

Whixall Parish Council



Chairman: Ian Mercer

To all Members of the Council. You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the Parish Council of Whixall to be held on Wednesday 8 March 2023 at Whixall Social Centre which will commence at 7.30pm in order to conduct the following business enclosed on the agenda below. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Signed:

A. Mercer

Date: 1 March 2023

1. Chairman's welcome, announcements and public session

Should a member of the public so require they will be permitted to speak. Public speaking time will be limited to 15 minutes, 3 minutes per speaker

2. Update from North Salop Wheelers (Tim Fry)

3. Apologies

4. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary or any other interests or requests for dispensations

Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting and which is not included in the register of interests. Members are reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

Members are reminded that they must declare non-pecuniary interests relating to agenda items

5. To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8 February 2023

6. Reports

Shropshire Councillors; Parish Councillors and Clerk

7. To agree the Parish Council's community policing priorities (information circulated)

In response to correspondence from West Mercia Police in relation to the Community Charter

8. Parish Matters

a. The Marlot

- i. To receive an activity report from Marlot Conservation Group (Circulated)
- ii. To consider publication of a Marlot information leaflet (Circulated)
- iii. To agree a course of action for the access to the Marlot (information circulated)

b. To consider the extension of the Grass Cutting Contract for two years on the current rate.

c. Hollinwood Green: Update on parking, maintenance and boundary (Map Circulated)

d. To consider updating the Asset Register (Report circulated)

e. To consider the Annual Parish Meeting

9. Planning (to include items received post agenda)

a) To receive planning applications from Shropshire Council

23/00407/FUL	Erection of extension and alterations to existing vehicular access and driveway. 9 Moss Villas, The Moss.
22/05736/FUL	Proposed Dog Exercise Area (Amended Application) Glebe Farm, Church Lane

b) To note planning decisions made by Shropshire Council

23/00037/FUL	Erection of extension to form enlarged kitchen/diner with en-suite over. Hornspike Lane Farm, SY13 2QD	Grant Permission
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10. Finance

- a) To receive Monthly Balance Record and reconciliation (circulated)
- b) To resolve to approve outstanding invoices and payments
- c) To receive a report on end of year working budget and reserves.
- d) To resolve to distribute grant funding (applications circulated)

Recipient	Reason for Payment	Amount £	Ref.	Power of Expenditure
<u>Payments before the meeting</u>				
ICO	Data Protection Fee	35.00	60.22DD	DPA 2018 s134
<u>Payments to be Made</u>				
HMRC	PAYE	145.60	61.22	LGA 1972 s112(2)
Employee	Salary for February Hours	219.18	62.22	LGA 1972 s112(2)
Employee	Reimbursement	58.19	63.22	LG(FP)A 1963 s5 / LGA 1972 s.142
NEST	Pension Contributions	57.20	64.22DD	LGS(DP)R 1961 s1
MCG	Fuel for machinery	17.37	65.22	OSA 1906, S164(9) and (10)

11. Items for Next Agenda

To enable Councillors to bring forward items for the 12 April 2023 meeting agenda.

Whixall Parish Council



Chairman: Ian Mercer

Minutes of the Parish Council's Monthly Meeting held on 8 February 2023 at Whixall Social Centre starting at 7:30pm

Present:

Councillors: Cllr Mercer (Chair); Cllr Weedall; Cllr Evans; Cllr Harris; Cllr Spenser; Cllr Rodenhurst;
Cllr Howard; Cllr Rawlinson

Shropshire Councillors: Cllr Broomhall; Cllr Towers

Clerk: A Roberts

Other Organisations 0

Members of the Public 2

10/23 Public Session

Two members of the public attended and spoke in relation to Planning Application 22/05736/FUL.

11/23 Apologies for Absence

None received.

12/23 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

13/23 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Proposed Cllr Weedall, seconded Cllr Spenser and agreed by all present.

Resolved: The minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 January 2023 are an accurate record.

The Chair signed the minutes.

14/23 Reports

- a. Cllrs Broomhall and Towers (Shropshire Council) circulated reports prior to the meeting. The content was noted.
- b. Cllr Harris reported on a Safeguarding presentation at the recent NSAC meeting. He advised that SALC will shortly circulate a draft policy which the Parish Council should consider using as the basis for a local policy.
- c. The Clerk's update included the following:
 - Two grant applications have been received and will go onto the March agenda.
 - Shropshire Council is providing a cost of living Q&A for Staff and Councillors. Details to be circulated.

15/23 Parish Matters

- a. The Marlot
The content of the Marlot Activity Report was noted. The Council discussed the concerns raised about access safety due to damaged concrete above the culvert. Cllr Rawlinson agreed to go on site and carry out an assessment.
Cllr Rawlinson has received an additional £120 in donations for Marlot Action Plan items. This will be transferred to the Parish Council account and earmarked.
- b. Grass Cutting Contract
Deferred to the March meeting as no information was available regarding any increase in contract rates.
- c. Parish Connectivity Survey (Circulated with meeting papers)
Cllr Harris presented a report on the survey carried out in Autumn 2022 and gave a

verbal report of a meeting with Shropshire Council attended by himself and Cllr Mercer along with representatives of Wem Rural Parish Council.

d. Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme

Cllr Harris outlined the details of this scheme. Whixall is in the second phase and more information will be made available in future. Members noted that Shropshire Council has an interest in Broadband connectivity, mobile connectivity is a purely commercial matter.

e. Hollinwood Green Parking and Maintenance Issues

Cllrs Mercer and Spencer met on site with the Clerk and Martin Spenser prior to the meeting to view the modifications carried out by a local resident.

The Clerk outlined the following:

- The terms Hollinwood Green and Hollinwood Common appear to be interchangeable. A plan from `2004 appeared to show the area of the common covering a wider area than formerly believed and Shropshire Council has been contacted for a copy of the Commons Map to ensure that the area of modified land is part of the Common.
- The Council holds a document showing that the land is an unowned common.
- Through a volunteer, the Council has maintained the Green for many years but has no actual management responsibility for the land and does not own the land. However, the land is included on the Council's asset register and this should be addressed.
- Even though the land is unowned, the Council may have some powers to prevent restricted works.

Following discussion, including the option to write to the resident concerned, it was agreed that the Clerk will carry out more research and this will be included in the March agenda.

16/23 Planning

a. To Consider Applications

22/05736/FUL	Proposed Dog Exercise Area. Glebe Farm, Church Lane.	The Parish Council objects to this application on the grounds of its impact on residents in the locality.
23/00037/FUL	Erection of extension to form enlarged kitchen/diner with en-suite over. Hornspike Lane Farm, SY13 2QD.	The Council supports this application which it believes to be a reasonable extension, in keeping with local character.

b. Planning decisions received.

22/05573/FUL	New oak-framed 2 storey side extension, oak porch & attic conversion. Dragonfly House, 12a Platt Lane, SY13 2NY	Granted
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17/23 Financial Matters

a. To receive monthly bank balance record.

The Clerk advised the council of the council's bank balances.

DATE	ACCOUNT NAME	AMOUNT
31 January 2023	Current Account (Working Budget)	£2,101.93
	Savings Account (Reserves)	£11,920.43
TOTAL		£14,022.36

The bank reconciliation and statements were checked and approved by Cllr Evans.

b. To resolve to approve outstanding accounts

Orders for the payment of outstanding invoices and all payments approved remotely (under "Power to Spend" LGA1972 s.112(2) and 124(1). Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Rawlinson and agreed by all.

Resolved: The outstanding accounts should be paid and the payment transactions authorised by two nominated councillors.

Recipient	Reason for Payment	Amount £	Ref.
HMRC	PAYE	474.40	56.22
Employee	Salary for December hours	219.18	57.22
Employee	Reimbursement	22.94	58.22
NEST	Pension Contributions	57.20	59.22DD

Scheduled date of next meeting:

8 March 2023 (7.30pm)

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

1.	Background
	West Mercia Constabulary consults the Parish Council each year regarding community policing priorities for the parish. These concerns are then included in the Parish Contact Contract which sets out the working relationship between the local police and the parish council.
2.	Detail
	In 2021/22 the community policing concerns were: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Anti-social <u>driver</u> behaviour, particularly in the area around the school2. Security of rural and semi-rural properties3. Concerns about potential dog thefts and suspicious callers
3.	Action Required
	The Council has been asked to confirm that the above concerns still stand or identify new concerns before 28 March 2023.

A Roberts
1 March 2023

West Mercia Police Community Charter

Parish Contact Contract

- INITIAL CONTRACT
 RENEWED CONTRACT

Parish Council:			
Contract Date: Click here to enter a date.		3 Month Review Date: Click here to enter a date.	
Council Chair		Tel:	Email:
Council Clerk		Tel:	Email:
PC / PCSO		Tel:	Email:
Top 3 community issues			
1	2	3	
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	
Other Comments			
Agreed contact	Contact type Email Choose an item. Choose an item. Choose an item.	Contact Frequency QUARTERLY Choose an item. Choose an item. Choose an item.	

PLEASE SEND A COPY OF THE COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR & CLERK, YOUR Local SNT AND TO THE PREVENTION HUB TEAM EMAIL BOX

Marlot Conservation Group (MCG)

Work report to Whixall Parish Council meeting 8 March 2023

Period - 3 February – 2 March 2023

On 6 February the MCG, together with Peter Bowyer +2 from Natural England and Nicky Hunter (Newt Surveyor/Ecologist) inspected the pond area in order to consider work to re-scape several of the ponds. The issue of the strength and stability of the main entrance bridge was looked at and agreed by all that it was unsafe for any large mechanical digger machinery to use. Any vehicular access to the Marlot would have to be via the lower NE field and up the main pathway. However, on further inspection and a walkthrough to the middle ponds it was found that the main pond, being the only access through to the other ponds, was too deep and the banks too steep to safely get the digger safely across. There was no other viable access to the central and back ponds and therefore it was agreed that mechanical digger clearing of the ponds was not currently achievable. The conclusion by all was that unless a further access crossing point from the main roadway to the centre and back ponds is constructed that further pond clearing will have to be carried out by hand only. This is an issue which will need further consideration at a later date.

After the extensive flooding of the pond area reconstruction work was required on the willow hedge around the viewing area. The side supports had collapsed and willow brash had spilled out onto the pathway. New hedge posts from woodland willow were cut and staked around the hedge and the willow brash re-stacked. A temporary covering of cut willow was laid across the muddy pathway at the steps to the woodland area. It is intended to strengthen the pond paths with a further trellis of cut willow and then covered by wood chippings – but this needs to be done when the ground has had time to dry out. We also cleared and dug out reed mace from the edges of several of the ponds in order to open them up for the breeding newts. The reeds were left on the side for a week to enable any wildlife to return to the ponds. The overgrown pathways and pond surrounds were also cut back and all arisings raked up into piles. We were lucky to have an additional workday this month as we received an offer of help from 3 volunteers from Natural England. Their assistance enabled us to quickly remove the cuttings, rake and clear pathways and place all the arisings in our compost heaps. No further work will be conducted in the ponds themselves due to newt breeding, however the pathways will undergo regular cutting for visitor access during the rest of the year.

We are currently focussing work on clearing silt and vegetation from the meadow-side ditch, starting at the James' farm end. This is a thankless and dirty task which will take a considerable amount of time and effort to complete. We are still waiting for some clear and dry weather in order to burn the cut and dug willow from our winter efforts – this will take place as and when.

After receiving Councillor Rawlinson's report on the main bridge, the MCG took the opportunity over a weekend to carry out a further assessment of the bridge/culvert. The MCG response has been submitted in a separate report.

The final review and update of the A5 Marlot information 8 page booklet was conducted by myself and my daughter, Alice. It was passed around the MCG who all agreed that it will provide visitors with an informative and useful guide to the Marlot. It has been passed to the Parish Council separately for approval and subsequent printing considerations.

Graham Turnbull
Marlot Conservation Group
2 March 2023

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 March 2023 14:44
To: Whixall Parish Clerk
Subject: Marlot A5 Information leaflet final copy
Attachments: MARLOT A5 Information Leaflet Final V.2.1.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Mandy.

Please find attached the final version of the Marlot A5 Information leaflet.

To explain the sequence of pages on the pdf file:

First page consists of leaflet back and front pages

Second page is printed onto the back of first page (leaflet pages 2 and 7)

Third page consists of leaflet page 6 and 3

Fourth page is printed on back of third page (consist of leaflet pages 4-5)

Once printed they can be compiled into the 8 page leaflet

That is why they are not in sequence.

Please pass the final version to the PC for approval. They now need to consider options for printing.

My thoughts are for an initial run of 200 on a grade of paper similar to Parish Newsletter (or lesser if too costly). I would be happy to look at local printers and costs or you can cost with the printers you use for Newsletter. If we have funds available this FY within Marlot annual costs perhaps this could be used?

We are looking at sourcing two leaflet boxes from NE for the main and side entrances to the Marlot.

Regards
Graham



WELCOME TO THE MARL ALLOTMENT (THE MARLOT) LOCAL NATURE RESERVE



NEAR ROUNDTORN BRIDGE,
CANALSIDE, WHIXALL, SY13 2PH
WHAT3WORDS: PORT.FELL.CAPTIONS

THE MARLOT PAST & PRESENT

This six-acre MARL ALLOTMENT or THE MARLOT as it is historically known, is a very rare example of 'common land'. In the early 1800's the majority of land in England was enclosed by wealthy landowners, but THE MARLOT survived intact as common land.



The Common Registration Act of 1965 placed any remaining areas of common land under the protection of local authorities. Whixall Parish Council took legal ownership of THE MARLOT in 1975.



Up until WWII, THE MARLOT was used for rough grazing of stock and for digging up the agriculturally valuable mineral resource of marl, a crumbly limestone clay. Marl was spread as a fertiliser on poor ground on the edge of Whixall Moss. The clay may also have been used to line the adjacent canal, which may explain why there are so many depressions in the ground.

The use of marl as a fertiliser was no longer practised in the area; the common land became overgrown, neglected and sadly afflicted by the dumping of scrap metals, glass and general household rubbish.

In 2000, Whixall Parish Council secured Countryside Stewardship funding to undertake clearance work to remove dumped materials, managed the trees and undergrowth, clear pathways and maintain the ponds.



VOLUNTEERING

We are looking for volunteers to help out at THE MARLOT.

No experience is needed, just a love of nature and the willingness to get stuck into a variety of tasks.

Tasks vary from weeding, grass cutting, pond management, clearing undergrowth, tree and brush cutting.

No matter if you can only give an hour of your time or a full day, all and any help is welcomed. And its fun!

THE MARLOT CONSERVATION GROUP will provide all personal protective equipment and assorted tools for each task.

Health and Safety is paramount and associated training and safety briefs are given prior to each individual task to be undertaken.

For further details:
Please email the
Whixall Parish Clerk

on
clerk.whixallpc@hotmail.co.uk



THE WOODLAND AREA

Walk through the cool and dappled woodland of THE MARLOT. The understorey is mainly bramble scrub, but wild garlic and British bluebells carpet THE MARLOT in the spring.



Nest boxes and bat roost boxes have been installed around the site. Currently *Natural England* staff and volunteers, under supervision, monitor their occupation as part of a wider nest box scheme across the whole of the Mosses NNR.



Take a rest break at the pond terrace just at the edge of the woodland. Look out to the ponds and enjoy the view and peaceful surroundings.



In 2006, the Whixall Environmental Group, now formally known as THE MARLOT CONSERVATION GROUP (MCG) was created to continue the work and manage the site for the enhancement of biodiversity and the enjoyment of the local community. The Group has been made up of local volunteers giving their own time on THE MARLOT.



On walking around the site, it soon becomes apparent that the special value of THE MARLOT as a conservation area lies in the very close proximity of a number of markedly different habitats, including broad-leaved woodland, dense scrub, grassland areas and ponds.

PLEASE SEE MAP ON BACK.



In 2020, it was decided by *Whixall Parish Council* to elevate the status of THE MARLOT in order to promote its existence and use by the local community, wildlife organisations and the wider general public. Work commenced on the application process to achieve Local Nature Reserve status. A comprehensive management plan was developed by the MCG and *Whixall Parish Council* and submitted to *Natural England* for approval. Local Nature Reserve status was awarded to THE MARLOT on 10th December 2021.

THE POND AREA

The historical digging of Marl for fertiliser and other uses has produced numerous man-made ponds of different sizes and depths at THE MARLOT. Considerable work was undertaken in 2012 to establish the main pond area.



Take a walk around the pond area and you will be surprised by the different flora and fauna that has populated this part of THE MARLOT. Numerous reed mace (bull rushes) and horse's tails cover the ponds - some so thick that you cannot see the pond, so regular maintenance is required.



The ponds are home to the protected great crested newts as well as smooth newts. Frogs and toads also frequent the ponds. Dragonflies and damselflies can be seen in abundance darting in and around the pond plant life. The rare white-legged damselfly is a regular summer visitor.

