

# West Ashton Parish Council

## Chairman's Annual Report May 2013/2014

The Parish Council was returned on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013

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

Chairman	Richard Covington
Vice Chairman	Peter Westlake
Councillors	Ian Robertson Margaret Workman Dave Richards Tim Le Mare Angeline Nicholson (from March 2014)
Clerk	Carol Hackett

### **The Parish**

At the time of writing there are 285 properties and 547 Electors in the West Ashton Parish. The Precept and grant for 2013/14 is £4,270.00

### **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)
- Supporting and liaising with the Editorial Team of the West Ashton Magazine
- Village Website – Parish Council information more readily available
- Meetings:
  - Parish Council Liaison Group
  - Neighbourhood Policing Team
  - Area Board
  - Western Area Planning Committee
  - Community Area Transport Group
  - Other includes
    - Wind Farm
    - Network Against Wiltshire Sprawl

### **Matters of Interest**

#### 1. Core Strategy

This is Wiltshire Council's strategy for development in the County to 2026 has been in effect ongoing since August 2011 and there is still no sign of it being signed off. In fact the inspector has made

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changes that has resulted in yet more consultation, some of which has just been completed, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2014. The inspector has struck out the following -

- Gone is Wiltshire Councils proposal for a Westbury Eastern bypass Appendix D Policy T1A (Westbury Bypass). The Westbury Eastern bypass route was firmly rejected at the full planning enquiry. The cost to council tax payers was in the region of five million pounds. On that basis alone it is irresponsible to persist in keeping it as a saved route.
- There is a proposed increase in the housing allocation from 37,000 to 42,000 and Wiltshire council want to share this increase based on the numbers allocated in the Core Strategy. However the distribution should be shared throughout Wiltshire on the same pro rata basis as was used for the original Regional Spatial Strategy calculation of 44,400 houses. To do so otherwise would disadvantage communities such as Trowbridge and rural villages by permitting a disproportionate increase in house building compared to other areas in Wiltshire. There is a proposal for different rates to be adopted for the Affordable Housing allocation – 30% or 40%. These different rates will adversely affect the Trowbridge Area. There should be the same rate in all Community Areas in Wiltshire.
- There should be parity between Gypsy and Travellers and the settled community in respect of planning applications and the Core Strategy must reflect that parity

### 2. Wind Farm

Disappointingly the inspector has struck out the safeguard provided by separation distances. Of course we all recall the establishment of the 'Stop Grange Farm Wind Farm' (SGFWF) action group and they have developed and grown in numbers to be formidable campaigners. They have a wealth of knowledge about wind turbines and the detrimental impact they have on rural communities.

To name a few, there are the issues of: Infrasound; Amplitude Modulation; Subsidies; Poor Generating performance; CO2 reuse: This wealth of information and scientific evidence shows that Wind Turbines / Farms are not to be the panacea that some would have us believe. Even the low emission claims that discount the necessity for fossil fuels or Nuclear (which is operationally carbon free) are false. These power stations are absolutely necessary to provide the base-load capability but have to do so at below their optimum efficiency when the turbines deem to spin.

The new consultation directed by the inspector has been responded to by this Parish Council, SGFWF and individuals alike. Details of all comments can be found on the Wiltshire Council's website: [http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal/spatial\\_planning/wcs/wiltshire\\_core\\_strategy\\_proposed\\_modifications\\_april\\_2014?page=0&pageSize=250&status=&tab=list&sortMode=response\\_date&q%3AsortMode=](http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal/spatial_planning/wcs/wiltshire_core_strategy_proposed_modifications_april_2014?page=0&pageSize=250&status=&tab=list&sortMode=response_date&q%3AsortMode=)

### 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. In fact this is being seen across the county where CSW schemes are being run. On occasions, the local community policeman joins a CSW session and has issued tickets, a surprising £100 fine and three points on the licence. One thing more; it would be helpful if we could encourage more volunteers for this worthwhile cause.

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### 4. Recreation Area

A year on and the recreation area is in good shape, new equipment has been installed and trees planted to provide a hedge around the whole area. There are a couple of further potential tasks, a new gate at the end of the recreation area so that entry can be made from the road (East Town); there is also space to put another piece of play equipment within the current play area.

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.

The current Gypsy / Romany planning application, which is for a change of use from a single family with one static and one mobile caravan to twice that number, and for general Gypsy / Romany use has been called in for determination, but as yet has not been scheduled for the Western Planning Committee. Despite many representations to Wiltshire Council in what appears to be a clear breach of the conditions set for the original planning permission NO enforcement action has been taken by Wiltshire Council. This is very disappointing.

