly meetings have included subjects as diverse as learning how the LIVES team operates; English country dancing; talks on taking better photographs and making jewellery. Members have knitted and crocheted tiny hats for premature baby units, donated shoe-box parcels to refugees in Romania and knitted teddy bears for the Lincolnshire Police Community Safety Scheme. Dorothy Wain has stepped down as President and the role has recently been taken on by Angela Borman. There are 27 members at present, everyone is welcome.
- **St Helen’s PCC** (Sue Faull on behalf of Barbara Bussey). The year has seen St Helen’s formally joined to the extended group with the Saxilby churches and they are slowly becoming more united. There has been positive progress with building projects and maintenance and the faculty has at last been received to start the project to repair the leaky tower. Grants were applied for and obtained and money raised with fundraising events. Thanks to Sue Faull for getting this project underway and to villagers for their donations and support. Volunteer days in the churchyard were starting to make a difference there. Services during the year had been varied and interesting. A trial period over the summer will see the church open every day from 10.00 am – 5.00 pm.
- **St Helen’s Bellringers** (Sue Faull). The bells continue to be rung on a regular basis on Sundays and Wednesday practice nights, though they have lost some of their younger ringers to table tennis and to homework commitments. New recruits of any age would be welcome. They have been pleased to have regular visitors from other churches. A lot of work was done on the bell tower in the summer and it is now completely watertight.
- **Horticultural Show** (Sue Faull). The 2013 show was again very successful, with local support much appreciated. The 2014 show will be held on the last Saturday in September as usual, the categories are now available on the village website and the show schedule will be delivered to each household in August. Fuchsia and geranium plants for growing on in time for the Show are available now from Sue Bingham. The committee would welcome new members.
- **Table Tennis** (Daniel Cullen). The adult section of the club (currently 8 members) meets from 8pm-10pm on Wednesdays, September to April; the junior section has 10-15 youngsters under the leadership of Kev Birkett meeting from 7pm-8pm. New members always welcome.
- **Village Liaison with Howson Care Centre** (Sally Cullen) – Sally still has a good link with Howson; the manager, Carole, is always willing to listen to members of the village. A couple of residents have joined a cookery course, some work in charity shops. If anyone knows of any placements, please let Howson know.
- **Village Hall** (Rebecca Andrews). The Village Hall has had an excellent year during which they have continued to maintain the Hall and organised a number of successful fundraising and social events including a ‘learn to knit’ workshop, the Annual Autumn Fayre, a Christmas Floral Art making workshop and the showing of the family film ‘Despicable Me 2’ (unfortunately not well attended). The recent St George’s Night dinner was a great night of English food and entertainment. Sausages and Maypole dancing are obviously a good combination!!

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There were various improvements to the Hall. Following problems with the new boiler installed in April 2012 it was decided to replace the pipework and radiators. They fundraised for this but were unsuccessful in obtaining grant aid. An alternative plan of insulating the roof and the walls to stop heat escaping proved too costly. They therefore reverted to the plan of insulating the cavity walls of the extension and replacing the pipework and radiators. Fortunately due to all the fundraising they have enough to achieve this without grant aid and it is hoped the work can be done over the summer. Externally, Margaret Martin has done an excellent job with the small garden area making it look very neat and colourful. They have also recently had the front walls topped with coping stones which has further improved the look of the Hall.

For the last 3 years a grant from the Parish Council has enabled them to reduce and keep the hourly rates charged to hire the hall affordable for local organisations and private hire. This has continued to prove successful. This is regularly monitored and total receipts from hire charges are not significantly reduced and the hall is in constant use in the evenings during the week. We've had a continued increase in private hire events.

Local organisations continue to enjoy use of the hall including the new Willingham band and the local group Wilko. Brownies, Sturton Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers all meet weekly and monthly bookings from Friendship and WI keep up the use.

The regular monthly coffee mornings started in May last year have been popular and will continue and the committee are open to new ideas of how to use the hall.

There is a very committed committee, attendance at meetings is excellent and everyone helps out at events and supports in numerous different ways. They are looking for a new Bookings Clerk.

