

**Clerk's Report
Shevington Annual Parish Meeting
Held 15 March 2018
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.

The leases for Shevington FC and Shevington Sharks ARLFC were assigned in February 2017 and the work on the lease for Shevington Gardening Club for the allotments is in its final stages. The car park with its entrance gate were constructed last Autumn – soon after the work on the drainage for the playing fields had been completed. The weather prevented the sowing of new grass seed for the pitches, but, hopefully, a new window will open for this in the very near future.

Funding has now been secured for the fencing for the allotment site and the coming weeks should witness the construction of the fence that will enclose the allotments and preparation of the ground for the allotments.

Meanwhile, the sports clubs are in the process of sourcing funding for the construction of a community building that will include team changing facilities and a Working Party composed of parish councillors, co-opted parish council committee members and representatives of the sports clubs and the allotments group are looking into ways in which the landscaping can be developed and what other facilities could be provided for the community.

The drainage in Memorial Park has continued to create issues. The impact of work carried out recently to improve an existing connection from a manhole in the park to the main drain in Shevington Lane and the introduction of a soakaway at the Church Lane end of the trim trail is being monitored. The preparation of a scheme for improvements continues to be a work in progress. To achieve their aims the Council will have to bid for grant funding.

Throughout the past year 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, in the centre of Appley Bridge and in Shevington Moor. The star on the tree in Shevington was up-graded and received many positive comments. The Council are now working with the District Councillors with a view to providing motifs for the lamp standards for the shopping area between the two mini-roundabouts in Gathurst Lane.

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

Appendix A

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 and the watering of most of the planters and flower beds during the Summer months. This will continue.

All the 'In Bloom' groups did very well in the North West in Bloom competition and the Council were delighted for them. Appley Bridge in Bloom volunteers achieved their ambition of being judged as 'Outstanding' in the 'It's My Neighbourhood' category and Crooke Village were named the Best Small Village after their first attempt. Congratulations to all on fitting rewards for a great deal of hard work by, essentially, a small and dedicated number of people.

Sadly, due to a shortage of volunteers, Shevington in Bloom did not enter the North West in Bloom competition in 2017. However, advertising helped to double their numbers and we are hoping the situation for 2018 will be reversed.

Support for Local Organisations and Other Bodies

Cllrs Ira Whiteley and John Ball are the Council's representatives on the Youth Club management committee.

Cllrs Ira Whiteley and Jean Fletcher represent the Parish Council as Trustees of Shevington Recreation Ground. Mr Jim Maloney, Mrs Veronica Maloney and Mr Shane Currie 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. Mr Shaun Boyle acts as liaison with our allotment tenants.

Cllr Jean Fletcher represents the Parish Council on Wigan Council Audit & Standards Committee.

Cllr Carole Miles is the Parish Council's representative on Shevington Surgery's Patient Participation Group.

From time to time members also attend meetings of Crooke Village Residents 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, the Royal British Legion, the Save Our Schools campaign, 6th Shevington Brownies and Shevington Youth Club's 50th Anniversary Variety Show.

In November our Councillors were amongst those leading the annual Remembrance Day Service at Shevington Memorial, with Cllr Ken Shaw taking on the role usually taken by the Chairman, Cllr Ira Whiteley, in her absence. The Vice Chairman, Cllr Bill McKnight, represented the Council at the Memorial at Appley Bridge.

Recent research by Cllrs Jean Fletcher and Ira Whiteley has led to the re-establishment of Shevington United Charities, with Cllrs John Ball, Chris Horridge and Ken Shaw being

appointed by the Parish Council as the three Representative Trustees to take things forward.

Supporting Local Businesses

The 'Christmas Shop Front' competition was held for the tenth year running. The winner in 2017 was the Spar Supermarket in Shevington Vale – a 'first' for the area. Donations were made to Wigan & Leigh Hospice, The Brick and Hope Kidney Patients Association – the Charities nominated by the top three entries. Thank you to local PCSOs Leanne Winnard and Debbie Higginsmith, who acted as the judges.

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. The Parish Caretaker is responsible for doing many of the small, but very important jobs, that no one else can do.

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 has continued to campaign for the reinstatement of the play area at Herons Wharf. This was one of the planning conditions that had to be met by the developer as part of the second phase. He has met with some success – as soon as the materials have arrived work on its reinstatement will begin.

Arriva Rail North took over the 'Northern' services on 1 April 2016. Even before they took over we heard that there were proposals to re-route all train services from Southport to Manchester so that they terminated at Victoria, resulting in the loss of links to Manchester Airport and main line routes via Piccadilly. Local MPs, OPSTA and other stakeholders are campaigning against this and the Council are supporting them.

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 the Summer 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.

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.

Appendix A

In connection with this the Council are working with the District Councillors to install a permanent CCTV system for the Parish – Brighter Borough funding will pay for the purchase and installation of a new camera and sockets at several locations and the Parish Council have agreed to fund the Data Plan and on-going maintenance.

Wigan Council's decision to close Shevington Community Primary School led to the transformation of the 'Save Our Schools' pressure group into a group that would oversee the transition period. The Parish Council supported this group and were represented on it by Cllr Carole Miles. The future of the former school site is currently being explored and the Parish Council are consulting their residents over this.

Conclusion

Over the past year Parish Councillors and co-opted Committee members have been working with many groups in the parish to achieve various goals – too numerous to mention. The Parish Council is always anxious to support and encourage local activities.

Krystyna Pilkington
Clerk to Shevington Parish Council