

Willoughby Parish Council Community Survey - Responses and Solutions

Introduction

This document provides some background information for the main issues and ideas raised by residents in the Community Survey (July 2022) and includes actions shared and discussed with them during the Annual Community Meeting on 20 September 2022.

Volunteers and Working Groups

Residents are asked to remember that councillors are volunteers who give their time to make a difference in the community. There are five councillors when all the posts are filled. Often there are only four. As a Parish Council, having looked into all the issues raised, the only way forward on the main issues is for people in the village to form working groups to address these.

The Precept - Your Money

Each year, the Parish Council raises money for the services it provides through the 'precept', which forms a small percentage of the council tax levied by Rugby Borough Council. This precept is residents' money and it is important that they are aware of expenditure and think that it is used for the benefit of the community. The more services and items requested by residents, the more precept would have to be charged to cover the cost. The Council's only other source of income is from successful applications for grants.

Keep up-to-date with the work of the Parish Council

Residents are asked to note that some of the issues raised in the survey have already been dealt with by the Parish Council. Residents can keep up-to-date with the work of the Council by reading the agendas and minutes for their meetings. These are posted on the website www.willoughbyparishcouncil.org and on the noticeboard in the Amenity Garden. In addition, residents are always welcome to attend Parish Council meetings where there is a section on the agenda for Public Participation.

<p>Q1B How YOU can communicate with us Ways in which councillors and the parish clerk can be contacted currently were outlined and residents were asked for other ways in which they could share their ideas or concerns.</p>	<p>Responses/Possible Solutions The Parish Council provides information in a number of ways - the Willoughby Monthly, occasional flyers, the Parish Council website and noticeboard, and the Willoughby Monthly facebook page. Residents are always welcome to contact the Parish Clerk to offer suggestions, ideas and feedback. Alternatively, please contact one of the councillors.</p>
<p>Q2A Upgrading the street lights to LEDs</p> <p>66% of respondents scored 8, 9 or 10 on the survey indicating they thought it was important to very important to upgrade the street lights.</p> <p>However, the willingness to help fund this through a small increase in the precept was much more evenly spread.</p> <p>Q2Ac Do you have concerns about upgrading the street lights to use LED lanterns? YES/NO</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>40% of people said Yes (22 respondents) 60% of people said No (33 respondents)</p> </div>	<p>Whilst a considerable majority (66%) felt it was important to upgrade the street lights, a significant number of people (40%) expressed concern about funding an upgrade to the lights. These concerns fell into two categories - cost and quality/direction of light.</p> <p>The purpose of the survey was to find out residents' views on upgrading the street lighting. While there is a clear majority in favour amongst those who responded, the Parish Council understands the concerns raised and would like to reassure residents that there is a considerable amount of work that needs to be done before a costed plan is developed.</p> <p>Councillors are not experts in this field and would welcome volunteers coming forward to form a research group to identify the key areas for research and to develop a plan for upgrading the lights at some point in the future. The responses from residents in the Community Survey Report will provide a useful starting point.</p> <p>ACTIONS 1a. and 1b. See page 5.</p>

<p>2B Setting up Community Speed Watch in the village</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 57% of respondents scored 8, 9 or 10 on the survey indicating they thought that speeding in the village was serious to very serious. Most of the rest of the respondents thought it was a moderately serious problem (scored 5, 6 or 7). 2. 52% of respondents scored 8, 9 or 10 indicating they thought Community Speed Watch would be useful to very useful. Responses were quite evenly spread below this, perhaps indicating uncertainty amongst the other 48% about whether or not it would be of value. <p>15 people volunteered to be trained and to carry out monitoring from time to time.</p>	<p>The high number of volunteers means that we could move forward on this project. The next step would be to circulate Community Speed Watch Volunteer vetting forms which each volunteer completes and sends back to the police directly. Subject to the applicant being approved then training is arranged.</p> <p>A speed gun can be used by us on a long term loan.</p> <p>This potential project is linked to the main issue raised by residents under Traffic below.</p> <p>The response by residents to be trained and to carry out traffic monitoring is greatly appreciated. Thank you.</p> <p>ACTIONS 2a. and 2b. See Page 5.</p>
<p>2C Updating our Flood Action Plan</p> <p>17 people volunteered to help update the Action Plan 11 volunteered to become Flood Wardens + one maybe</p>	<p>In the past, a group of residents created a Flood Action Plan and reported back to the Parish Council. The group had its own chair and treasurer. As well as using their local knowledge, the group had help from the National Flood Action Group which can provide quite substantial support in getting grants and advising on necessary work. This latter group is now the National Flood Forum. https://nationalfloodforum.org.uk/</p> <p>The response by residents to help update the Action Plan and to become Flood Wardens is also greatly appreciated. Thank you.</p> <p>ACTIONS 3a. and 3b. See page 5.</p>
<p>RESIDENTS' RESPONSES FOR PROJECTS/IDEAS THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS</p>	
<p>TRAFFIC</p>	
<p>Traffic was the issue causing most concern to residents and included comments and ideas about possible solutions in the following areas:</p> <p><u>Highways (in the village)</u> Enforcement of the 7.5 weight limit Speeding Parking Brook in Moor Lane</p> <p><u>Highways (in the wider parish)</u> Enforcement of the 7.5 weight limit on Longdown Lane Speeding</p>	<p>Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is responsible for all matters related to Highways. Mike Thomas, Chair, is in regular and sometimes frequent contact with the Locality Officer, raising concerns expressed by residents.</p> <p>Most recently, he has exchanged numerous emails about the vegetation in the Moor Lane brook. An ecological survey has now been done but the Ecology Team needs to do another one to check there are no water voles. The Locality Officer has said that the vegetation will be cleared in October.</p> <p>The community survey lists concerns and possible solutions to traffic issues both in the village and in the</p>

