

Parish Council Response to Public Comments during the Memorial Park Consultation

1	<p>Would you like to put a fence all round the new pitches to keep the dogs out.</p>	<p>The cost of installing fences around the new pitches would be prohibitive even though the idea has merit. The Parish Council's resources are limited and this would unfortunately, not be a priority at the present time.</p>
2	<p>Acknowledging that the Memorial Park is the 'jewel in the crown', other park provision in the area has lost out due to the effects of flooding there. If this project gets the go-ahead, would the pc seriously consider spending a greater percentage of regular maintenance and improvement monies during that time on our 'Cinderella' parks in Shevington Moor, Appley Bridge etc.</p>	<p>The Parish Council is acutely aware that the other parks and playgrounds in the Parish require improvements. The problem is that all the other parks are owned and maintained by Wigan Council. On several occasions we have asked Wigan Council to transfer ownership to the Parish Council but these requests have been refused. If the parks were ours we would be able to create a forward plan for their progressive improvement. The three District Councillors have also raised this issue on our behalf and have also lobbied the relevant departments in Wigan Council when maintenance work, e.g. litter picking and</p>
3	<p>It's a great idea, are you thinking of putting French drains in? When it floods I worry that the large trees opposite will become uprooted and fall through my house. They do lean considerably already. Renewing the playground equipment is an excellent idea. It might be nice to make the park multi generational. We have a sizeable older demographic in Shevington, it would be good to encourage our older generation to use the open space too. Have you ever seen those stone seats and tables? The ones where the table tops are chess / checker boards? It may be a lovely thing for people to be able to play games outside in summer. I have often thought we should have a Shevington community barbecue on the park in summer. That would be lovely for bringing the community together, (obviously after Covid).</p>	<p>The drainage being installed is similar to a French Drain in that the drainage pipes will be set within trenches that have porous sand surrounding the pipes with sufficient fall to allow the water to drain towards the SW end of the park, where it will enter the main drainage system. The renewal of the play equipment will be one of the last phases of the improvement works and our plan is to also provide equipment for older generations, e.g. exercise equipment. We are open to suggestions on the type of equipment to be provided and the chess tables are popular in European cities, so why not Shevington! It is our aim that once the work on the park is completed, we will have a valuable resource that can be used for various community activities. The Friends of Shevington Memorial Park (FSMP) are committed to maximising the use of the park for all residents in future.</p>

4	<p>This is an incredible amount of money to expect the whole community to pay toward when as you have said it is an incredibly difficult time when most people are struggling to manage to live. The suggestion that this is a priority and it is put to the community at such a difficult time is ludicrous and completely demoralising. For example investment in bins for dog poo that are actually emptied would be much more beneficial, also that the roads are maintained instead of allowing weeds and moss to be continually left to develop. Also that the basic need for more regular refuse collection and maintenance of the trees and grass is a more effective, quality provision. Also the Christmas tree on Shevington Moor was an embarrassment, also the signs welcoming visitors to Shevington are embarrassing and ugly. So to recap no I don't think you should use any part of my money to fund the drainage for a strip of grass I never use.</p>	<p>The writer is entitled to express this opinion and the Parish Council recognises that these improvements will not be popular with everyone. However, the park has many protected trees within it that are at serious risk of dying (some have already) if drainage works are not completed. The park is a community asset and worthy of improvement and protection to allow it to be better used by the community in the future. The cost of completing this project will be spread over 25 years and the annual cost of repaying the loan is equivalent to the price of a cup of coffee per household annually. Other matters referred to including road maintenance and refuse collection are the responsibility of Wigan Council as well as tree works and grass cutting on land not owned by the Parish Council. There have been positive comments about the Christmas trees this year but we recognise that there were issues in 2019. As regards the signs to the village, we will look at these. We also hope that once all the improvement works are completed that you will take the time to visit the park. This also applies to residents in Appley Bridge, Shevington Vale, Crooke and Shevington Moor who are all within the Parish and who contribute.</p>
5	<p>If it's going to be done it needs to be done properly for longevity. The flagged paths have been poor for well over 30 years, so perhaps tarmac would be a better option. I would like an all weather surface in the play area to make it more useable in the winter months. Also consideration of lighting (perhaps a movement sensitive spotlight)/cctv to deter youths from gathering in the play area at night. It would also help dog walkers after work when it's dark.</p>	<p>The work will be done properly and our consultants will oversee the drainage works. The flagging has been affected by the waterlogged ground and the paths will be fully relayed by responsible contractors. Some urgent works are being done now because parts of the footpath have become difficult to walk on. We will look at all weather surfacing and explore the possibility of improved lighting and CCTV.</p>

