

Witton Gilbert Parish Council News

wittongilbertparishcouncil@gmail.com

A THANK YOU TO FRASER REYNOLDS

Long serving Parish Councillor, and former Durham City Councillor, Fraser Reynolds attended his last Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 19th May 2021, following a period of service of 46 years, to the community of Witton Gilbert, excepting for a 4 year break in service due to work commitments.

Almost two years into his service as a Councillor Fraser was elected Vice Chairman of the Parish Council at the Annual General Meeting on the 17th May 1977 and Chaired his first meeting on the 14th June



Chairman Fraser Reynolds being presented with the Durham County Tidy Village award in 1979



Former Parish Councillor Fraser Reynolds

1977 due to the absence of the then Chairman. He was subsequently elected Chairman on the 13th June 1978 at the AGM and served in that role off and on all the way up to his retirement. In his early years as Chairman of the Parish Council, he was presented with the trophy when Witton Gilbert won the Tidy Britain Award in 1979 and in his final year he was involved with efforts to save the Sacriston Lane Allotments.

In addition to his service on the Parish Council Fraser

represented the village as a Councillor on the City of Durham Council where he rose to be Leader of that Council up until it was dissolved during local government reorganisation in 2008.

Fraser has been heavily involved in the organisation of youth football both in the village of Witton Gilbert and the surrounding area for many years.

He served on the management committee of the Village Hall for a time, and in conjunction with other members of that Committee helped to steer it through a difficult period.

He unselfishly pursued this sense of public service for one reason and one reason alone he loves the village of Witton Gilbert and it is only right and proper that we as a community record our thanks to him for his service.

Well, done Fraser and I'm sure everyone involved with the Parish Council and many local residents wish you a well-earned and happy retirement.

Christmas Tree

In the previous edition of this newsletter the Parish Council asked for residents' views in the choice of a new permanently planted Christmas tree for the village planned to be in place for next Christmas. In light of the feedback received and after discussing the matter the Parish Council have narrowed it down to a choice of three species of tree. Members have decided to run a poll to further gauge residents' views.

You can share your views/preference directly with the Parish Clerk via Email at wittongilbertparishcouncil@gmail.com, or via Facebook; both the Parish Council and Witton Gilbert Facebook pages will have a poll that will remain active for the remainder of December. Alternatively place a cross in the box below corresponding to your preference, cut out and return to the Deputy Clerk at 7 Hillside, Witton Gilbert.

We are providing some information on the three candidate trees as follows in order to help our readers make an informed choice.

Western Red Cedar



The western red cedar is a medium to large-sized tree that grows up to 60 metres tall and 2.5 metres in diameter. Its trunk tapers rapidly and it has a long, even crown. Leaves are scale-like, arranged in flat, fan-like sprays.

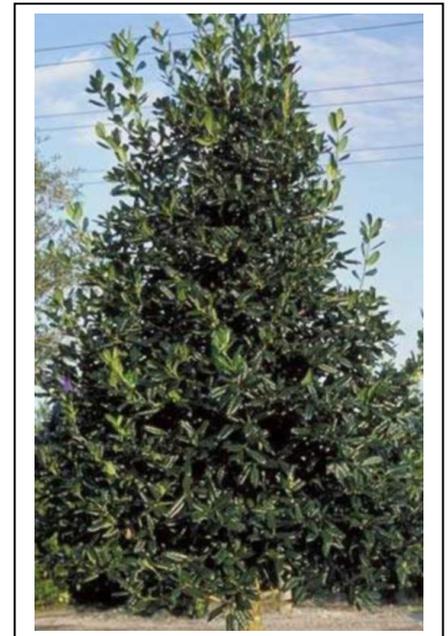
Nordmann Fir



Is a large evergreen coniferous tree growing to 55–61 m tall and with a trunk diameter of up to 2 m.

The leaves are needle-like, flattened, glossy dark green above, and with two blue-white bands of stomata below. The tip of the leaf is usually blunt, often slightly notched at the tip, but can be pointed, particularly on strong-growing shoots on young trees.

