

## **Shevington Parish Council Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 15 March 2018**

Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting for 2018.  
It's good to see a fair number of you here this evening.

This year we devised a cunning plan to get you here... Awards?.. Very well deserved awards of course, but first you have to listen to the boring stuff.

### **Clerks Report**

The Clerks report explains the progress of the Vicarage Lane project which at last is beginning to move forward. Thanks to the hard work of just one or two dedicated people, in particular Andy Williams and Steve Bates. The allotments work is now going ahead thanks to the hard work of Eileen Longmore and Andrew Moakes.

**The In Bloom groups** have worked their magic again... Creating a very special summery environment across Shevington and gaining the high level awards they deserve. Congratulations to all concerned.

**The Youth Club** held a concert in December commemorating 50 years since the opening of the building. There were many excellent performances from talented singers and musicians and quite a lot of fun and nonsense as well. A hot pot was provided free of charge by Martin and Julie Saxon - a very generous gesture from them.

### **The Closure of the School**

This was a huge disappointment for the whole community. The Parish Council joined with the Save the Schools Groups and others to lobby Wigan Council and the Education Department against closure, but, of course, to no avail. However, all that is behind us now. We understand that the children have settled in their new schools and we have been assured that the measures that have been put in place for transport and travel for Shevington Central children are adequate.

The Parish Council contributed to the impressive commemorative mosaics composed by the children with help from a professional artist. The mosaics represent the history of Shevington Community Primary School from 1813 to the present day. The mosaics are now displayed - one at Millbrook School and one at Shevington Vale School.

### **The Future of the School Site**

The issue now is the future of the school site. The building represents over 200 years of history and heritage of the people of Shevington. Residents want this building to remain a central part of the community. The Parish Council is working with others to ensure that the site remains a community asset. The proposal is that the building should become an all-age community facility providing for the elderly, the young and the vulnerable - a centre for the community. The Parish Council have taken the initiative and sent out a consultation paper to all residents. This has received a strong response - 99 % are in favour of such a development.

In January the Parish Council met with Wigan's Chief Executive Donna Hall and Officers of Wigan Council. Our first question was about the future of the site. We were assured that Council plans are entirely in line with the wishes of the community... It will, of course, take

## Appendix B

time, but the location of the building - next to the surgery, near shops and community centres, on bus routes - makes it ideal for such a development. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the progress of this project.

### **Parish Council Treasure Hunt . Shevington United Charities**

Last July we learnt that many years ago a benefactor bequeathed some land in Eccleston to the people of Shevington..yes about, three to four acres of land in Eccleston land belongs to you! Well, not to all of you .....The benefactors intention was that the proceeds from the land should be distributed and, I quote, 'for the benefit and comfort of the poor and needy of the Parish of Shevington'. How many of you fall into that category! Hmm! There was another bequest also of some financial bonds for the same purpose. . These bequests eventually came together as the SUC .

The whole thing worked well for a time and the lands and bonds produced small amounts of money which were duly distributed to the poor and needy of the Parish - most usually as a hamper of food for various families at Christmas time.

As time went on the land fell into disuse it is now a field full of ragwort, the bonds ceased to produce much at all and Trustees died... That happens a lot to trustees! By 2008 the whole thing ceased to function.

So you now think I am about to reveal that a rich seam of gold has been unearthed in a field in Eccleston. Sorry, No! The Parish Council is researching the Trust, the bank accounts, what remains of the bonds, what can be done about the Eccleston land.. The Deed requires the Parish Council to appoint 3 new trustees, who will eventually appoint further trustees to regulate and distribute the proceeds. The three Trustees have been appointed - they are Cllrs K Shaw, C Horridge and J Ball.

You will have to wait until the next APM for the next instalment.

I would like to thank Councillor Fletcher for the detailed work she has done researching the history and status of the Shevington United Charities and providing us with vital information re the way forward.

### **Vicarage Lane Fields**

As the Clerk has outlined .. The important development at Vicarage Lane Fields is proceeding successfully.. allotment work is also beginning. Drainage is not yet complete. That will have to wait for better weather.

The PC has responsibility for various parts of the land ... The perimeter pathway, some open areas and the small patch of woodland called Little Wood. A Working Party is looking at how to best develop these areas. Our thoughts are: improved pathways, small play - leisure area, increased wild life habitat and, hopefully, development of the Woodland as a Nature Trail. The allotment group will create a small community orchard. Of course, all this will take time, but we have made a start. After seeking advice from Wigan Council's wildlife experts we have applied to the Woodland Trust for plantings of shrubs, trees and bushes to provide greater variety of habitat for wildlife, autumn colour and wild berry bushes. I learnt last week that The Woodland Trust have granted us 270 saplings and plantings free of charge. These we will receive in November. The downside ... We will have to plant them all ourselves! Development of that area will be slow...

## **Appendix B**

We are grateful for the input from Wigan Council's Woodlands Officer, Andy Smallshaw, and The Biodiversity Officer, Graham Workman. We greatly value their in-put. Some of their suggestions include ...opening up the ponds and encouraging crested newts .. Bird and bat boxes are part of Wigan in Bloom project .. We can apply for them.

### **The Drainage of the Memorial Park.**

The long on- going problem of our water-logged Memorial Park and the need for paths and our children's play area to be upgraded is very present in the minds of PC. We hope to develop a plan during this year and will be looking for grant funding to help us solve this very expensive and difficult problem.

If any you have expertise in this area we would be delighted to hear from you.

Cllr Ira Whiteley  
Chairman of Shevington Parish Council