

# Witton Gilbert Parish Council News

wgpcnewsletter@gmail.com

## WITTON GILBERT WAR MEMORIAL LISTED STATUS

On November 10 2019 a large crowd of people gathered around the War Memorial to pay tribute to the dead of two World Wars. In attendance were local dignitaries and ordinary people willing to brave the November weather to honour residents who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The War Memorial itself has an interesting history. The memorial was originally erected in the Graham Memorial Park in Witton Dene at a cost of £400, raised by public subscription.



The War Memorial in its original location. Photograph reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office Ref D/Ph 110/26.



Remembrance Day Service November 2019

The designer was JG Burrell of Durham. It was unveiled on Saturday 2nd September 1922 by Lt Col JR Ritson, in attendance were representatives from Parish and District organisations.

The memorial was relocated to its current position in 1978 by members of 105 Squadron, 72 Regiment the Royal Engineers. At the turn of the Century the Memorial was cleaned and the inscriptions recut.

In early 2020 the War Memorial was designated as a Grade II Listed Monument by Historic England for the following reasons: -

- Historic Interest, as an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on the local community and the sacrifice it made in the conflicts
- Architectural Interest, for the strong design interest of its St. Cuthbert's Cross and the complex mouldings of its tapering octagonal column and square pedestal.

The Parish Council were happy to support the listing of the War Memorial when approached by Historic England for comments.

## **WITTON GILBERT PARISH COUNCIL**

### **New Assistant Clerk Appointed from April 2020**

Mr David Rider (also editor of this newsletter) has been appointed Assistant Clerk to the Parish Council from April 2020 with a view to eventually taking over as Clerk on a permanent basis.

### **Parish Council Meetings and Contact Details**

Current members of Witton Gilbert Parish Council are as follows:-

Fraser Reynolds (Chair)	3711198
Neil Liddle	07950440265
Arnold Simpson	3712161
Paul Guy	3710455
Lynne Michelle Hope	0790418423
Geoff Brown (Vice Chair)	07540500073
Amanda Hillary	3718239
Louise Murphy	3711564
Daniel Lynch	07837278471

Parish Council meetings are normally held on the second Monday of the month in the Witton Gilbert Community Centre at 6.30 pm. However, at the time of publication meetings are being held by video link only due to Covid 19. This will continue until it is deemed safe for face to face meetings to resume.

Members of the public wishing to attend a normal or video meeting may do so but must leave during confidential parts of the agenda. Residents attending the meeting may be given an opportunity to speak but this will be restricted to 15 minutes and is at the Chairman's discretion.

Agendas and Minutes would normally be published on the notice boards at McColl's, at the top of Newton Street, at Briar Lea and on the Parish Council website but are currently being published on the website only in line with Government Guidelines.

For any member of the public who wishes to attend an online video meeting of the Council, these will be held on the same date and time as a normal meeting would be so keep an eye on the website for the Agenda. Members of the public wishing to attend the meeting must give their full details (Name, Address, Contact No.) to the Assistant Clerk by email at [wgassistantclerk@gmail.com](mailto:wgassistantclerk@gmail.com) at least 3 days in advance of the meeting and will receive an invitation email with further instructions in good time before the meeting. If a member of the public wishes to take part they will need to be willing to install the necessary software on their PC, Tablet or Telephone if they don't already have it, further details will be provided by the Assistant Clerk before the meeting.

The Parish Clerk can be contacted on 01913711808, or by mobile at 07984027243 or by email at [wittongilbertparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:wittongilbertparishcouncil@gmail.com)

The Assistant Parish Clerk can be contacted by Mobile phone on 07587568095 or by email on [wgassistantclerk@gmail.com](mailto:wgassistantclerk@gmail.com)

### **Neighbourhood Plan Referendum Result**

A referendum was held on Thursday 7th November 2019 to decide on the following question.

**Do you want Durham County Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Witton Gilbert to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?**

The turnout was 23% and the result was:-

- **Yes 409 votes** 88% of the total vote
- **No 56 votes** 12% of the total vote.

The Neighbourhood Plan for Witton Gilbert was therefore approved.

The Parish Council would like to thank all residents who voted in this important referendum.

### **Sacriston Lane Allotments**

The Parish Council with the help and support of our County Councillors are continuing to do everything they can to secure the future of this important community asset

At the time of going to press the Parish Council have obtained County Council approval for a compulsory Purchase Order for the land that the allotments are situated on.

This is a very positive step forward for our long-standing allotment holders who have

backed the Parish Council in their quest to resolve this issue. The Allotments have proved a lifeline during the Coronavirus pandemic and strengthens the case to keep them as a valuable community asset.



