

# West Ashton Parish Council

## Chairman's Annual Report May 2016/2017

The Parish Council was returned on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016

### **The members are as follows:**

Chairman	Richard Covington
Vice Chairman	Tim Le Mare
Councillors	Margaret Workman Co-opted: Helen Barrow Simon Alford Horace Prickett (Wiltshire Council Southwick Division)
Clerk	Nicola Duke
Resignations	Ian Robertson Pauline Hume

### **Prospective Councillor**

There is one parish councillor vacancy.

### **The Parish**

At the time of writing there are 285 properties and 547 Electors in the West Ashton Parish. The Precept and grant for 2016/2017 was £6,507.55 and £20.95 respectively...

### **Activities**

The Council's activities cover a variety of issues that arise but in the main are about keeping a watchful eye in the Parish. This includes engaging with other organisations to provide and improve services in the Parish. Typically these are:

- Neighbourhood Plan
- Highway maintenance on the roads in and around the village
- The Parish Steward
- Community Speed Watch (CSW).
- West Ashton Magazine
- West Ashton Website
- Meetings:
  - Parish Council Liaison Group – WAPC has taken responsibility for these meetings but unfortunately the schedule has slipped but it is proposed to reinstate after the May 2017 local elections.
  - Neighbourhood Policing Team – Ellie Porter and Maria Badder were the PCSOs for the area.

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- Area Board
- Community Area Transport Group (CATG)
- Planning Committees - Western Area
- Other includes
  - Wind Farm – This at least for the time being is no longer an issue and the group wound up.
  - Fracking and the potential harm it could cause in the area now the latest environmental concern
  - White Horse Alliance (WHA) still meets regularly to discuss development issues

### **Matters of Interest**

#### 1. Neighbourhood Plan

Group chaired by Tim Le Mare and supported by Carol Hackett. The parish council have contracted the services of David King to assist in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). The draft scoping report has been completed; the Housing Needs Survey and NP are both in their final draft state.

#### 2. Traffic Calming

WAPC has been successful in its applications for grants towards traffic calming with the potential for a further substantive grant from CATG. The traffic calming is specifically in Bratton Road where we are seeing an increase in traffic volumes and speed. The options are for raised pillars or pads at the Bratton end of the village and near the village hall and white fencing either side of the road at the Bratton end of the village. Sadly the different schemes will cost in the order of £26,000. Matched funding from CATG / Area Board is £8,000 plus a potential £6,000 substantive grant, which still leave WAPC to find £12,000. This project is one of the reasons why the precept was raised this year so that this priority issue can be addressed.

#### 3. Governance Review

Trowbridge Town Council was successful in their lobbying with 'Old Farm' and the 'Employment Land' which have both been being transferred to the town. This has resulted in a loss of a third of the West Ashton's precept but has had a much greater impact on the residents of Old Farm with on average an increase of approximately 500% on their council tax due to Trowbridge.

#### 4. Traveller Site on the A350

The appeal was upheld by the Inspector, which allowed for two static, two mobile and two day rooms plus stables (for their use only) but as expected things don't quite happen as permitted. There are now three static dwellings on site, the copse of some 40 trees has been felled contrary to Forestry Commission Regulations, a replanting order was served but with no apparent enforcement to remedy these breaches of conditions.

#### 5. Community Speed Watch

Community Speed Watch (CSW) continues and the device now shared between West Ashton and Steeple Ashton. There are now four members in the team. Margaret Workman is the lead and coordinator ably helped by Carol Hackett, Jo Walton (new member in March 2017) and Richard Covington. There is a Speed Indicator Device (SID), which Simon Alford plans to install

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### 6. Recreation Area

The recreation area is in good shape and after requests by parents a swing has been added to the play equipment, which has been well received. The trees planted last year are not fairing so well but hopefully some will survive.

Maintenance of the ground is ongoing, and the monies transferred from Wiltshire Council; part of the 106 agreement when Shepherds Drove was built are providing more than adequate income to cover the cost, and the surplus could be utilised for any further capital expenditure.

### 7. Miscellaneous Planning Applications

There have been a variety of planning applications for extensions to property in the parish, and whilst the Parish Council doesn't have to make the final decision, it does raise issues and concerns and submits responses to Wiltshire Council.

There have been two applications that have caused some concern: 'Biss Farm' and 'Biss Barn', the first was permitted but the second was refused. The concern is that both cut down mature trees and in the case of Biss Barn this exceed the regulations and is subject to ongoing investigations by the Forestry Commission.