Newt surveys are conducted from early April to mid July. Licenced experts lay newt traps and all records are provided to *Natural England* and *Shropshire Wildlife Trust*. There are habitat piles everywhere on site to provide refuge for amphibians and other wildlife.



THE MEADOWS

THE MARLOT has two linked meadow areas - which we call the Front and Back Meadows. Take a leisurely walk around the front meadow and look out for the many varieties of butterflies. Stop off at the picnic table for a rest and take in the tranquil and quiet surroundings.



The meadows support a wide variety of wildflowers such as the Common Spotted Orchid, Devil's-bit Scabious, common knapweed and the abundant Rosebay Willow herb in all its purple glory.

Control of re-generated willow growth presents the biggest challenge to the MCG. Work is in place to remove as much as possible to enable more wildflower growth.



Look out for the patch of Creeping Willow (ring fenced for protection). A nationally rare plant species and found at only a handful of sites in North Shropshire.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 February 2023 17:30
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Marlot inspection.

Good evening Ian,

Just to say I visited site this afternoon to do an inspection. In my professional opinion, there is no immediate danger of a collapse in the culvert however, some general maintenance will be required.

The general construction of the gateway with the culvert running beneath, has been formed by way of placing an old clay pipe with approximate dimensions of 450mm diameter into the base of the ditch. Then loose rubble and general building waste has been used as back fill on top to build up the level.

At the final top level, concrete pre-stressed panels have been placed parallel to the crossing with loose earth forming the final layer.

There is evidence that directly below these panels of the use of waste concrete similar to that found in old fence post holes, of being placed to prevent the internal infill falling out into the open ditch.

Over a period of time, this waste concrete has fractured, due in part to settlement and also the lack of any internal re-bar steel support in this concrete.

However, the concrete panels above these have not suffered any noticeable cracking and are not of any risk of failing in the immediate future.

I conducted an on site water-flow test and with your back to the canal looking at the gate, if we took the left hand side of the ditch there is a reasonable flow of water moving at approx 1000 mm per 5 seconds.

There was no water movement noted on the opposite side of the culvert. In addition, the ditch water level at this point was in excess of 1200mm deep as opposed to 100 mm on the other side.

It is noted that this 'blockage' was due to excessive tree root growth with visible signs of hawthorn bushes of approx 85 mm diameter having taken root in the ditch.

In conclusion, given the biodiversity of the site and ditch, it would probably be best left well alone as any attempt to clear this blockage with a large machine would result in significant damage to the existing hedge. The blockage of the ditch creates no problem and in fact, will probably provide a more effective habitat for the invertebrates living in such an environment.

Hope this is helpful?

Kind regards.

Alan

Marlot Conservation Group (MCG) comments on Councillor Rawlinson's Marlot bridge site report (9 Feb 23) – for the attention of Whixall Parish Council Members

The MCG received Councillor Rawlinson's Marlot bridge report from the Whixall Parish clerk on 15th February and it was distributed to all four members for comment. As a result of the report it was decided that the MCG should conduct a further inspection of the bridge and pipe on Sunday 19th February. The following is our response to the points made in Councillor Rawlinson's report and from our on-site inspection and discussions between the MCG members.

We thank Councillor Rawlinson for taking the time to go down to have a look at the issues that had been raised in my last monthly report (Period 8 Jan-2 Feb 23). We agree that there is no immediate danger of collapse of the bridge/culvert at present and that is why we previously reported that it was still safe for pedestrian traffic, however there is evidence of extensive damage and deterioration to the bridge/culvert structure and we do not consider it safe for any form of vehicular traffic – which we have now stopped. The MCG is, however, not in agreement with Councillor Rawlinson's assessment of the construct or state of the bridge/culvert. In his report he states that on the final top layer there are concrete pre-stressed panels that have been placed parallel to the crossing with loose earth forming the final layer. Whilst there is one concrete lintel on the edge at the pond side which goes across the ditch, we could find no evidence of other similar pre-stressed panels along the length of the bridge. We dug a trench across the centre length of the bridge and could only find stones and ballast under the top earth layer and no concrete panels. Our summation was that if we dug out the earth, rubble and ballast stones further that we would eventually get to the layer which Councillor Rawlinson describes as waste concrete. Looking at both sides of the culvert from the ditch level it is evident that this concrete layer has split and sunk slightly, however it is not possible to assess whether this is completely along the full length of the structure. The sides and internal infill have collapsed into the ditch and will continue to do so as there is no support at either end. We took the opportunity to get right into the water on the pond side ditch and as suspected we retrieved materials from the bottom of the ditch, finding it was predominantly ballast and stones that has come from the collapsed side of the infill. On the meadow side you can visibly see where the infill side has collapsed and is unsupported. This erosion of the infill sides will only continue to get worse and will start to considerably reduce the strength and integrity of the culvert sides and the banks. Councillor Rawlinson also conducted a water-flow test and stated that there was a reasonable flow of water. The MCG, again from getting right down into the ditch, re-assessed the water flow. We found that the water flow is not coming via the pipe but in the main from eroded flow channels on the roadside bank in which the water has found a way through due to the blockage at the pipe on the pond side. You can see the soil erosion and the channels on the meadow side of the bank and see the water flowing through these; they are situated well above the pipe level. On the pond side the head of water is so high that the water is finding a

route through the left hand side of the soil bank and infill ballast. Unless the main pipe can be cleared of ballast rubble and root obstructions this will be the only way the ditch water will get through – causing more damage and further compromising and degrading the strength of the bank and structure as a whole.

On the pond side of the ditch the blackthorn trees have rooted across and under the ditch around the pipe area and the combination of this and collapsed rubble and stones from the culvert sides are the main cause of the blockage. However, with the water level being so high it is impossible to assess where the pipe entrance is and what exactly is the obstruction and how it can be cleared (we have been on our hands and knees and tried but it is too deep). We agree with Councillor Rawlinson's assessment that heavy machinery should not be used to clear the roots as this would result in significant damage to the bank and further compromise the strength of the bridge/culvert structure – so an alternative method and procedure needs to be properly assessed and considered.