Rebecca said that all in all it had been another great year for the Village Hall. It continued to provide a community venue which was accessible and available to the community and to promote events which fostered the great community spirit that already existed in this village.

- **Playing Field** (Bernadette Jones). It had been a quiet year as they had a very small committee at the moment. A Fun Day was held in the summer, an auction in December, a quiz night in February, and a 70's night in April. They are not able to hold the Breakfast event this year due to lack of members. The AGM will be held in October and they are desperately seeking new committee members. The garden gyms are going very well. This year they need to look at the fencing around the children's play park and the Lincolnshire fencing along the perimeter. Bernadette thanked the parish council for their grant and everyone who helped in any way.
- **Twinning Association** (Dave Edwards). A group from Willingham had a wonderful visit to Moyenneville in July last year, with some new families taking part. In 2014 there is a visit to Postrelmov by 24 people from Willingham. There had been some very successful fundraising events, including a quiz, Halloween parties for both children and adults, and the play 'Trouble at Willingham Abbey' – a special thanks was given to Rebecca Andrews for writing and producing the play. The fundraising goes towards hosting a visit from Moyenneville and Postrelmov in 2015, also to taking school-age children abroad for free. Various events are planned for this year, including a new play by Rebecca, and a children's Christmas party
- **1st Willingham Brownies** (Louise Foreman). 1st Willingham Brownies meets during term time every Monday evening. There are currently 18 girls attending, including 2 new members but we are soon to bid farewell to 5 of our older girls as they ready themselves for moving onward & upward to Girl Guides in the new academic year. Including Louise there are 2 adult leaders working alongside a young leader and an adult helper. Seeing the relocation of Sturton Brownies to Fillingham has further strengthened their appeal for local girls aged 7 – 10 years old to choose Willingham Brownies. 2014 sees the 100th birthday of Brownies and celebrations have already kick-started in April with a St George's Day parade in Gainsborough depicting Brownies through the century. The girls within the unit are tirelessly working toward a special Big Brownie Birthday badge. Having already completed tasks such as hosting a (generously supported by Morrisons and Saxilby Co-op) Fairtrade tea party, holding a WWII inspired black-out night and inviting the Sturton Rainbows to a meeting, gaining their badge is well underway. With many

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more activities lined up including a stay away trip at the end of May, 1st Willingham Brownies will be kept very busy this year. They continue to support local events by parading and attending the church services at St Helen's, entering pieces in to the annual Horticultural Show and holding a stall at the village hall Christmas Fair. Louise finished by saying her third year of being Brown Owl had been fantastic; she felt very lucky to have some of Willingham's and the surrounding villages most capable and mature young girls within her unit.

- **St Helen's Church** (Joan Wilkins) – the church has always received support from people in the village, even if they don't come to services. As there are no longer any chapels in the village, St Helen's is the only place of worship. There are 45 people on the roll, but only about 19 attend services. Caroline Leak did a wonderful job at Christmas, stepping into Penny Dunderdale's shoes. The tower was made waterproof, and the church received quite a lot of grants towards this. They now have to do work on the porch, so various fundraising events are planned, including a hog roast in July. Volunteer work is important – thanks to them the church is now open most days, the Parish News magazine is put together and distributed, and the churchyard gets a tidy-up session. There is only one church warden at the moment – this is a crucial role, as the church can manage with clergy, but not without church wardens.

5. Questions/Comments/Suggestions from the floor

- The improved footpath down Stow Road and round to the Playing Field was much appreciated. It was thought that the re-surfacing of the other side of Stow Road was done because air bubbles had been found in the tarmac.
- Lesley Kirk asked if there were any plans by any village organisations to commemorate the centenary of the start of World War I. No one was aware of any plans. Lesley said she was thinking of doing afternoon tea or a tea dance. This idea was welcomed by the floor.
- It was asked if the grass could be cut in front of the bench near the river Till, now that it has been moved further along. This has already been done and put on the list for regular cutting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed.