



# WENDOVER PARISH COUNCIL

## END OF YEAR REPORT

### 2019 - 2020



With the 2019 elections postponed until May 2020, and the introduction of a Unitary Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, it was felt the Council should take the initiative to review its value to the community in preparation for the opportunities 2020 may bring. Disappointingly COVID-19 has severely impacted on the Council's plans; however, we continue to work positively and successfully ensuring the essential Council functions for Wendover residents and the environment are maintained to a high standard.

Undeterred, outlined below are the initiatives completed for the year 2019/20 in preparation for 2020/21.

Four key areas of focus from within the Community Action Plan were identified:

- **Identity** – Strive to ensure every resident within Wendover knows who we are and what we do for them.
- **Engagement** – Take our identity to the next level by organising engaging events to maintain our connection with the residents.
- **Productivity** - Demonstrate to the community that worthwhile projects can be identified and more importantly delivered on time within budget.
- **Performance** – Ensure the Wendover community is receiving value for money by producing accurate budget forecasting and regularly scrutinising Key Performance Indicators

What follows is a summary of the achievements for 2019/20 based on the four objectives identified.

## IDENTITY



Figure 1. Cheryl Marley in WPC uniform

**Uniform:** At the beginning of the of the year if you casually asked most Wendover residents where the Parish Council Offices are and what it does, it is highly likely you would have received a negative response! Increasing our identity through the introduction of uniforms and holding a Clock Tower Open Day has helped. Residents are now approaching the staff to propose ideas for improving services, highlighting faults and commenting on how smart the staff look! This has helped; however, we recognised we need to do more if we are to maintain the community's interest in the council.

**Clock Tower Open Day:** On the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019 we held a Clock Tower Open Day encouraging residents with their families to visit the Council Offices, meet the Councillors and staff, and maybe consider becoming a Councillor or supporting one of our Working Groups.

The event was very well attended with many of the visitors saying, “we didn’t know the Parish Council had offices in the Clock Tower”. The Council also recruited a new Councillor from the event!

**Replacement Gazebo:** Wendover Parish Council is instrumental in organising numerous events which go unrecognised. The purchase of a new gazebo incorporating the Council logo and contact details will be used at future events. If you see it come & talk to us.

Did you know all the events over Christmas on the Manor Waste are organised by the Parish Council? This includes the Christmas Light Switch On, The Christmas Market with entertainment and the Carols Around the Tree!



Figure 2 Replacement gazebo

## **ENGAGEMENT**

**Our Revitalised Website:** Cheryl Marley, a member of the Administration Team, has been instrumental in developing a new website. Utilising Wix as the platform she designed a site which is appealing, informative and easy to navigate. The feedback we have received has been very positive and this with our improved Facebook presence (last count 611 followers) has significantly improved how we communicate with residents. We now regularly receive messages reporting faults and other concerns around the village as well as positive comments on our other engagement activities.

**Clock Tower Screen:** You will have hopefully noticed the Clock Tower Information Screen. Its primary purpose is to advertise council events ranging from the Neighbourhood Plan and Community Awards to the regular competitions we now hold throughout the year. We are also offering advertising space to support local clubs, societies and businesses. Please contact our Administration Team for more information on how to book your advertising space



*Figure 3 Clock Tower screen*



*Figure 4 Staff attend RAF Halton Graduation*

**Staff Attend RAF Halton Graduation:** Engagement with local organisations and businesses has been at the forefront of the Council's efforts during 2019/20. An invitation from the Station Commander to attend a Graduation Parade on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February was gratefully accepted by Amanda Massingham and Jane Ellis. The afternoon commenced with them enjoying lunch with the Station Commander and Reviewing Officer before being escorted to the parade square. The parade was followed by a visit to the Trenchard Museum where they learnt a great deal on the history of RAF Halton and received a further invitation to visit again for a tour of Halton House with lunch!