Councillor Rawlinson then goes on further to state that “the blockage of the ditch creates no problem and in fact, will probably provide a more effective habitat for the invertebrates living in such an environment”. The MCG strongly disagrees with this assessment and insists that it is vital that the blockage to the pipe is completely cleared for the following reasons:

Firstly, it is not correct to state that the high water levels would benefit wildlife on site. Over the winter many creatures hibernate and others take cover in burrows or on the low level ground in the pond area. This winter the pond area was badly flooded across the whole extent of the pond area resulting in it resembling a lake (we have never experienced this level of flooding at the Marlot before). We are now concerned that many of the Marlot creatures hibernating and living in burrows have been drowned; we have not seen much evidence of the usual wildlife since the water has receded, which is a concern. One of these hibernating creatures is our key and, more importantly, protected Marlot species – the Great Crested Newt. If the blockage is left the pond area will continue to extensively flood each winter and period of heavy rain, drowning and killing off resident Marlot protected and other wildlife species. These will not come back.

Secondly, the ditch takes surface water run-off from a number of small holdings and properties on the fringes of Whixall Moss. There is potential, more a likelihood, for the water to contain significant levels of pollution, particularly from nitrates and phosphates. Allowing such chemicals and polluted water to leech into the ponds is detrimental to the health of the amphibians and insects in an already delicate ecosystem. These two points are borne out by the opinion of experts from Natural England and Dr Nicky Hunter, the ecologist who conducts our annual newt surveys, when they recently visited the Marlot to assess the pond area and which they all consider a major cause for concern.

Thirdly, it is considered that this extensive annual flooding of the ponds will continue year on year if the culvert pipe blockage is not cleared. This results in the MCG having to constantly restrict access to the ponds in order to repair and fix the pathways around the pond area to make them safe and usable for our visitors. This is time consuming and takes our efforts

away from more important pond management tasks. The MCG only has 3-4 volunteers and the effort is considerable and most disheartening when we see previous hard work constantly destroyed, when it can be prevented.

In applying for Local Nature Reserve (LNR) status for the Marlot, Whixall Parish Council's consultation paper declared that the LNR would :

- Raise the nature conservation interest within the local community
- Promote recognition of the site's wildlife value
- Safeguard the local ecosystem of the site- benefiting the environment and local community alike
- Improve the quality of life, health and well-being for local community and visitors through direct contact with natural surroundings

With these aims in mind the MCG considers that Whixall Parish Council has a mandated responsibility, as the stewards of the Marlot, to ensure that every effort is made to ensure that the Marlot is made properly fit for purpose to achieve a safe and healthy environment within the Local Nature Reserve for both visitors and wildlife alike, using the best resources, funds and advice available. The MCG considers it essential that the Parish Council seek an outside and suitably qualified professional surveyor/engineer to assess and report on the condition of the bridge/culvert structure, assess it fully and make recommendations and guidance for repairs that will last, provide a risk assessment for its current use/limitations and recommend proper and considered method and directions on how to clear the current blockage without causing further damage to the bridge/culvert. MCG members do not have the experience or knowledge to make any recommendations on the best course of action and do not feel comfortable in conducting any corrective work or repair unless directed by a suitably qualified surveyor/structural engineer with specific and clear instructions. We consider that there is a health and safety issue on the bridge for visitor and vehicular use, albeit not in the immediate timeframe, but it will deteriorate further and get worse if the issues highlighted are not properly addressed and corrected. In addition, not clearing the blockage will result in heavy flooding every year and will cause irreparable long term consequences to Marlot wildlife and the ecosystem and therefore it is vital that this achieved quickly and effectively. As part of the application process, Shropshire Council had to debate and approved the Parish Council's application for LNR and therefore it too has a considered interest in the Marlot LNR as it meets Shropshire Council's strategic outcomes for the following Strategies:

- Shropshire Great Outdoor Strategy (2018-2028)
- Shropshire's Economic Growth Strategy – developing visitor economy, improving quality of life and ensuring attractive environments
- Shropshire's Local Plan – better planning of meaningful greenspace and non-motorised access, new destination country parks, protecting environmentally sensitive areas

- Shropshire’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy – harnessing the power of the outdoors to increase physical activity, address mental health issues and help people stay independent longer.

The MCG suggest that Whixall Parish Council approach the relevant Shropshire Council department to have a qualified surveyor/engineer attend the Marlot and provide a comprehensive report on how to repair the bridge/culvert structure, how blockage clearing can be achieved without further damage and also provide a risk assessment of the bridge/culvert in its current state. If this is not achievable then the Parish Council should consider paying for a private qualified and registered surveyor/engineer to carry out an assessment and provide recommendations/fixes to the issues highlighted. Once a report is provided then the Parish Council will have to look further on how to achieve any recommendations on corrective work and to what cost. In the meantime, the MCG will not do any further investigations or work on the bridge/culvert/pipe until an official report has been made and recommendations and actions agreed by the Parish Council. We will, within our capabilities and abilities, assist or conduct any work that is needed to sort out the issues, but only from directions and advice provided by a suitably qualified surveyor/engineer.

The MCG hope that you will consider our findings and recommendations and initiate the process to have the bridge/culvert and blocked pipe professionally surveyed and assessed. It is important that future work is considered so that we can ensure the Marlot remains a safe and healthy place for both visitors and wildlife alike. The Marlot remains “Whixall’s Hidden Treasure” and is worth time, effort and cost.

