

**Clerk's Report  
Shevington Annual Parish Meeting  
Held 17 March 2016  
7 pm Shevington Library**

The purpose of this report is to present a review of developments in the Parish and the work of the Parish Council over the past year.

**Projects**

The Council have continued to focus on proposals for the development of Vicarage Lane Fields.

Discussions with Shevington FC and Shevington Sharks ARLFC over the possible introduction of playing fields and with Shevington Gardening Club over the setting up of allotments at Vicarage Lane Fields continued. Drawings of proposed layouts were prepared and during the Spring of 2015 a parish-wide and nearest neighbour consultation was launched. The outcome of both consultations was largely in favour of the project and a planning application, based on the more popular layout, for a 'Change of Use' was submitted to the Planning Department in the Autumn. The application was approved by the Planning Committee in January.

Also during the Spring of 2015, Shevington Sharks and Shevington FC were successful in securing grants from Sport England to cover the cost of introducing drainage, two football pitches and a rugby pitch to Vicarage Lane Fields. More recently Shevington Gardening Club have been successful in being awarded grant funding from Wigan Council through 'The Deal'. In addition to this approximately £50,000 has been secured with the help of Dist Cllr Damian Edwardson towards the development of a car park to be shared by the sports clubs and the future allotment holders.

Last year saw the birth of the Friends of Otters Croft & Crooke Woods – a group of volunteers committed to improving and maintaining the ecology of this Site of Biological Importance. Since its inception the group has been involved in litter collection in the area and trying to deter poaching. The group also monitors developments in relation to the Taylor Wimpey protected woodland.

The long-awaited zip wire was finally installed in Memorial Park last Summer and has proved very popular with children of all ages. Due to the heavy rain we have been blessed with over the Winter the footpath from the trim trail path to the wire was only introduced earlier this year.

45% of the Trustees of Shevington Recreation Ground are appointed by the Council. Throughout the year some of our appointees have been active in securing grants for further improvements to this green lung in the centre of Shevington. Meanwhile, the Council have continued to fund the general maintenance of the Recreation Ground.

As in past years the Council provided community Christmas trees in the centre of Shevington village, on Crooke Village green and in the centre of Appley Bridge and in Shevington Moor.

## **Appendix A**

Throughout the year the Council continued to support the 'In Bloom' groups with a view to enhancing the local environment. Not only did the Council continue to fund the maintenance of some 45 planters, which are located in all areas of the parish, but they also paid for the plants for some of the flower beds in several locations in the parish.

All the 'In Bloom' groups did very well in the North West in Bloom competition and the Council were delighted for them. Once again we were all overjoyed to hear that Shevington in Bloom volunteers had won 'Gold' and had been named Best Town in their category in the competition. Congratulations to all on fitting rewards for a great deal of hard work by, essentially, a small number of people.

### **Support for Local Organisations and Other Bodies**

Cllr Ira Whiteley has continued with her role at the Youth Club.

Cllrs Ira Whiteley and John Ball continue to represent the Parish Council as Trustees of Shevington Recreation Ground. Mr Jim Maloney, Mrs Veronica Maloney and Mr Andy Williams have also been appointed by the Council as Trustees from the local community.

Several of the members regularly attend Shevington & District Community Association meetings and are involved in running the Association's events. Cllrs Ira Whiteley and Carole Miles are the Council's official representatives to the Association. Cllr Chris Horridge acts as liaison with our allotment tenants.

A decision taken by the Parish Council in 2014 meant that the Council once again did not take up its place on Wigan Council's Standards Committee last year.

Members also attend meetings of Crooke Village Residents Association from time to time. Mrs Eileen Longmore, one of our co-opted Committee members, sits on the Committee of Appley Bridge Community Association.

Over the past year the Council has been very generous in making donations to a number of local organisations. Beneficiaries over the past year have included St Anne's PCC, Shevington, who received a donation towards the upkeep of the churchyard.

In November our Councillors were amongst those leading the annual Remembrance Day Service at Shevington Memorial. The Vice Chair, Cllr Bill McKnight, represented the Council at the Memorial at Appley Bridge.

### **Commemoration of the Centenary of the Outbreak of World War One**

Throughout the year the members of the WW1 Centenary working party have continued quietly working on the production of a memorial booklet.

### **Parish Plan**

The Parish Plan working party, led by Mr Barry King, spent much of 2014 reviewing the 2006 Parish Plan and the final version of the report on the review has just been published with a view to consulting the residents over the next steps. The consultation is due to be launched later during this meeting. It is important to note that the members of this working party were not parish councillors. Once the residents have been consulted, the document will be revised in line with the majority view and it will be presented for adoption by the Parish Council, who will use it to inform future policy decisions.

## Appendix A

### **Supporting Local Businesses**

The 'Christmas Shop Front' competition was held for the eighth year running. The winner in 2015 was 'Elizabeth Ann Hair Salon' of Shevington Moor. Donations were made to Wigan & Leigh Hospice, Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research and Our Local Heroes – the three Charities nominated by the top three entries. Thank you to PCSO Stacey Whitehouse, who acted as the judge.

### **The Environment**

The Council employ a number of different contractors to look after its properties and the local environment, something to which it will continue to be committed.

### **Planning and other Building Matters**

A special 'Thank You' must go to our co-opted Committee member, Mr Barry King, who has been invaluable in preparing reports and replies with regard to numerous consultations in this area over the past year. With his help planning applications continue to be monitored and commented on by the Parish Council, as they arise and as necessary.

Cllr Bill McKnight and Mr King have continued to monitor issues arising as a result of the development at Herons Wharf. This was the site of the former glue works at Appley Bridge and remediation procedures have caused concerns.

In the latter part of 2015 the Council supported a successful campaign fought by ABCAGE to prevent a proposal by P-Fuel to develop a biomass conversion plant in Appley Bridge.

The Council received presentations from Arriva and Abellio in relation to their bids for the new Northern Rail franchise. The winner was Arriva Rail North who take over the service on 1 April this year. We have recently heard that there are proposals to re-route all train services from Southport to Manchester so that they terminate at Victoria, resulting in the loss of links to Manchester Airport and main line routes via Piccadilly. OPSTA are campaigning against this and the Council are supporting them.

In the Autumn of 2015 the Council played host to a presentation by officers from Wigan Council on producing a Neighbourhood Plan – perhaps a project to contemplate for the future.

### **Communication**

The Parish Council communicates with residents in a number of different ways: via the website, the notice boards and the newsletter - a bi-monthly publication. In August the Council hire a stall at the Annual Fete and members use this opportunity to engage with residents. The calendar of meetings, which usually take place at Shevington Library, is advertised on the website.

Members of the public are always welcome and can speak during the first thirty minutes of the Full Council Meeting about any issues or suggestions they have.

This year we have once again included information on the Council Tax bill about the Parish Council and the work it does.

## **Appendix A**

### **Public Concerns**

The Parish Council is always willing to take any matters of concern seriously and works with the Community Safety Team and the PCSOs who patrol the village. It will continue to do so until all unacceptable behaviour is under control.

### **Conclusion**

Amongst the highlights of the past year were the parish's three successful entries in the North West in Bloom Competition and the successes in relation to the Vicarage Lane site. Parish Councillors and co-opted Committee members have been working with other groups in the parish to achieve various goals. The Parish Council is always anxious to support and encourage such activities.

Krystyna Pilkington  
Clerk to the Parish Council