Sacriston Lane Allotments  
Summer 2019

At its ordinary meeting on Monday 8th June the Parish Council resolved to approach the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government to seek approval for the proposed borrowing of a loan towards the cost of the purchase of the Allotment Gardens, Sacriston Lane.

### Covid 19

The response of the Parish Council to the current Pandemic is as follows:-

- We have donated £1500 to an initiative overseen by Sacriston Parish Council from the Fulforth Centre, Sacriston to provide hot meals to

vulnerable residents of Sacriston and Witton Gilbert. We have earmarked another £1500 of funding in case it is required in the future

- Parish Councillors and other volunteers have been involved in an initiative to provide shopping for vulnerable residents of Witton Gilbert in association with McColls
- The Council have set up a page on their website with access to information on the Virus. It can be accessed via the front page of the website
- We are currently evaluating ways of allowing the firework display and remembrance Sunday service to go ahead in November should current restrictions still be in place
- We have temporarily suspended litter picking activities in the village but hope to return to this in July with a more limited service depending on how safe it will be to do so

The Parish Council would like to send best wishes to all of our residents at this difficult time.

### COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

For those who may have missed the article in our recent newsletter, we

have committed a total of £20,000 towards significant improvements to the play park situated, just behind the primary school. The current play equipment is worn, damaged and in need of replacement, so the children have somewhere safe and enjoyable to play. This project is being done in conjunction with DCC and the Parish Council.

We arranged for the dragon teeth markings to be refreshed, this work was carried out and now they are much more apparent.

We intend to initiate some walkabouts with the local PCSO and Neighbourhood Wardens, just to clarify how things are going in the area and see how together we can address any issues

If any local sports, social or environmental groups, need funding, please get in touch and we will see if we can help. It is very important to us that children and adults have as many opportunities as possible to participate in local activities.

We regularly attend the Parish meetings and work alongside members to address concerns raised.

If you need to contact us, our contact details are shown below

[bev.coult@durham.gov.uk](mailto:bev.coult@durham.gov.uk)

03000268675 Bev

[arnold.simpson@durham.gov.uk](mailto:arnold.simpson@durham.gov.uk) 03000268674 Arnie.

## **WITTON GILBERT COMMUNITY CENTRE**

The Community Centre (Cooper Hall) is currently closed at the moment due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. We hope it won't be too long in the future before we can re-open our doors and welcome back our regular users attending classes such as Zumba, Play Group, Weight Watchers, Walking Group, Card and Craft Class, Bridge, the Monday IT Group and many others.

For the latest information on the status of the Centre telephone 01913712161 or 07982862127.

### **Statement by the Committee**

May we the Committee of Witton Gilbert Village Hall Association express our most sincere congratulations to Lotty our Zumba teacher for her remarkable achievement in becoming the Regional Instructor for the North and overall Fitsteps instructor of the year for 2019. These awards were held in the Tower Ballroom in Blackpool.

We are so proud of Lotty and most grateful she is holding her classes in the Community Centre.

## **WITTON GILBERT WOMANS INSTITUTE**

A big thank you to everyone who attended the Woman's Institute Annual Christmas Musical Evening at Cooper Hall last December.



Handing over of the cheque for the Chemotherapy Ward at the WI Christmas Musical Evening

Together we raised over £500 for the Chemotherapy Ward at University Hospital, Durham.

Witton Gilbert Woman's Institute normally meet at 7 pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month except for August at Cooper Hall.

Please contact Christine Liddle on 07535552103 for the latest information on future meetings.

## **CHILDREN'S HOPES AND DREAMS (CHAD)**

Last year thanks to the generosity of the village we raised £11,000.00. We spent some of that money on the toddler group, the drama group, and Breathing Space.

We also purchased a large number of pairs of sparring gloves for a local boxing club to help their children learn to box. We spent quite a large chunk of the money on two high flow oxygen units for Treetops neonatal ward at University Hospital of North Durham (Dryburn).

We also paid for an Easter family day at the club which was free to all the kids in the village, we did the same at Christmas and we also put a Halloween party on. Over the Christmas and New Year period we raised £5,500.

We spent some of it at Treetops and the rest was given to a local mental health charity If U Care Share, who we worked with last year developing a scheme for them to go into Witton Gilbert Primary School and talk to the teachers and children about mental wellness.

Thanks to everyone for all of your support.

**Editor Mr. D. C. Rider**  
**wgpcnewsletter@gmail.com**

**Due to Covid 19 this edition will be published online for now but we will eventually be going back to publishing in print form when the time is right. We may republish some of the items in this edition in print form at a later date.**

**Please keep sending in your Articles as we will be publishing online on a regular basis. Articles should be emailed to the editor at the above address as a Word Document and any photographs should be sent separately as an attachment.**