

**Clerk's Report
Shevington Annual Parish Meeting
Held 20 March 2019
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

Over the past year the Council's focus on the Vicarage Lane project has reduced in intensity. The grass seed for the new pitches was sown in the Spring and the grass has grown. We will, hopefully, see them in use in the not too distant future. The new allotments opened last April – all plots are now occupied - and the lease for that part of the site was assigned to Shevington Gardening Club at the end of January this year.

Meanwhile, the sports clubs have continued to source funding for the construction of a community building that will include team changing facilities. The design of the building was approved by the Parish Council and meets the requirements of the Football Association. It received planning approval in 2018.

Because of the very warm and dry climate last Summer, the drainage in Memorial Park did not create as many issues as in previous years. However, we cannot be complacent – this is England and it is inevitable that we can expect more heavy rain in the future! During 2018 the Parish Council arranged for the ground in the park to be surveyed and its drainage to be assessed. A drainage plan was drawn up and the Council have set aside £20,000 in the 2019 budget as match funding for the work involved in introducing new drainage. To achieve their aims the Council will have to bid for grant funding from a variety of sources.

Throughout the past year the Council have:

- continued to fund the general maintenance of the Recreation Ground;
- continued to maintain Shevington Memorial Park;
- continued to maintain the bowling green at Forest Fold;
- provided community Christmas trees (together with lights) in the centre of Shevington village, on Crooke Village green, in the centre of Appley Bridge and in Shevington Moor;
- in a joint project with District Councillors, provided Christmas motifs for the lamp standards for the shopping area between the two mini-roundabouts in Gathurst Lane;
- continued to support all the 'In Bloom' groups with a view to enhancing the local environment by funding the maintenance of some 45 planters, which are located in all areas of the parish and also paying 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.
- increased its provision of litter bins in the green spaces around the Parish.

All the 'In Bloom' groups did very well in the North West in Bloom competition and the Council were delighted for them. For the first time ever Memorial Park was entered on a stand alone basis and won Gold!

Support for Local Organisations and Other Bodies

Elected members continued to represent the Parish Council

- on the Youth Club management committee;
- as Trustees of Shevington Recreation Ground;
- at meetings of Shevington & District Community Association;
- on Wigan Council's Audit, Governance & Standards Committee for part of the year;
- on Shevington Surgery's Patient Participation Group;
- as Trustees of Shevington United Charities.

Appendix A

Over the past year the Council has been very generous in making donations and awarding grants to a number of local organisations and have maintained links with Crooke Village Residents Association and Appley Bridge Community Association.

In November our Councillors were amongst those leading the annual Remembrance Day Service at Shevington Memorial, with 2018 marking the Centenary of the end of WW1. As part of the celebrations the Council were successful in securing a grant from Wigan Council to fund the replacement of the plaque on the War Memorial. The Vice Chairman, Cllr Bill McKnight, represented the Council at the Memorial at Appley Bridge.

Supporting Local Businesses

The 'Christmas Shop Front' competition was held for the eleventh year running. The winner in 2018 was the Wigan & Leigh Hospice Shop. All three winning entries nominated Wigan & Leigh Hospice as their chosen Charity, which meant that the Council made a donation of £100 to the Hospice. Thanks go to Pam Powell, who was a very able judge.

Planning and other Building Matters

Sadly, we no longer have the services of Mr Barry King, who for many years was invaluable in preparing reports and replies to numerous consultations in this area. However, the Parish Council have tried to continue with these activities to the best of their ability.

Cllr Bill McKnight was successful in his 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 and the play area is now in place.

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. We are proud to say that our finances are sound. We have always been able to make ends meet, despite keeping precept increases to a bare minimum for several years.

Public Concerns

The Parish Council is always willing to take any matters of concern seriously and works with the Community Safety Team and the GMP whenever possible to combat anti-social behaviour. It will continue to do so until all unacceptable behaviour is under control.

In connection with this the Council have made a commitment to fund the Data Plan and on-going maintenance of the CCTV system that was installed in the centre of Shevington last year.

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