Regards

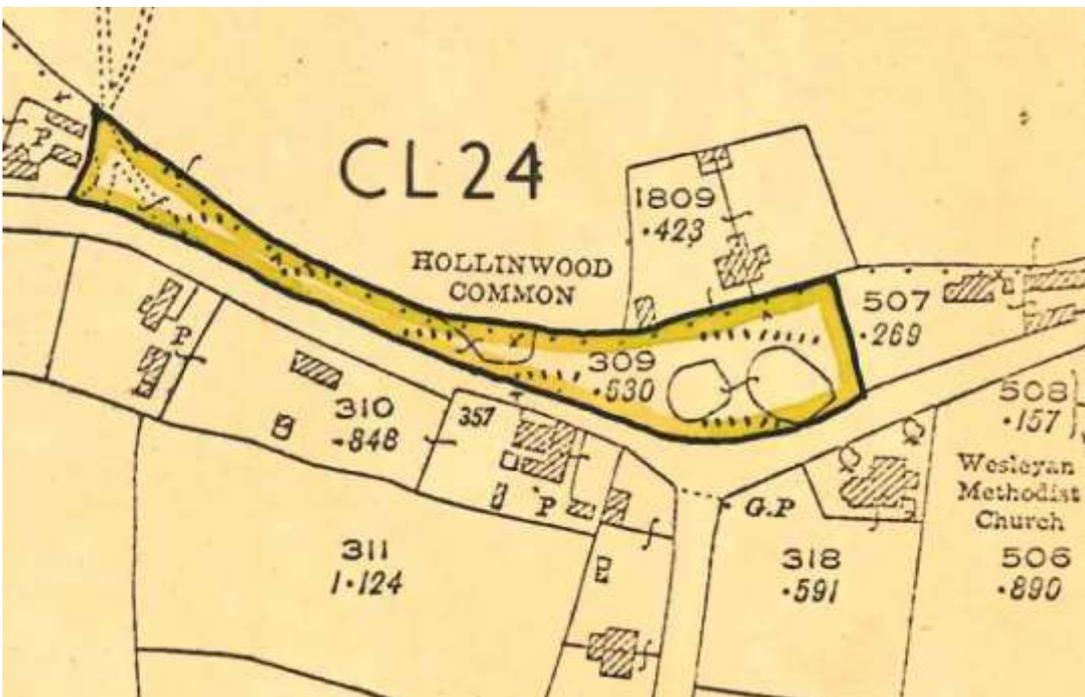
Graham Turnbull
Marlot Conservation Group Lead Volunteer
Hollinwood, Whixall

