

# WILLOUGHBY PARISH

## COMMUNITY ACTION REPORTS

**27 APRIL 2023**

The reports provide residents with updates on four initiatives:

- Management of Outdoor Areas
- Developing a Community Flood Action Plan
- Upgrading the Street Lighting in the Village
- Community Speed Watch and Traffic Issues  
*(including the planned traffic calming measures at the Longdown Lane junction on the A45)*

# Willoughby Parish Council: Management of outdoor areas

## Mowing

Towards the end of the 2022 mowing season, our contractor suddenly and without notice gave up the contract having successfully cared for the grassed areas for a number of years. This led to a number of actions having to be undertaken to make sure all the grass in the village continued to be looked after;

- Two remaining cuts had to be and were resourced.
- Refreshed mowing specification drawn up.
- New Contractors were sought, interviewed, references taken up and an appointment made.
- Continual monitoring of the service provided is underway.

## Pond

Maintenance of the pond and its environment continue to be monitored;

- The willow trees are checked on a regular basis and cut back as appropriate and as advised by professionals.
- New signs, warning passing drivers about the risk of ducks sitting in the road, have been installed. These are more eye-catching than previous signs and are also reflective.
- New signs warning of the dangers of an ice-covered pond have also been installed.
- The drainage grid is cleaned out when needed and the drainage of water from the road monitored to minimise the risk of flooding.

## Footpaths and bridleways

The Parish Council continues to monitor the condition of public footpaths and bridleways to ensure ease of access. A number of issues have been identified and are being / have been addressed.

- We have invited the custodian of footpaths and bridleways in Warwickshire to visit and advise on various issues.
- Narrow access at 2 kiss gates in the village have been identified as a problem for walkers with backpacks, babies in arms etc. These are the wooden gates at Pye Court and also the Shrubberies / Lower Street junction. In consultation with Warwickshire County Council, alternative solutions are being sought, such as removal or replacement with staggered barriers.
- Impeded access through gateways, where the path through is liable to flooding, is to be repaired at the cost of Warwickshire C.C. These are at gateways leading to Big Grounds and also near to Hayward Lodge nature area.
- Footpath between Magdalen Road and Main Street has had tarmac repairs and undergrowth cleared.
- Barbed wire fly tipping on the shrubberies has been cleared.

## Playground

The playground and equipment are regularly inspected by the Council to ensure safety for users. There is an annual audit inspection by ROSPA. No issues requiring immediate action were reported at the last inspection. The step to the shelter has been renewed and the Igloo frame is to be painted.

Rod Honess

# FLOOD ACTION GROUP - PROGRESS REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

The Flood Action Group has the following purposes:

1. to establish a team of designated Flood Wardens and to outline their responsibilities
2. to identify and action the improvements required to reduce the impact of flood events
3. to produce and keep an up-to-date maintenance programme for watercourses in the parish
4. to identify measures to reduce the overloading of the sewer system during flood events
5. to update the Community Flood Action Plan

## PROGRESS

### 1. Flood Wardens

- A team of 11 flood wardens, including two reserves, has been established and their responsibilities agreed. The lead flood warden is Ant Ray and the other wardens are Brian Hall, Kim Taylor, Val Taylor, Dave Waddington, Jim Hesketh, Jackie Hesketh, Sue Johnson, Robin Ledson, Hilly Honess and Craig McMullen. Bert Ogle is an 'honorary' warden to aid communications and Chair of the group.
- Communication channels via a 'phone tree' and a Whatsapp group have been set up.
- Work on identifying properties that have flooded in the past is underway.

### 2. Reduction of the impact of flood events

- An annotated Environment Agency flood map has been produced to show how flood water makes its way off the fields and into the watercourses in the village leading, on occasion, to severe flooding, particularly at the lower end of the village.
- Bert Ogle has produced a paper with photographs and commentary which identifies options for what could be done to improve the flow of water out of the village. This work would require a survey by Warwickshire County Council Highways and is likely to be expensive.
- Flood wardens will gather information about blocked gullies, grips and watercourses and liaise with the designated parish councillor who will contact the Highways Locality Officer. Note: Highways has a 'rigid programme of works already planned not within just Willoughby but Warwickshire as a whole'.

### 3. Maintenance programme

- The Highways Locality Officer has noted that residents in Willoughby are generally great at keeping ditches clear. Work to identify sources of funding for additional work required is underway.
- Photographs and commentary on the erosion of the bank in the Village Hall grounds have been provided. Details and prices for gabions and rocks to shore up the bank have been identified. As the landowner is the Village Hall, the shoring up and costs are to be discussed at their next meeting.

### 4. Adequacy of the sewer system

- A map of the sewer system and photographs of inspection chamber covers 'regurgitating' are available.

### 5. The Community Flood Action Plan

- Work on the first draft has begun and this will be added to as further information is gained.