6	<p>We strongly object to the suggestion that the parish precept be increased for the purpose of loan repayments for improvements to Shevington Park. Whilst the work may be desirable, it is not urgent or life threatening and little or no benefit will be gained for the residents of the Shevington Moor area. Shevington Moor receives very little in services from Shevington Parish Council for the amounts that are paid by residents each year. All the area receives are three planting boxes and a Christmas tree. May I suggest that you upgrade play facilities on Whiteacre Park and keep the Park tidy. By all means, go ahead with the improvements, but do not expect us as residents of Shevington Moor to contribute. We suggest that you find some other method to fund the cost of the works. We also suggest that you canvass the views of residents of Shevington Moor separately on this important issue. Thank you.</p>	<p>Please see response to Comment 4 above. Whiteacre play park is not within the Parish Council ownership as explained in Comment 2 above. We have looked at other funding options and did apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for support. Our application, although worthy, was cancelled due to other HLF priorities. The loan is therefore our only option to follow. If we do not go ahead with this work, more trees will die due to the waterlogging and a valuable asset will be spoiled. As the trees are protected, by law we have to replace them but to do so without completing the drainage works first would be folly. We recognise that outlying areas of the Parish may not support this proposal but a significant majority of residents from all parts of the Parish did respond positively. We would also encourage all residents to make full use of the park when works are complete.</p>
7	<p>I feel this is a vital recreation area for children to play and socialise in safety. I wish I had the answer to stop the small number of vandals spoiling it for others, but I guess that should be the job of their parents.</p>	<p>We agree and it is very frustrating that a small minority of jobs act as they do. We work positively with Wigan Council and GMP to deter these individuals and to take action when they are identified. Parents are indeed responsible also.</p>
8	<p>I would like the Parish Council to consider that they are currently spending £1 on Administration for every £3.72 collected from the precept & other income. This level of spending on administration seems excessive to me for such a small organisation & not to be good value for money. I would like the Parish Council to look into the possibility of streamlining their spending on administration thus allowing additional funds to be available for repayment of the loan & reducing the percentage increase to the precept to pay for the interest repayments on the loan.</p>	<p>We regularly review our budgets and expenditure and make savings where we can. A significant percentage of the Administration budget line covers staffing costs. The Parish Council could not operate effectively without the sterling work of our Parish Clerk and Caretakers. This is also supplemented by the valuable contributions made by the numerous volunteers who work hard to make the Parish a great place to live.</p>

9	<p>The children's park is constantly covered in glass from young adults. I don't take my child there anymore because of this and the problems with the sand and drainage. I feel a soft play area flooring would be much better and safer.</p>	<p>In completing the improvements to the play equipment we will remove the sand and replace it with soft play surfacing. This will make it better to keep the area clean. We also hope that it will deter the mindless breaking of glass that becomes buried in the sand. We have a current contract with Wigan Council for the maintenance of the park and the cleaning of the sand but the work is not done every day. Our Caretaker also checks on the site and clears dangerous items.</p>
10	<p>The park should be an integral part of life in Shevington. The improvements would make it more accessible to the whole community if all weather pathways were installed. At the moment it appears to be taken over by dog walkers. It has to be developed as a community area with points of interest. I think a pond would be a great addition. The play park is so important for the socialising of children and adults alike and is essential. Thank you for your efforts.</p>	<p>We agree with your comments on the park being a community asset to be used by everyone. Although a pond might be a wonderful addition that encourages wildlife, we have to be very mindful of the potential dangers of such a feature and the need to ensure that all children would be safe. It is not a proposal that we could develop unfortunately.</p>
11	<p>Shevington Moor has been for many years totally neglected. I think the time has come for us to use any money in Shevington Moor, so part company from Shevington Parish. The Christmas tree was an insult. The 4 strands of your "left over" lights a disgrace. The children's park on Whiteacre is an eyesore. I went for a meeting when my grandchildren were small and was told the sand would be removed - the grass cut regularly. My granddaughter will be 21. This November and the park is unchanged. Every item of equipment is Shevington cast off, so please let us have our</p>	<p>Please see comments above. Please be assured that any equipment supplied by Wigan Council in the Whiteacre Park is not secondhand or a castoff from other parts of Shevington. We regularly chase Wigan Council to ensure that the park is properly maintained but COVID this year did mean that some services provided by Wigan Council were scaled back as staff were redeployed. The question as to whether Shevington Moor is no longer part of the Parish is not something that the Parish Council can decide as boundaries are not set by us. This requires outside consideration.</p>