27 February 2023

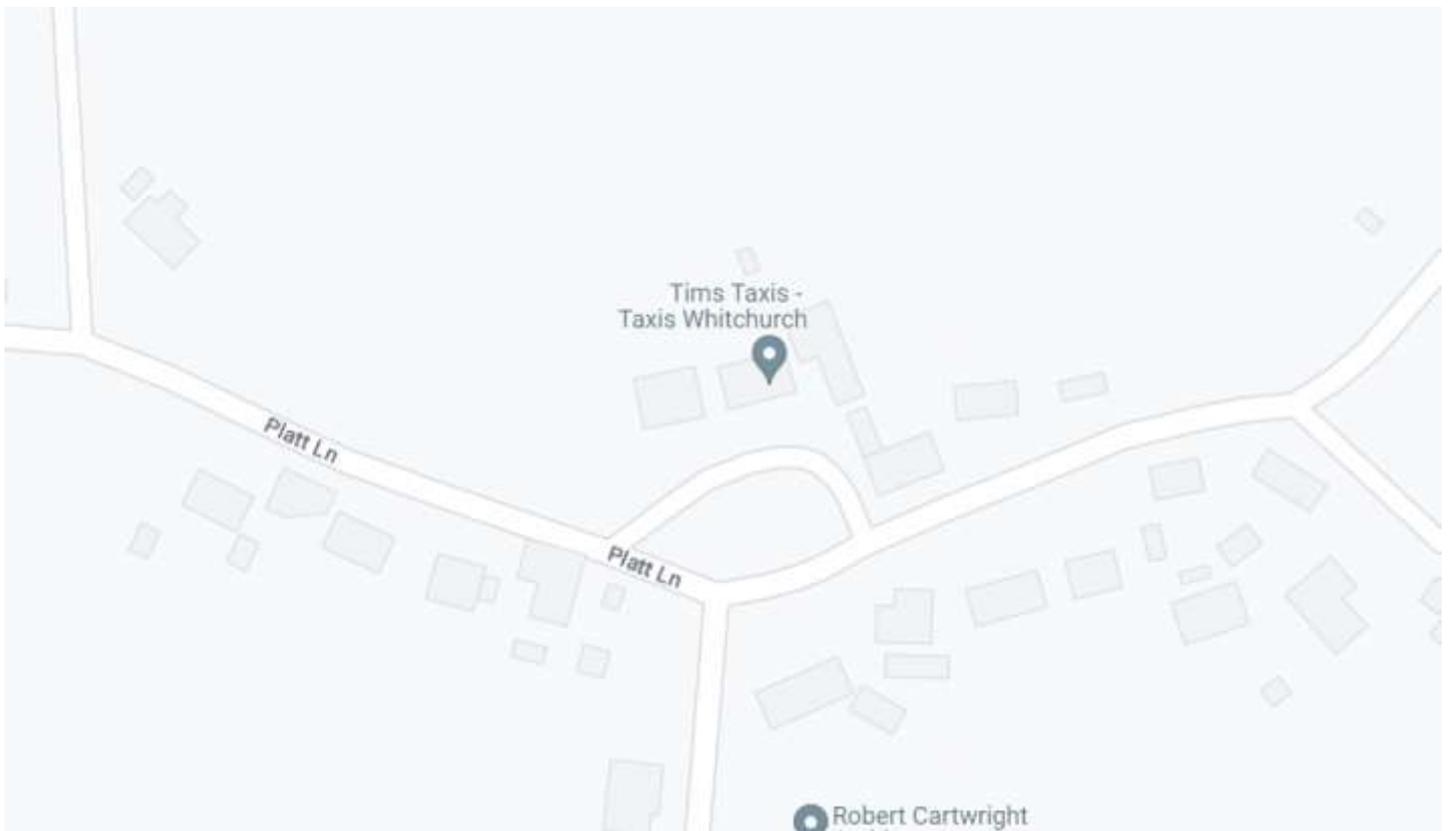
Agenda Item 8c Hollinwood Green/Common



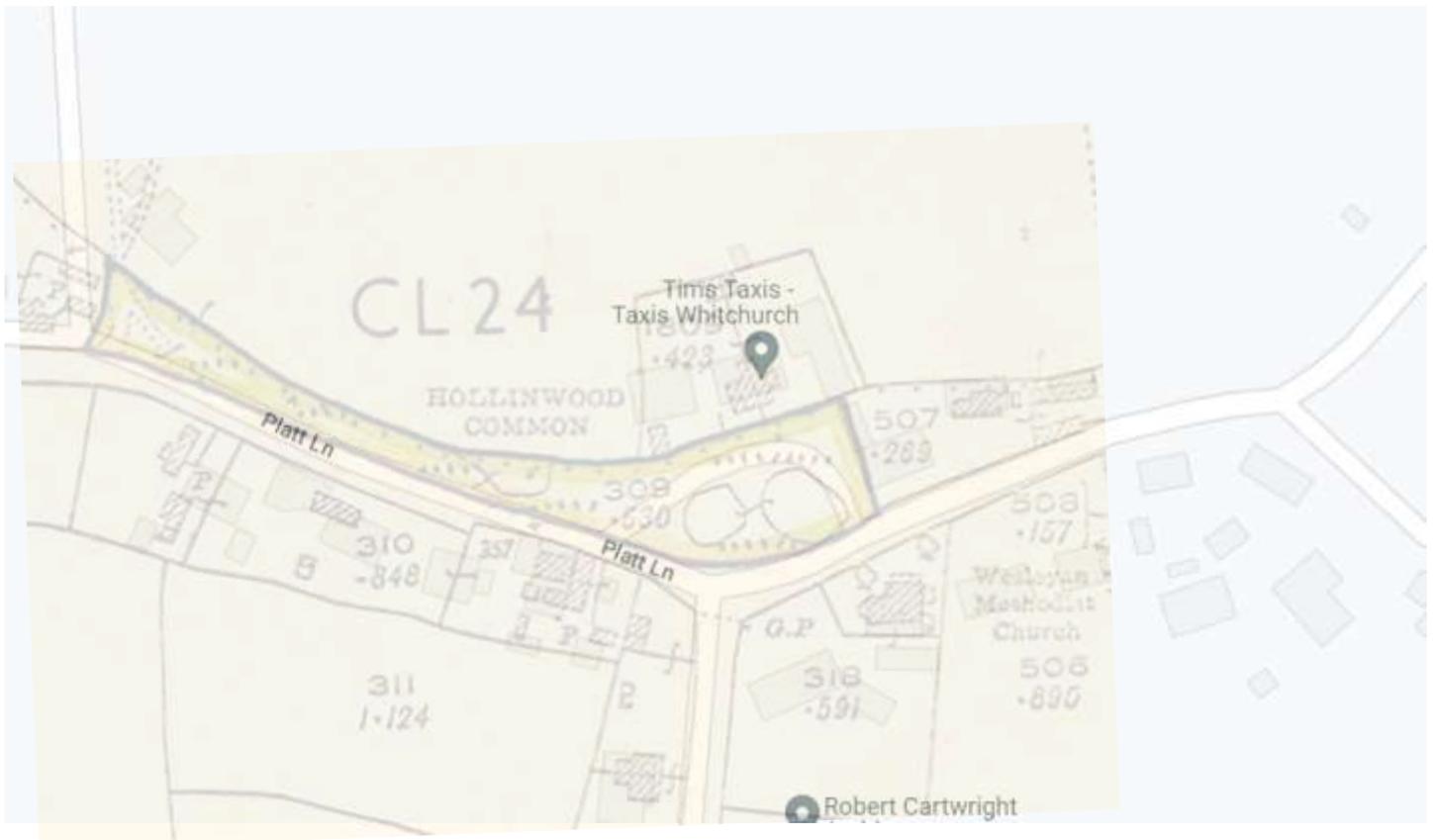
Ariel view of Hollinwood Common



Copy of entry in the Commons Register held by Shropshire Council (area marked in yellow is Hollinwood Common)



Road layout showing Hollinwood Common (Google Maps)



Commons Register entry superimposed onto road layout.



COMMONS REGISTRATION ACT 1965

Reference No. 231/U/13

In the Matter of Hollinwood Common
Whixall., North Shropshire, Salop

DECISION

This reference relates to the question of the ownership of land known as Hollinwood Common, Whixall., North Shropshire District being the land comprised in the Land Section of Register Unit No. CL.24 in the Register of Common Land maintained by the Salop County Council of which no person is registered under section 4 of the Commons Registration Act 1965 as the owner.

Following upon the public notice of this reference no person claimed to be the freehold owner of the land in question and no one claimed to have any information as to its ownership.

I held a hearing for the purpose of inquiring into the question of the ownership of the land at Shrewsbury on 9th April 1975. Mr. Dulson and Mr. Trow from Whixall Parish Council were present but had no information as to the ownership of the land in question.

In the absence of any evidence I am not satisfied that any person is the owner of the land and it will therefore remain subject to protection under section 9 of the Act of 1965.