## NEXT STEPS

1. Flood wardens to progress the identification of residents who might welcome some support in the event of imminent or occurring flood events. A leaflet through the doors of potentially at risk properties and follow-up visits to be arranged to find out what kind of support might be wanted.
2. Approaches to communicating flood alerts to all residents to be identified e.g. agreed messages on Facebook, text messages, phone calls, visits.
3. Identify people who have access to tractors, winch equipment, four wheel drives and hovercraft.
4. Agree and list specific measures that would limit the flow of water into the village. Prioritise actions and agree implementation requirements.
5. Organise working parties for any maintenance work performed by residents. If landowners/local authority are responsible, maintain contact and request again, if necessary.
6. Identify funding required to implement flood control measures and potential sources of grants.
7. Research to provide accurate numbers of houses in 1961, when the sewers were constructed, and now, as a starting point in making the case that work is needed to increase capacity.

Thank you to all the volunteer flood wardens above and to other residents who have offered to help with the Flood Action Plan - Andrew Palmer, Rachel Settle and Catherine Taylor.

Maggie Beech

## **Street Lighting Volunteer Group – Progress Report**

### **Objective**

1. To research the most appropriate way of upgrading the EXISTING street lights to LED lanterns – Supply of our existing sodium lamps are being phased out.
2. To research an acceptable way of funding the upgrade.

### **Progress**

1. We have produced a log of the current Street Lamp Inventory (Now Revision controlled)
2. We have prepared a Street Lighting Plan identifying the location of each Light (Revision Controlled)
3. Held a site meeting with Eon and currently agreeing the specification of each existing Lantern.
4. Have contacted our electricity supplier (nPower) to update their log of Willoughby street lights.
5. Have had meeting with Barby and Onley PC about their LED upgrade experiences.
6. Have started to research potential grants and low-cost financing vehicles.
7. Are investigating implications of embracing a ‘Darker Skies’ approach in the potential LED Upgrade.

### **Action Plan**

1. Identify 3 potential LED upgrade suppliers from our research and have meetings with them to build up our knowledge base so we can fine tune our LED upgrade specification.
2. Prepare ‘Requests for Quotation’ (RFQs) for at least 3 potential LED upgrade suppliers including on-going MAINTENANCE projections.
3. This will enable the COST of the upgrade to be established and the projected MAINTENANCE SAVINGS.
4. Work with nPower to understand how they calculate our Electricity usage bearing in mind it is not metered.
5. Identify at least 2 other (i.e. nPower plus 2 others) electricity suppliers to quote for supplying electricity for the proposed LED installation.
6. This will enable us to evaluate the electricity COST SAVINGS to use in the financial justification – this will be affected by our current fixed cost contract expiring in August 2024
7. Chase down as many funding opportunities as possible and present a recommendation to the WPC.

Special thanks to our Street Lighting Volunteers – Steve Palmer, Hilly Honess, Tony Gasser and Bert Ogle

Malcolm Lewis

## **TRAFFIC REPORT**

### **Willoughby Parish: Community Speed Watch.**

At last year's community meeting we had 15 people kindly volunteer to be part of the speed watch project and on behalf of the Parish Council we want to thank you for offering to participate in this activity. Unfortunately, as many people are probably already aware, following a site visit by PC Ken Bratley of Warwickshire Police, based in Rugby, there were no suitable sites identified anywhere in the village that complied with the minimum safety requirements for speed watch activities to be conducted.

Speed watch activities require a minimum of 600m of clear road within a reduced speed area to conduct speed measurement activity. From a 30mph speed limit sign it is made up of 200m to allow for a vehicle to decrease speed to the indicated limit and a further 100m minimum of clear view road before the position of a speed watch volunteers activity area. These distances must be available on both sides of the speed measurement point thus giving a total of 600m.

### **Willoughby Parish: Traffic Group.**

#### **The 7.5 Tonne Weight Limit**

At last year's community meeting there was a large amount of concern at the increasing number of heavy goods vehicles accessing and transiting through Willoughby that exceed the stated weight limit for the village roads.

The matter was discussed in detail with Grant Dumbleton, Traffic Management Advisor, Warwickshire Police and Graham Stanley, Warwickshire County Council (WCC). Apparently, there are significant difficulties in legally enforcing a stated vehicle weight limit. It requires the direct involvement of specialist police traffic officers to impound suspect vehicles. After which they must be transported to the Highways Depot at Coleshill to be weighed using a calibrated weigh bridge. Obviously, given the already stretched police resources in Warwickshire, this is highly unlikely to be a feasible proposition. Furthermore, a lorry larger than the stated weight limit can legally gain access via a restricted road to carry out its purpose, such as the delivery of goods.

We would like to thank the residents who volunteered to take part in this group.

### **Willoughby Parish: Traffic Calming A45.**

Warwickshire Highways Agency has provided a currently approved scheme for traffic calming works on the A45/Longdown Lane/Woolscott Road junction. This will involve reflective solar studs down the middle of each of the four roads leading into the junction. Two 6m X 1.5m refuge islands are being installed in the hatched area of the A45 with illuminated bollards and Keep Left signs visible from both directions to ensure all traffic stays left before entering the turning lanes into Longdown Lane and Woolscott Road.

We are currently waiting to hear back from Warwickshire Highways Agency for the exact start date for the junction's upgrade works.

Stuart Sheppard