**Seasonal Competitions:** During the year competitions were organised to involve the community. The competitions were held over Easter, Halloween, Christmas and finally a Valentines promotion encouraging residents to 'Love their Shops' and shop in Wendover.

## **PRODUCTIVITY**

Traditionally projects are proposed by the Councillors and Staff for essential maintenance, environmental and recreational improvements. It is then resolved by the Council to progress what is felt as the most beneficial projects to the community. We've have had a productive year; however, it is our ambition to have the community materially engaged with the Council, stimulating thinking to provide ideas which can benefit Wendover residents, societies, clubs and other organisations.



Working Groups involving members from the community will provide a productive method of achieving this ambition. COVID-19 permitting, details for joining the Groups will be published throughout the year and we encourage you to bring your valuable skills along by joining a relevant Group.

*Figure 5 Above ground electrics installed for reliable electrics on the Manor Waste.*

## **PERFORMANCE**

Annual Ear Marked Reserves (EMR's) are agreed by the Council for projects to provide new amenities, update existing facilities and provide funding for worthwhile endeavours to protect the Parish; the HS2 Working Group campaigning for the Wendover Tunnel is a good example.

Productivity is a by-product of performance and it is crucial all Wendover residents receive value for money for their precept payments.

Accurate budget forecasting is essential, particularly when a large proportion of the budget is allocated to the EMR's..... which brings us back to community involvement and the benefits of Working Groups!

Pertinent Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are central to providing tangible evidence that objectives are being met. This year we introduced a KPI to monitor EMR progress and the subsequent end of year achievements.



*Figure 6 Witchell Car Park extension during construction*

Measured as a percentage, our aim is to achieve 100% on the completion of EMR's. Realistically this is unlikely due to unpredictable events such as weather conditions and postponed project start dates. Notwithstanding this, we applied the KPI to the percentage spend achieved against the budgets for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

We are pleased to report a 42% increase for 2019/20 over 2018/19 confirming our performance and productivity has improved significantly!



The Council and Staff hope you find this report informative and thought-provoking. Working with the support of their communities, Parish Councils can achieve remarkable goals and we hope you are now clear on Wendover Parish Council's desire to work with you over the coming year and beyond.....despite COVID-19!

## **UPDATE REPORTS ON GRANTS AGREED FOR 2019/20**

**Wendover Action Group** Only a short time ago but in a different world the Parish Council were kind enough to make the Wendover Community Car the beneficiary of the 2019 Christmas Event on the Manor Waste. A cold but nevertheless enjoyable evening.

It is now 25 years since the original founders began their work which led to the formation of the Wendover Action Group, whose sole function is to provide and run the Wendover Community Car. Our service has been driven (pun intended) by the aim of reducing social isolation of those members of the local community who have difficulty getting about. We do ask our passengers to contribute to part of the cost of running the service, but inevitably we rely on contributions from the local community to meet the full cost. We have been helped by the Parish Council many times in the past. We are especially pleased, not only by the funding, but with the recognition of our efforts that being chosen as beneficiaries signifies.

Two other stall holders at the event, The Harpenden Building Society and Heritage & Sons were also generous in donating their proceeds of the evening to us. My thanks to them as well.

For obvious reasons we are off the road at present. Our volunteer drivers are eager and willing to return to duty when we can.

It is important that the safety and well-being of our drivers and passengers is not compromised. We will be carefully considering the prevailing conditions and the actions we need to take before re-commencing.

Jeremy Stevenson, Chair, Wendover Action Group, May 2020.



### **Report to Wendover Parish Council on their donation of £5,000 in 2018/19 for a polytunnel**

Lindengate are incredibly grateful to the Trustees of Wendover Parish Council for their wonderful and generous grant of £5,000 which has enabled us to purchase a fit for purpose poly tunnel to create an environment for our Gardeners (service users) to be able to enjoy activities and help increase the wildlife habitats on the site, learn more about particular species and eco-environments and support some of Lindengate's partnership projects with national and local conservation groups.

