



Appleton Parish Council Newsletter

SPRING 2018

Message from the Chairman, Councillor Sandra Bengier



As both the Chairman of the Parish Council and Chairman of the Planning Committee it has been a busy time in my dual role!

Planning issues continue to dominate in South Warrington with Homes & Communities applications for Appleton Cross and Grappenhall Heys and over the summer the consultation on the Local Plan from Warrington Borough Council. The Parish Council strongly opposed the Local Plan on numerous grounds and will continue to fight to protect the greenbelt fields in Appleton and surrounding area and try to ensure that the Highways are dramatically improved before any further housing is even considered.

Councillor Dot Edwards has resigned due to ill health after 32 years as a Parish Councillor and she will be greatly missed for her invaluable input over the years.

The Parish Council proudly continues to support local community projects. The Parish Council made a grant of £1,900 towards the cost of the hire of the football pitches for the Broomfields Youth Project. This is continuing to be a valuable Friday night venue for teenagers, a project which the Parish Council has continued to support for a considerable number of years. The Parish Council has recently held a school photograph competition for school children in Appleton around a nature theme. The Parish Council received more than 40 entries and prizes to school and children have been awarded. The Parish Council also has provided grants to Playability, the Bawming Committee in Appleton Thorn and to Lumb Brook Millennium Green who continue to maintain a great open space asset in Appleton.

The Parish Council will provide vital financial support from April 2018 for Stockton Heath library as this is a vital resource for residents.

Team Thorn and Park Appleton WI have planted bulbs in the centre of Appleton Thorn and the Parish Council expresses many thanks and gratitude to all the volunteers for their continued work.



School Photo competition

First Prize entry from Thomas Emery Age 7, who attends Broomfields Junior School the photo was taken in his front Garden. The prize was £100.00 and £100.00 for the primary school.

Activities in Appleton Parish Hall

Weekly events

Sun 11am Appleton Independent
Methodist (AIM) Church Service
Tues 10am AIM Coffee morning &
Library
Wed 9.15am Caterpillar Music
Thurs 11am Young At Heart fitness
Thurs 5pm Little Stars

Monthly events

2nd Mon 7.30pm Park WI
1st Tues 7.30pm Stockton Heath Flower Club
3rd Tues 7.30pm Parish Council meeting
2nd Thurs 2pm Stretton WI
3rd Thurs 2pm Appleton Afternoon flower club
3rd Friday 7.30pm RSPB

**Hire Appleton Parish Hall for children's
birthday parties and events! Tel 01925 604589**

Environment Committee report

One thing is certain, our green spaces are reducing at an alarming rate. The Environment Committee are dedicated to keeping what little green space we have, as clean, tidy and attractive as we can, with limited funds. The bulbs that we have planted are organised in conjunction with Warrington Borough Council and should last between 10-15 years before needing to be replaced. If you have any ideas of locations that would be improved by planting, please let us know. The only condition we have, is that these areas must be in public view and should be for the benefit of the community as a whole. We also have a Parish Ranger who works on reducing litter, and clearing and cutting back overgrown areas. He has recently completed a weed killing course, and is now ready to start getting rid of weeds next spring. Please let us know if you have concerns about weeds growing in public areas. Smaller areas only please. We have adopted 2 telephone boxes which we are currently working on refurbishing. One of them is located at the corner of Clydesdale Road and Bridge Lane and will be turned into a library. Books will be changed regularly and will include children's books. The other box is on the corner of Lyons Lane and London Road and a defibrillator will be located here. The box will be used for displaying local history, specifically that of South Warrington. If you have any local history items please contact the Parish Council This is an exciting project and one which we hope will interest our residents.



Neighbourhood plans

The Localism Act 2011 encourages local communities to come together and get more involved in planning for their areas by producing Neighbourhood Plans which can set out policies for planning, development and the use of land in a neighbourhood. Appleton Thorn's Neighbourhood Plan was formally adopted earlier this year (the first one in Warrington) and Stretton, Grappenhall and Thelwall and Lymm Parishes are in the process of producing their own.

Neighbourhood planning can inspire local people and businesses to consider other ways to improve their neighbourhood than through the development and use of land. They may identify specific action or policies to deliver these improvements. Wider community aspirations than those relating to development and use of land can be included in a neighbourhood plan. A Neighbourhood Plan can be detailed or general depending what local people want, but must still meet the needs of the wider area. A Neighbourhood Plan is usually initiated by a Parish Council but is resident owned and led. Appleton is facing the biggest change to its landscape and infrastructure since the New Town developments in the 1970s and 1980s so this may be the ideal time for residents to come together to have an input in shaping the future of Appleton.

Appleton Cross & Grappenhall Heys. A warning of things to come?

At a meeting of the Borough Council's Development Management Committee on 10th October planning permission was given for 370 houses at Appleton Cross and 400 houses at Grappenhall Heys. This was in spite of superb speeches made by local residents and councillors objecting to the proposals and the presence of 200 members of the public who were in the audience to support them. Astonishingly the Council's Highways Engineers accepted the view of the applicants (HCA) that our road network could cope with the extra vehicles from the new housing, when residents know from experience that it cannot cope with what we have now. The 770 houses are on top of 180 at Pewterspear approved earlier this year.

Even more worryingly, according to the preferred option for its Local Development Plan, the Council wants to build more than 6300 homes in the Green Belt here and 1800 in the Green Belt in Higher Walton as well. All of this would be with minimal highway improvements. Our environment would be trashed, our roads choked, and there would not be a single field left in Appleton east of London Road.

The response from local residents in opposition to the Local Plan proposals during the consultation period has been magnificent. However, if our arguments are ignored and the Local Plan goes ahead as it stands, then we shall have to fight it at the Public Inquiry which will follow. Local Parish Councils, Appleton included, are already setting aside funds for planning advice and legal representation, so that if necessary we can mount serious opposition to the Council's destructive plans. The outcome with Appleton Cross and Grappenhall Heys, though, could be an omen of things to come, with environment, ecology, air quality, road transport, etc. all sacrificed for the sake of housing numbers. Our residents were let down by the Borough Council over Appleton Cross and Grappenhall Heys; we hope that it will not be the same with the Development Plan.



School Photo competition

Second Prize for the toadstool went to Olivia Dobson Age 8, who attends Broomsfields Junior School.

Third Prize for the ducks went to Arran Birkbeck age 5 who attends Cobbs Infants.



South Warrington Library (in Stockton Heath)

With support from Appleton, Stockton Heath, Hatton and Stretton Parish Councils, the story for South Warrington Library (in Stockton Heath) Library Working Group continues to be positive. This support enabled the Working Group to submit its Final Report to the Executive Board in December last year. The main recommendation of the Executive Board was that all libraries will stay open for at least a further three years, whilst the current LiveWire operational contract will continue until 2022. In addition, the book fund will be increased by £50k to £150k for three years, plus an initial one-off £150k capital allocation to the book fund.

A new Libraries Partnership Board is taking over from the Modernisation Group and will move the process on to the next stage. As a result of the hard work of the Working Group, South Warrington Library (in Stockton Heath) is now in a very good position to move on to the next stage and we hope that you will begin to see some welcome changes to the library within the next 6 months. We are also pleased to report that a Friends of South Warrington Library (in Stockton Heath) - SWISH - has been constitutionally formed and has started to arrange events. The Facebook page 'Supporters of South Warrington Library (in Stockton Heath)' has become the Friends Facebook page and you can find out what exciting things the Friends' Group are organising there. If you need any more information, please contact Cllr Sharon Harris.

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