### 8. Festivals

There are fewer applications for festivals / music events in 2017 as indicated by the number of licences for 'Temporary Event Notices' granted by Wiltshire Council.

### 9. Highways

The planned re-routing of the A350 has been held up because of wildlife but is believed to have been resolved. Therefore the proposed works may be started this year (2017).

The roundabout on the C49 joining the Eastern Distributor Road was finally opened but has generated objections by residents of Castle Mead as it has been signposted as a route for Lorries from the trading estate on Canal Road via the Hilperton Gap through to the West Ashton A350 crossroads. The route through Castle Mead to the traffic lighted crossroads on the A350 has subsequently seen a huge increase in vehicle numbers.

### 10. West Ashton Magazine (WAM)

The West Ashton Magazine editorial team is headed by Leya Walker and there is a new 'revitalised' format and presentation of articles. The team has kept the magazine going for the past twelve years and continues to be supported by Jo Watkins and Paul Workman with the help of Janet Sweetman and Tim Le Mare who prepares the copy for printing. Geoff Watkins continues to secure the sponsorship necessary to keep the magazine free.

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### Finances for 2016/2017 (see last page 5 more detail)

<b><u>Income in 2016/2017</u></b>	<b>£11,328</b>
<b><u>Expenditure in 2016/2017</u></b>	<b>£15,548</b>
<b><u>Reserves</u></b>	
Held in reserve for the Recreation Area (including £50k investment)	<b>£53,977</b>
The Village Magazine	<b>£1,347</b>
Contribution to electronic speed indicators	<b>£1,000</b>

### Thank you

I wish to thank all Councillors and Villagers who have helped me in my role as Chairman in 2016/17. In particular I would like to thank:

- Parish Clerk - Nicola Duke who has provided invaluable support and guidance in the formal matters of the Parish Council.
- Margaret Workman for continuing to organise Community Speed Watch and deal with planning matters along with contribution about school issues and processes. Whilst not part of the parish council responsibilities a particular thank you for organising 'Friday Coffee Mornings' in the village, which has been a great success in both meeting villagers and its financial contribution to the village hall funds.
- Tim Le Mare who has decided not to continue on the council, in part because Old Farm is now part of Trowbridge. Tim has however agreed to continue supporting the website.
- Horace Prickett, stepping in when councillor numbers were close to missing the quorum requirements. As Wiltshire Councillor for helping with the issues confronting the council and calling in, when necessary to the Western Planning Committee a number of the more planning applications. As Community Action Transport Group (CATG) chairmen supporting grant applications for traffic calming on Bratton Road.
- I would also like to thank all in the parish that by their hard work and dedication provide the essential support and help to ensure West Ashton is a safe and interesting parish in which to live.
- Geoff Watkins for continuing to secure sponsorship to keep the magazine free.
- Simon Alford for taking on and identifying tasks for the Parish Steward, the scheme that has been reinstated by Wiltshire Council having contracted with Ringway for Highway services.
- Thank you to both Ellie and Maria (PCSOs) for their valuable service and feedback on crime and issues in the Parish. Maria has now moved onto pastures new.

**West Ashton Parish Council**  
**Chairman's Annual Report May 2016/2017**

**Finance in more Detail**

<b>Year to 31 March 2016</b>	
<b>Receipts</b>	
11 Village Magazine	£ 250.00
12 Recreation Area	£ 0.00
13 General Interest Income	£ 1.43
14 Other Income	£ 459.91
15 Precept	£ 6507.65
16 VAT refund	£ 38.48
17 Grants	£ 4070.95
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 11,328.42</b>
<b>Payments</b>	
1 Clerk's Salary	£ 1,913.52
2 Admin Expenses	£ 302.50
3 Audit	£ 50.00
4 Hire of Hall	£ 120.00
5 Insurance	£ 424.49
6 Recreation Area	£ 4585.07
7 Training	£ -
8 S137 grants / donations	£ -
9 Subscriptions	£ 315.25
10 Neighbourhood Planning	£ 5892.45
11 Other expenditure	£ 1,525.00
12 Village Magazine	£ 420.00
13 Web site	£ -
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 15,548.28</b>

# West Ashton Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report May 2016/2017

The new Parish Council was returned 'uncontested' on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017

## **The members are as follows:**

Councillors	Richard Covington Margaret Workman Helen Barrow Simon Alford Horace Prickett Steve Molloy
Clerk	Nicola Duke

**Richard Covington  
Chairman  
May, 2017**