Nellie Stevens Holly



A dense growing variety with smooth, dark green, glossy leaves often up to 7.5 cm long. Versatile variety which can be grown as bush or small tree. Vigorous and fast-growing, this Holly quickly grows into an attractive, broad pyramid-shaped evergreen, 6 to 9 metres high and 3 to 3.5 metres wide.

**A Merry Christmas
and a Happy New
Year to all our
readers**

Western Red Cedar	
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Nordmann Fir	
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Nellie Stevens Holly	
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Parish Council Meetings and Contact Details

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

Daniel Lynch	07837278471
Neil Liddle	07950440265
Arnold Simpson	3712161
Lynne Hope	07904718423
Geoff Brown	07540500073
Lisa Watts	07592527174
Claire Simmons	07736936918
Kristi Johnson	07758334238

Parish Council meetings are normally held on the second Monday of the month in the Witton Gilbert Community Centre at 6.30 pm. Anyone attending the meetings are currently being asked to consider wearing face coverings and to social distance in line with current government advice on Covid 19.

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

Agendas are published on the notice boards at Morrisons, at the top of Newton Street, at Briar Lea, and on the Parish Council website and minutes are available on the website and on the notice board at Morrisons.

The Parish Clerk can be contacted by Mobile phone on 07587568095 or by email on wittongilbertparishcouncil@gmail.com

The Deputy Parish Clerk can be contacted on 01913711808, or by mobile phone at 07984027243 or by email at wgassistantclerk@gmail.com

Fireworks Display

Saturday November 6th 2021 saw the much anticipated return of the fireworks display at the Clink Bank field in Witton Gilbert after it was cancelled last year due to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Unfortunately, we were unable to have a bonfire this year due to some stringent insurance requirements.

However, following some intensive discussions, by the Clerk and his Deputy, with the Council's Insurers and with the input of the organisers of the display, it was agreed at the last minute that a firework display could be held but without a bonfire.

Despite this the event was a great success with a large crowd of spectators turning up.

The Parish Council will likely review arrangements for next year in the hope that we can bring back the bonfire although this may involve looking at alternative sites.

Please send items for future newsletters to the editor Mr. D. C. Rider

wittongilbertparishcouncil@gmail.com

Christmas Fayre

Following on from our successful Village Fun Day the Parish Council organised a Christmas Fayre at the Working Men's Club in Witton Gilbert that took place on Sunday 5th December.

There was an impressive selection of local businesses booked for the day including: festive flowers, handmade baubles, candles, clothes and beauty products.

Santa was there to meet the children and give them a little gift and a face painter was booked.

For those wanting a little Christmas spirit the bar was open!

There was a raffle and tombola with some amazing prizes with all proceeds going to our amazing local charity, CHAD!

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Sunday the 14th November once again saw local dignitaries, serving military personnel, and members of the public gather at the War Memorial in Witton Gilbert, to pay tribute to the fallen of two World Wars after the event had to be cancelled last year due to the Covid pandemic.

The Parish Council was represented by Councillor Dan Lynch the Chairman who laid a wreath on behalf of the Council as well as several other Councillors and both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk.



Wreath Laying on Remembrance Sunday

In addition, there were many other representatives of local organisations laying wreaths in tribute to the fallen. The service was performed by the Reverend Dr Gordon Harper and musical accompaniment was provided by the Chester le Street Riverside Youth Brass Academy.

*They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them*
Extract from For the Fallen
by Laurence Binyon

POSSIBLE NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FOR WITTON GILBERT

Believe Housing and Homes by Carlton are currently in the early stages of a public consultation, on a new development they are proposing on land between Front Street Witton Gilbert and the A691 bypass (See a map of the area of the proposed development below).

They have arranged an event at the Community Centre on Thursday 16th December between 2 and 6 pm, in which residents can come along and see the proposals for themselves and have any questions they may have answered.

There will also be a website link for public consultation: <https://planninghouse.co.uk/consultation-wittongilbert> that is due to go live on Monday 13th December.