<p>Longdown Lane/A45 junction</p>	<p>wider parish. This would make an excellent starting point for a group of residents to prepare a report on the issue which the Parish Council could then forward to the Locality Officer and follow up on progress.</p> <p>ACTIONS 4a. and 4b. See page 5.</p>
<p>PAVEMENTS</p>	
<p>Residents are allowing hedges and shrubs to overgrow. This restricts safe passage and makes it difficult and sometimes impossible for pedestrians, pushchairs and wheelchairs to use the pavement.</p>	<p>The Parish Council already asks residents to cut back hedges and refers them to the Locality Officer at WCC for further action, if nothing happens.</p> <p>Residents are asked to inform Jo Jarman, the Parish Clerk, when there is a problem. She can be contacted by email: willoughbyparishclerk@gmail.com or by phone on 07809 197817. Please note Jo is only contracted to work 4 hours per week so will respond when she is able.</p>
<p>FOOTPATHS</p>	
<p>Residents raised issues around a number of footpaths in the parish.</p>	<p>The Rights of Way Team (RWT) for the whole of south Warwickshire consists of two people with a very limited budget. The same applies to the whole of north Warwickshire.</p> <p>On 28 July, two councillors and the parish clerk spent two hours walking around the village and parts of the wider parish discussing maintenance requirements on some footpaths with the two members of the RWT.</p> <p>The RWT message was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The maintenance of footpaths and stiles is the responsibility of the landowner. 2. All the footpaths they saw were considered 'usable' provided people were wearing proper walking shoes/boots and they would do nothing about them. 3. In two cases, they did offer to provide stones to the landowner to fill in the worst of the holes on the footpath, in one case they said they would provide a new larger stile for the landowner to install (at the end of Pye Court) and, in one case, they advised an adaptation of the stile between the two fields to the east of the playing field so that walkers could bypass the flooding on the usual main path, when required. 4. If the Council could provide contact details for the landowners involved (preferably mobile numbers), they would contact them to make arrangements. <p>ACTION 5. See page 5.</p>

VILLAGE POND	
Several issues were raised in connection with the pond including concern for the safety of the ducks.	<p>As part of the Council's ongoing risk assessments and in the interests of safety, new signage is being purchased advising people not to go onto the pond in freezing weather.</p> <p>New signage is also being purchased to make drivers more aware of the ducks. It is not clear how the ducks could be persuaded not to sit/sleep on the road no matter what additions are made to the pond - e.g. improvements to the island, additional concrete at the edge.</p>
ADULT FITNESS EQUIPMENT	
There was an enquiry about the outcome of a previous survey on this matter and four requests for such fitness equipment.	Councillor Lewis has obtained a quotation for four different pieces of equipment to give a guide on price. The cost for supply, installation of a safety surface and VAT would be £6,436 (£5,149 excl. VAT). At this stage, it is not known how many residents would use such equipment on a regular basis to justify the cost.
PLAYING FIELD	
There were requests that no development should take place on the playing field and to provide two more benches.	<p>The playing field is an important community asset owned by the Parish Council. It will not be developed in the foreseeable future.</p> <p>If a resident or group of residents would like to donate a bench in memory of someone, the Parish Council would be pleased to provide space on the playing field.</p>
PLANNING APPLICATIONS	
	<p>Rugby Borough Council (RBC) approves or refuses planning applications. The Parish Council has no power to do so. They are, however, a statutory consultee and can make a case to RBC as to why an application should be refused. The case made must be in line with planning law which is the only framework RBC can use to make their decision.</p> <p>All residents who are concerned about a planning application can come to a Parish Council meeting to share their concerns and why they think an application should not be approved by RBC. Again, their reasons must be informed by planning law. They can also contact the Chair or the Parish Clerk.</p>

ACTIONS

Upgrading street lights to LEDs

- 1a. Working group to research and report on upgrading the street lights to LEDs (to include research into grants and loans available).

Volunteers: Hilly Honess, Bert Ogle, Steve Palmer, Elizabeth Woolf, Tony Gasser

- 1b. Parish Council to facilitate the first meeting. (Facilitator - Malcolm Lewis)

Community Speed Watch

- 2a. To circulate Community Speed Watch volunteer vetting forms provided by the police.
- 2b. Parish Council to provide liaison between the police and volunteers with regard to training and subsequent activity. (Facilitator - Stuart Sheppard)

Flood Action Group

Two groups have volunteered to update the local response to flooding

- i. group to update the Flood Action Plan; and
- ii. group of volunteer Flood Wardens.

As the work of the two groups is closely intertwined, and several people are in both groups, it seems sensible to hold an initial meeting to establish an agreed way forward.

- 3a. Parish Council to facilitate the first meeting. (Facilitators - Mike Thomas and Maggie Beech)
- 3b. If possible, the Parish Council to organise training for volunteer flood wardens.

Traffic Issues

- 4a. Working group to research and report on approaches to addressing Traffic issues.

Volunteers: Phil Cox, Alison Armitage, Janet Rowley, Alan Hughes, Jane Edgar.

Group to consider the following amongst other things:

- Make the case for the reduction of speed limits in and around the village
- Liaise with the Speed Watch volunteers
- Establish which authority can set speed limits
- Contact other villages to see what measures have had a positive impact on the reduction of traffic issues
- Research the use of electronic speed warning signs and who is able to install them – do we need permission from Warwickshire County Council, if we decided to install our own?

- 4b. Parish Council to facilitate the first meeting. (Facilitator - Stuart Sheppard)

Footpaths

5. Rod Honess is in discussion with Warwickshire County Council Rights of Way Team and has developed an action plan to address issues related to footpaths. He has added footpaths noted by residents to the plan.