

Shevington Parish Council
Clerk's Report to the Council Meeting of 31 August 2017

Bench IMO Eddie Evans

The bench was delivered to Wigan Council's depot in July, was checked over by the LA's operatives, who sent me photographs as proof that it was the correct model and testified that it was in perfect condition. It has been paid for by the Parish Council. The work on installing the bench is due to begin this week, weather permitting. The family are aware of this and will be invoiced once the work has been completed.

July Newsletter

The July edition of the newsletter was delivered as agreed.

Memorial Park Drainage

I have tried to contact Mr Ian Clemow several times over the past couple of months without any success to find out when he will be able to attend a meeting of the Council to provide an update. I have recently discovered that he has been away for the past couple of weeks. Consequently, the update has had to be deferred to a date which has yet to be confirmed. I am reliably informed that Mr Clemow has also been kept very busy with the fallout from the Grenfell Tower fire in recent weeks. As members will appreciate, this has become a priority.

Alteration to No.635 Service

A Co-opted Committee member discovered the following announcement in the TFGM service changes list for July:

*'The 635 Wrightington Hospital/Shevington Vale – Wigan
Run by Diamond. Times are changed with journeys to/from Wrightington Hospital withdrawn.
Partly replaced by buses 640 and 641 for journeys to/from Wrightington Hospital.'*

The changes were approved by Members of TFGM at the Bus Network Committee meeting on 7 July. The Co-opted Committee member advised that

".....the change restores the link between Shevington Moor and Wrightington Hospital lost last year whilst withdrawing the daytime link from Appley Bridge/Shevington Vale and Standish Lower Ground with the Hospital. The evening and Sunday service on 635 to the Hospital still links these areas!"

The notice of the changes was put on the Parish Council's website.

External Audit 2016/17

Work on the external audit submission was completed and forwarded to the auditors. The external auditors report is expected some time during the coming month.

Weeds & Saplings in Memorial Park Play Area

I have made several telephone calls to Greenspaces since the end of June to ask them to remove the weeds from the play area, to rotovate the sand and repair the piece of play equipment which has a rope missing and a loose log. Promises were made each time that a team would visit within a couple of days to carry out the work. Work on the weeds was finally carried out in mid-August, but it is not of very good quality. No repairs have been made to the piece of play equipment and there is no sign that the sand has been rotovated.

Potholes in Gathurst Lane Car Park

Several pot holes have appeared in a section of the car park near its entrance. The pot holes are on the section that comes under the responsibility of the Recreation Ground Trustees. They have been reported to the Trustees, as they are their liability, not that of the Parish Council.

Vicarage Lane Fields Car Park Matters

- a) I met with the project manager for Vicarage Lane Fields Car Park on site to discuss several issues, including that of future security. The funding received from The Deal was not sufficient to cover the costs of fencing as depicted on the plans approved for the project. This will need to be sourced from elsewhere. The project manager agreed to provide me with an

estimate of the cost of low level fencing. This is awaited. The leaseholders have been made aware of this.

- b) When work on the car park began I received a complaint from a resident about the noise created when a delivery was made at about 5am. Again the leaseholders were made aware of this. I have since then checked with the resident, who has confirmed that there have been no further incidents of this nature.
- c) I have also received an email from another resident expressing her family's delight to see the work on the car park taking place.

Treeworks in Memorial Park

The work on trees with TPOs in Memorial Park that required the LA's approval has been approved and the residents of No.35 Shevington Lane have been informed of this. I have met with three approved contractors on site and have received three sets of quotations. The contract for the work will be on the agenda for the Finance Committee's meeting next week.

No.50 Shevington Moor

The Planning Enforcement Officer has written the following in relation to the enquiry about the status of No.50 Shevington Moor:

"On 6 July 2017, in response to a complaint from a neighbour, I carried out a site visit to the property and confirmed the dreadful state of amenity of both the unoccupied dwelling and the garden curtilage to the front side and rear of the property. The property has been unoccupied for a number of years with no persons carrying out any maintenance to the premises whatsoever.

There is no registered title holder to the property and the only land registry entry identified persons who are entitled to collect the annual ground rent to the property. Enquiries revealed that no owner could be located and that no ground rent had actually been collected for some 20 years.

The neighbours are aware that the female occupant merely left the premises a number of years ago and did not return.

Enquiries to trace an owner have proved negative and on 10 July 2017 correspondence was forwarded to the ground rent holders requesting immediate remedial works to the property to negate any requirement for further enforcement action. Sadly, the recipients of the correspondence have denied any ownership rights of the site and declined to carry out any works at their expense.

It has since been confirmed by the Council's solicitors that the recipients of the ground rent have no legally enforceable requirement to undertake the remedial works under the auspices of Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

However, as there is no land owner, the property is in the process of being acquired by Wigan council under Compulsory purchase legislation and at the conclusion of this lengthy process, the matters the amenity of the property will be dramatically improved and the property brought back into occupation.