12	As a responsible dog walker & owner I am continually appalled at the amount of dog waste that is left by irresponsible dog owners. Providing free poo bags, etc, is not the answer - more positive & effective policing is required. Similarly, the amount of refuse & empty bottles & gas cartridges left behind on the seats in the recreation ground by "yoof" is a disgrace & needs effective policing.	We agree with your sentiments and do work closely with Wigan Council's ASB team and GMP to deal with this type of behaviour. However, Police resources cannot be focused 100% on this as much as we would like.
13	Dog poo fouling! It seems to have become a big problem again around the estate!! You have made everything possible to encourage the irresponsible owners to clean up!! But do we need all the diseases that it can cause on top of Covid!!? I am a dog owner myself!! I do pick up my dog poo's!! I can't see a solution to this apart from putting up CCTV's to catch them! They must be coming out at night and not bothering.	Irresponsible dog owners are a scourge and ideally, prosecutions would be carried out. As you will be aware, catching these individuals is difficult. Trying to re-educate irresponsible dog owners, although challenging, is the only option.
14	I welcome this initiative to do the necessary work to the memorial. It has disturbed me for some time now to see its deterioration. I would like to speak to someone concerning the level of service being offered by the refuse collection teams, could someone contact me please? Many thanks and best wishes	The Parish Clerk will speak to the writer and then refer this to the District Councillors for their attention and response.
15	Lane into a village pond which is a common feature in England has been mooted before. This would not be without its problems, but, if sufficient funds were available, it would be possible to provide a safe, attractive and natural feature for the village at this point in time, it might be worth revisiting this idea. It is always very satisfying to turn a problem into an advantage.	Please see comments in Section 10 above. The outcome of doing the new drainage is to stop future flooding and ponds forming along Church Lane.

16	As responsible dog owners, we have noticed that the bins round the park and the rec are often full and spilling over.	We regularly contact Wigan Council when bins are full and have not been emptied.
17	The plans would be an asset to the village - much needed play area (dogs banned!!) - had few "tiffs" with people using the area as a dog toilet - fine notice??	As with Comment 13 above, the new play equipment will be fenced off to deter irresponsible dog owners from using the area for their dogs. The removal of the sand will assist with this.
18	If these proposals go through will that mean we can do away with the ugly fence around the Christmas tree?	Unfortunately not. This fence is required under Health and Safety regulations because of the electricity supply.
19	No extra payments should be made, due to Covid 19 situation. Could I make a point to the Parish Council, that there are other areas in Shevington would like jobs being done, not just in the village?!	Parish Council resources provide services to all parts of the Parish and not just the centre of Shevington. Information on what services we provide is available on our Website.
20	Very important to improve the park drainage, particularly to preserve and replace, as necessary, mature trees, as well as paths, including play areas. Would having an appropriately placed small pond / water feature, as have been seen used in some places, including as part of a development in part of Nottingham (where I come from originally) and also seen more recently on outskirts of chorley, help with the drainage possibly? (Only a thought, I'm not an expert re this, of course - or the park's problems!)	We are encouraged by your positive comments but please see previous responses to the pond issue.
21	I hope the Shevington Memorial park does get repaired because it is lovely to go to for people of all ages. It is also a communal place for everybody to go to when this virus is over I hope. Also in the area not everybody has a back garden. I hope when it is done the youths do not destroy the park and hang about there when it is done. As you see from my address, the youths hang about till 11pm when it normal life.	It is our aim to develop the park as a community asset to be enjoyed by everyone of all ages. We will look at options to deter the mindless minority who will always try to spoil things for others.

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After many years of observing the grounds, I have noticed that the flooding has occurred more frequently, draining off the fields on to Church Lane, subsequent to extensions to the hardcore play grounds of St Bernadette's primary school.

The drainage plans are designed to solve this problem permanently.