

West Ashton Parish Council

Chairman's Annual Report May 2014/2015

The Parish Council was returned on 28th May 2014

The members are as follows:

Chairman	Richard Covington
Vice Chairman	Ian Robertson
Councillors	Ian Robertson Margaret Workman Tim Le Mare Angeline Nicholson (from March 2014) Denise Butterworth (from September 2015) Dave Richardson resigned because he was moving from the village to Westbury
Clerk	Nicola Duke

Prospective Councillor

We have a vacancy for a councillor for which no election was called, therefore we can co-opt. As a result Denise Butterworth has agreed to be a co-opted councillor.

The Parish

At the time of writing there are 285 properties and 547 Electors in the West Ashton Parish. The Precept and grant for 2015/2016 is £4,143.62 and £116.38 precept grant from Wiltshire giving a total of £4260.

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:

- Highway maintenance on the roads in and around the village
- Liaison with the Parish Steward scheme for minor repairs
- Community Speed Watch (CSW) and the use of the Speed Indicator Device (SID), although this has now been discontinued by WC because of 'cost cutting'
- Supporting and liaising with the Editorial Team of the West Ashton Magazine
- West Ashton Website
- Meetings:
 - Parish Council Liaison Group
 - Neighbourhood Policing Team
 - Area Board
 - Community Area Transport Group (CATG)
 - Planning Committees
 - Western Area
 - Strategic

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- Other includes
 - Wind Farm
 - Network Against Wiltshire Sprawl
 - White Horse Alliance (WHA)

Matters of Interest

1. Core Strategy

This is Wiltshire Council's strategy for development in the County to 2026 was finally signed off in January 2015. Although the gypsy – Traveller site provision has yet to be completed. We already see this lengthy tome being tinkered with to allow more housing provision and it would appear a significant number is earmarked for Trowbridge.

2. Wind Farm

The inspector struck out the safeguard provided by separation distances and we are yet to see any additional guidance proposed by Wiltshire Council. One crumb of comfort is that the planning application for a single turbine at Thoulstone has been refused. Of course the applicant can still go to appeal but it is good news for now.

3. Community Speed Watch

Community Speed Watch (CSW) is continuing, with sessions every four weeks approx. It is fair to say that there has been a reduction in the number of vehicles exceeding the 30 mph limit. When he is able to join one of the sessions the local community policeman has issued tickets, a surprising £100 fine and three points on the licence. However there is still a 'hardcore' that seem to think the speed limit only applies to others. To address this we are exploring traffic calming options, both around the school and at the Bratton end of the village

4. Recreation Area

The recreation area is in reasonably good shape, play equipment is used and trees planted to provide a hedge around the whole area. A new gate at the end of the recreation area has been installed for entry from East Town.

Maintenance of the ground is ongoing, and the monies invested are providing more than adequate income to cover the cost, and the surplus could be made available for any further capital expenditure.

5. 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.

6. Highways

The agreed 40 mph on the A350 across the Traffic lights has been implemented but again there are those that ignore both the limit and requirement stop at a red traffic light.

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The roundabout on the C49 joining the Eastern Distributor Road finally has street lighting but alas no sign of the distributor road being open, which is conditional on the number of houses built at Castle Mead (and now the Hilperton Gap road, which is due to open in August). Does make one wonder how the house building numbers are going to be achieved in the Core Strategy timescale i.e. to 2026?

Finances for 2013/2014 (see last page for more detail)

<u>Income in 2014/2015</u>	£6,534.91
<u>Expenditure in 2014/2015</u>	£5,596.20
<u>Reserves</u>	
Held in reserve for the Recreation Area (including £50k investment)	£53,639.07
The Village Magazine	£1,681.22
Contribution to electronic speed indicators	£1,000.00

Thank you

I wish to thank all Councillors and Villagers who have helped me in my role as Chairman in 2014/15. In particular I would like to thank:

- Parish Clerk - Nicola Duke took over from Carol Hackett in November 2014 and formally at the next meeting in January 2015. After a false start when Nicola 'Nikki' was unable to initially take up the clerk's role from Carol earlier in the year we re-advertised; time moved on and Nikki was again available, the parish council was again unanimous in appointing Nikki.
- Carol Hackett, Parish Clerk wished to resign as clerk earlier in 2014 but kindly offered to remain until we could find a suitable replacement and agreed to continue during the handover period providing a seamless transition. Carol had been Parish Clerk for some time, having been appointed when Peter Westlake was chairman and will be sadly missed. Carol carries on as clerk for Market Lavington and with both parish roles proved to be too demanding. We all wished her well and are pleased that Carol continues with the community speed watch in the village.
- Peter Westlake continued as vice chairman for as long as he could despite failing health providing valuable support.
- Ian Robertson for agreeing to take on the role of Vice Chairman, his knowledge of matters around the parish and representing the Council at the Peter Crook Charity meetings held in Steeple Ashton.
- Margaret Workman for taking on responsibility for Community Speed Watch, Planning matters and contribution about school issues and processes.
- Tim Le Mare for his sterling work in updating the website to look much more users friendly and his contribution to maintenance at the recreation area.
- Angeline for taking on the street scene program, village entrance to 'best kept village' and for representing the Parish Council on the village hall committee, along with Tim who recently agreed to join as well.
- Horace Prickett, Wiltshire Councillor for helping with the issues confronting the council and calling in to the Western Planning Committee a number of the more planning applications. Most recently the plot of land next to Beechwood that was refused and both occasions by

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WC's Western Planning committee but was overturned on Appeal by the Inspector, one person. Hard to reconcile with democracy.

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.

Finance in more Detail

Year to 31 March 2015	
Receipts	
11 Village Magazine	£ 504.00
12 Recreation Area	£ 1,800.00
13 General Interest Income	£ 0.91
14 Other Income	£ -
15 Precept	£ 4,070.58
16 VAT refund	£ -
17 Grants	£ 159.42
Total Income	£ 6,534.91
Payments	
VAT paid on payments	£ 83.15
1 Clerk's Salary (inc £758.72)	£ 2,415.30
2 Admin Expenses	£ 194.38
3 Audit	£ 265.00
4 Hire of Hall	£ 120.00
5 Insurance	£ 306.81
6 Recreation Area	£ 910.75
7 Training	£ -
8 S137 grants / donations	£ 150.00
9 Subscriptions	£ 295.24
10 Parish Maintenance	£ 240.00
11 Other expenditure	£ 107.57
12 Village Magazine	£ 508.00
13 Web site	£ -
Total Expenditure	£ 5,596.20

Richard Covington
Chairman
May, 2014