### 6. Highways

The agreed 40 mph on the A350 across the Traffic lights still hasn't materialised but was anticipated to be done when Wiltshire Council comes up with the funds to implement their list of road improvements. The good news, the 40 mph limit has been partly completed; well the signs are there, albeit covered up. It appears the '40' needs to be painted on the road, perhaps Wiltshire Council is still saving up for the cost of the paint?

The roundabout on the C49 joining the Eastern Distributor Road is still in a temporary state. Apparently (a slight chortle here) the contractor cannot surface the road without closing the road and they forgot to apply for closure. So belatedly they have done so, but the legal process takes seven weeks (another chortle).

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

<b><u>Income in 2013/14</u></b>	<b>£11,438.28</b>
<b><u>Expenditure in 2013/14</u></b>	<b>£28,593.21</b>
<b><u>Reserves</u></b>	
Held in reserve for the Recreation Area (including £50k investment)	<b>£52,619.82</b>
The Village Magazine	<b>£1,708.22</b>
Contribution to electronic speed indicators	<b>£1,000.00</b>

# **West Ashton Parish Council**

## **Chairman's Annual Report May 2013/2014**

### **Thank you**

I wish to thank all Councillors and Villagers who have helped me in my role as Chairman in 2013/14. In particular I would like to thank:

- Carol Hackett, Parish Clerk who has provided invaluable support throughout the year and continues to be a great help to me and all of the Councillors. I do however have to report that Carol has decided to reduce her working commitments and with that has tendered her resignation as our Parish Council Clerk. Sadly I have had to accept this but Carol agreed to continue until an appointment is made (the position of clerk has been advertised) and maybe a little longer during a transition period of time. I'm sure all the councillor's will join me in thanking Carol for her sterling work and wish her well for the future.
- Peter Westlake for his continued support despite difficult health problems conspiring to slow him down.
- Ian Robertson for his knowledge of matters around the parish and representing the Council at the Peter Crook Charity meetings held in Steeple Ashton.
- Margaret Workman for her help with Community Speed Watch and knowledge of school processes.
- Tim Le Mare for agreeing to take on responsibility for the website, which I must confess I have let slip for some time now.
- Welcome to Angeline to the Parish Council who is keen to take on responsibility.
- 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 controversial planning applications: Gypsy Application; Land next to Beechwood (application to build a house), which is quite unsuitable.

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.

**Richard Covington**  
**Chairman**  
**May, 2014**

## West Ashton Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report May 2013/2014

### Finance in more Detail

Receipts		Year to 31/3/14
Precept		£ 4,024.73
Interest		£ 7.25
VAT recovered		£ 4,061.03
Other		£ 1,250.00
Village Magazine		£ -
Recreation Area		£ 1,850.00
Grants		£ 245.27
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£ 11,438.28</b>
Payments		
Clerks Salary		£ 1,341.66
Admin Exps		£ 147.47
Audit		£ 360.00
Hall Hire		£ 120.00
Insurance		£ 293.38
Recreation Area		£ 19,123.18
Training		£ -
S137 grants		£ 380.00
Subscriptions		£ 253.02
Parish Maintenance		£ 50.00
Other expenditure		£ 1,321.00
Village Magazine		£ 1,199.00
Web Site		£ -
VAT on payments		£ 4,004.50
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£ 28,593.21</b>

### Notes

**Year to 31/3/13 - Payments** - 'Other expenditure' payment includes - cost of tally counter for community speed watch £3.99 / cost of keys and batteries £21.25

**Year to 31/3/14 - Income** - 'Precept' (part of overall payment received was in the form of a precept grant' £4,024.73 + £245.27 = £4,270.00) - 'VAT recovered' includes claims for both 2012/13 £56.53 and 2013/14 £4,004.50 - 'Other' includes - 2 donations towards cost of defibrillator £500 & £750

**Payments** - 'Audit' higher external audit fee due to exceptionally high income in 2012/13 £300 - 'Recreation Area' includes - new play equipment £18,105 / grounds maintenance £660 / additional insurance £200 - 'Other expenditure' includes - defibrillator £1,318 - 'VAT on payments' includes - VAT paid on new play equipment £3,621.11 / defibrillator £263.60 - 'Village Magazine' includes - cost of printing 2 additional editions of the magazine