As yet there is no time scale for the compulsory purchase to be completed."

Dog Running Wild in Longbrook, Shevington

The LA's Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, to whom the enquiry was sent, have written:

"It is important that any complaint or enquiry is reported through the correct channels and as much information as possible provided. The information in this enquiry needs to be clarified – "a small dog possibly a terrier" and "it is probably owner by the residents of 21 Longbrook". If you could ask you constituents to call the Contact Centre on 01942 404364 or use Wigan Council's Report It App to confirm these details and also to leave details of their own then we would be able to make contact and obtain further information for investigation."

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Anti-Social Behaviour in the Centre of Shevington

As above, the LA's ASB Unit have written:

"It is vital that incidents are reported by the public in order for the Council to begin to gather evidence. The Safer Communities Team have not received any recent reports of ASB in Shevington. Again, please advise residents to report all incidents via the methods above in order to provide further details. We are an evidence led service and require residents to come forward to provide information which would assist in identifying those responsible."

Anti-Social Behaviour in Shevington Vale

This time the LA's ASB Unit have written:

"We are aware of some issues in this area and we are currently working with residents who have come forward to report incidents and ongoing issues. GMP have also carried out operations on weekend evenings to patrol the area, provide reassurance and identify those responsible. Works with the Spar on Woodnook Road is ongoing to deter young people from congregating in the area."

Anti-Social Behaviour in Appley Bridge

I have also received the following from a resident of Appley Bridge:

"Appley Bridge is currently being blighted by a large group of children obstructing traffic by dangerous riding on bikes, constantly littering the area, being abusive towards residents and intimidating pensioners.

They are also using and modifying the footpaths in the woods known as the slacks to make a cycle obstacle course. These footpaths are marked as cycling not permitted and I suspect that the flood defences in there are being damaged."

I have advised the resident to report this, particularly specific incidents that he has witnessed, to the Police on 101 and to the ASB Unit at Wigan Council.

Anti-Social Behaviour in the Parish

I have since been informed by the Police that a new PCSO with responsibility for the Ward has been appointed. The individual will have to undergo training and then spend a probationary period working with the other PCSOs for the area before taking full responsibility for the Ward.

Service Delivery Footprint Manager (Wigan North)

At the end of July I met, at her request, with Lynn Prescott, the Service Delivery Footprint Manager for Wigan North, which covers Shevington with Lower Ground, Standish and Aspull. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information about the proposals to create multi-agency hubs to improve liaison between partner agencies in the Wigan area. It is expected that one of those hubs will be based in Shevington Library and Lynn would like to come along to a Council meeting to talk to the Council about this. I am trying to establish a date for this.

Theft of Plants

Shevington in Bloom reported earlier this month that the contents of the two planters on either side of the bench at the Shevington Lane end of Memorial Park had possibly been stolen. The planters, one of which belongs to the Parish Council, were full of lovely non-stop begonias and small fir trees. Attempts were made by Shevington in Bloom to report the incident on 101. As it is now late in the season, the group decided that they would not be re-planting for the time being.

SLCC Regional Training Day

I attended the SLCC's Regional Training Day in Barnsley on 16 August. The training covered new developments and I will be reporting on these both to the Policy & General Purposes and Finance Committees.

Mrs Wade has had conversations with the Headteacher and Shevington Library about the future of the school's Honours Board. The Library responded to her on Monday.

Bowling Events

Shevington Village Bowling Club hosted two successful events on successive Sundays in August. One was a competition day for club members and the other was an open day for prospective bowlers.

Soil Surplus to Requirements

The amount of soil delivered for the 'Edible Appley Bridge' raised beds exceeded what was required. The surplus soil is being offered as a top-up opportunity to the tenants of the raised beds as their crops are harvested.

Department for Education

I received a mysterious message on my answerphone from someone at the Department for Education asking me to email her my email address. I have done this and received an acknowledgement, but have had no further contact from them.

The Red Ensign

A Red Ensign has been purchased and will be flown on 3 September - Merchant Navy Day - as agreed.

Tree Issue in Kickabout Within Longbook, Shevington

A member reported in July that he had discovered that a large tree in the kickabout had been cut down and the cuttings had been strewn all over the grass. The tree had not been removed completely, but part of the trunk had been left in place. The member had heard rumours about who had been responsible for this and was concerned that the, now very dry branches, were a fire risk. The matter was reported to the LA's Trees Officer and it took some time to establish who was legally responsible for maintaining this land. The ownership of the land has not been clarified and the LA have written this week that, "*in the absence of any firm evidence which could be used to take the matter further, the decision was made for us to remove the tree cuttings from the site*".

Japanese Knotweed

It is over two years since the Japanese Knotweed growing on the verges of the M6 near the bridge leading from New Miles Lane to Miles was reported to Highways England. At the time they replied immediately that they had reported it to their contractors. I recently noticed that the knotweed had finally been dealt with.

K.M.P. 30.08.17