Our Gardeners can now work in a calm and safe polytunnel in all weathers to propagate specific endangered indigenous plants and trees which eventually go out to nature reserves and local developments and into the Lindengate gardens. Of equal importance are the many and varied activities and the additional learning opportunities that our conservation policy brings to our Gardeners. A natural extension to the nurturing that we do on the Lindengate site was to offer support to other conservation projects within our local community. Our need for as broad a spectrum of



activities all year round for our Gardeners caused us to venture into a number of initiatives which in the past 5 years have developed into some very successful and mutually beneficial partnerships. They have the double benefit of offering our volunteers a chance to get involved in the bigger picture as well as learning and using specialist skills that can then be passed on to our Gardeners.

**Thank you**, without your kind grant of £5,000, we would not have had a specific area to grow these endangered species. The propagation of all these plants and trees are helping so many, from our Gardeners, volunteers, local and national conservation groups, and to provide a much needed trading arm for Lindengate. Thank you from everyone at Lindengate for your generosity and continued support, it is very much appreciated by us all.

### **Wendover Youth Club**

The grant from the WPC has assisted in the centre providing the following for the young people of Wendover.

Our Weekly activities include:

**Wednesday Youth Café** – After school café for school pupils of the John Colet aged 11-16.

**Thursday Youth Club** – 2-hour youth club for ages 12-16 that provides a range of different activities for each week (e.g. cooking, tournaments, sport, crafts and debates) and gives them the opportunity to hang out with friends.

**Friday Amazing Donkey** – 2-hour youth session for ages 10-12 years old. We provide a different activity each week (e.g. arts and crafts, karaoke, non-technology night and sport).

Yearly activities:

#### **Youth Festival 2019:**

We ran our annual youth festival where young people from Wendover could take part in a range of activities e.g. inflatables, sport and challenges as well as hang out with friends and enjoy some food.

#### **Trips:**

Throughout the year we take the young people who attend our different activities on trip. Over the last year we have taken the young people bowling, night walks, ice cream making and other fun activities.

Support for community events – in the last year WYC has provided input to various events including volunteer elves and BBQ helpers at the Christmas market, and a team of riders for the “cycle from Aleppo”,

WYC also provides a wide-range of tailored individual and group support to young people with mental health and well-being needs – most of this is at least partly funded by our partnerships with the schools, Lindengate, LAF etc.

Since the lockdown and closure, we have carried on our youth activities providing the following:

- **Online Thursday youth Club** – 1 Hour online session via zoom in which we played quizzes and games for young people aged 11—16.
- **Pen Pal Scheme** – Young people writing letters to individuals who are isolated and vulnerable.
- **Food Parcel Scheme** – Young people donating food to create food parcels which have been delivered to individuals who are isolated and unable to get the essentials
- **Art Competition** – 14 young people submitted entries to our lockdown art competition in which the themes were Hope and keyworkers. The artwork was amazing and the winners received vouchers and a donation to charity.
- **Foodbank Donation Week** – Young people and the local community are going to have a donation week to the foodbank to help ensure they have the items needed to create the food boxes that go to the people in the community who need the parcels.

### **Carers Bucks £2500 grant**

Firstly, on behalf of Carers Bucks I would like to say thank you for your very generous donation of £2500. The money that donated by Wendover Parish Council has really helped us support unpaid carers within Wendover. We needed a pot of emergency funding to help carers in Wendover who needed support for various things such as food, support with aches and pains and lots more. To give you some examples of families that your money has been able to help. We bought a £250 supermarket voucher for a carer and their family who needed some food. We also were able to give a carer £250 for a chiropractor treatment as they were suffering with back pain from lifting their cared for.

As you can see the money you have donated to us has really made a difference to the carers of Wendover. We still have £900 left to support more carers and their families in need of emergency funding.