I am required by regulation 30(1) of the Commons Commissioners Regulations 1971 to explain that a person aggrieved by this decision as being erroneous in point of law may, within 6 weeks from the date on which notice of the decision is sent to him, require me to state a case for the decision of the High Court.

Dated this

15th

day of

April

1975

Commons Commissioner

Bank Reconciliation
Whixall Parish Council

Balance per Bank statements as at 28 February 2023	£	£
Current Account (Unity Trust)	1,622.01	
Savings Account (Unity Trust)	11,920.43	
Petty Cash	-	
		13,542.44
Less: any un-presented cheques		
		-
Add any unbanked cash		
Net Bank balances		13,542.44
CASH BOOK		
Opening Balance	11,897.66	
Add: Receipts in the year to date	12,116.34	
Less: Payments in the year to date	- 10,471.56	
Balance as at 28 February 2023		13,542.44

Variance -

Customer: Whixall Parish Council

Account: 60-83-01 20423117

Statement 46 from 01 Feb 2023 to 28 Feb 2023

Date	Description	Serial No	Debits	Credits	Balance
01Feb2023	Brought forward balance			2,101.93	2,101.93
15Feb2023	Direct Debit (ICO)		(35.00)		2,066.93
16Feb2023	B/P to: AJ Roberts		(219.18)		1,847.75
16Feb2023	B/P to: AJ Roberts		(22.94)		1,824.81
16Feb2023	B/P to: HMRC Cumbernauld		(145.60)		1,679.21
24Feb2023	Direct Debit (NEST)		(57.20)		1,622.01



Customer: Whixall Parish Council

Account: 60-83-01 20423120

Statement 35 from 01 Feb 2023 to 28 Feb 2023

Date	Description	Serial No	Debits	Credits	Balance
01Feb2023	Brought forward balance			11,920.43	11,920.43

Page Generated at 15:23 on 01 Mar 2023

Clerk.whixallPC@hotmail.co.uk

From: team@hugofox.com
Sent: 06 February 2023 21:57
To: Clerk.whixallPC@hotmail.co.uk
Subject: Response to: Whixall Parish Council. Application for Community Grant. form

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

HugoFox

Response to: Whixall Parish Council. Application for Community Grant. form

Dear Whixall Parish Council,

You have received the following completed form from Dr. Robin Nelson.

Name of Organisation

NS Wheelers Community Bus Project

Your Name

Dr. Robin Nelson

Your role within the organisation

Hon. Sec.

Address for Correspondence

NS Wheelers CBP, c/o Wem Town Council, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem,
Wem
Shropshire
England
SY4 5DB

Email address

nswheelersCBP@gmail.com

Phone number

Briefly describe what your organisation does

NS Wheelers Community Bus Project aims to provide community bus services to residents of North Shropshire (market buses; community groups - day trips/regular travel; lifts to appointments in conjunction with community cars). We focus particularly on isolated, disadvantaged or disabled members of the population of North Shropshire, irrespective of age, colour, nationality or gender.

Charity Number (If applicable)

Application pending

Amount of grant funding applied for

£300

If you are applying for funding towards a one-off project, what is the total cost of that project?

N/a

If you are successful, how will this money be used?

We have developed a business plan to cover a three-year period, aiming to upgrade our fleet of five vehicles, and have been successful in an application to the Morgan Foundation for a "Smiley Bus". Any contribution is welcome as we need to replace the second of our old buses as soon as we can raise the funds, The money will be used in the first instance as a contribution to cover the running costs (vehicle maintenance, fuel, insurance, modest administration costs). Any excess of overall income over running costs will go to the replacement bus fund, Our running costs (fuel, insurance) have risen exponentially.

Approximately how many people will benefit from the work of your organisation?

Currently there are approximately 30+ members who are regular bus users and 2-3 individual journeys are made each week. The aim is to build modestly by better advertising the service. and our subscriber numbers have increased in the past year.

What proportion of these people live in Whixall parish?

10% live in Whixall, Coton, Coton Wood.

How will these people benefit?

* The service fills a gap in local transport provision. Whixall, Coton and Coton Wood residents are regularly transported to Market Drayton, Wem and Whitchurch markets and all North Shropshire residents may take advantage of other facilities offered. Many customers regard the bus service as a life-line, particularly in these difficult times

Selected option(s)

I am authorised to apply for this grant on behalf of the organisation named above, To the best of my knowledge the information included in this form is correct, I will provide a short progress report to the Council outlining how the funding has been spent, I understand that details of successful grant applications will be published on the parish council website

Submitted Text

Bank details for NS Wheelers CBP: [REDACTED]

Signature

R.A.Nelson

User's IP address: [REDACTED]

This message was sent from the following page:

[View Page](#)

From: team@hugofox.com
Sent: 30 January 2023 16:43
To: Clerk.whixallPC@hotmail.co.uk
Subject: Response to: Whixall Parish Council. Application for Community Grant. form

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

HugoFox

Response to: Whixall Parish Council. Application for Community Grant. form

Dear Whixall Parish Council,

You have received the following completed form from Mrs. Jennifer Spenser.

Name of Organisation

Whixall URC Graveyard Trust

Your Name

Mrs. Jennifer Spenser

Your role within the organisation

Secretary

Address for Correspondence

Myrtle House, Cumberland Lane
Hollinwood, Whixall
Whitchurch
Shropshire
United Kingdom
SY13 2NJ

Email address

[REDACTED]

Phone number

[REDACTED]

Briefly describe what your organisation does

The objectives of the Trust are the maintenance and upkeep of the Whixall United Reform Church Graveyard.

Charity Number (If applicable)

EW 37553

Amount of grant funding applied for

£50.00

If you are successful, how will this money be used?

To help towards the cost of maintaining the graveyard, eg grass cutting, essential repairs.

Approximately how many people will benefit from the work of your organisation?

The people that will benefit will be passers by who can see that the graveyard is well looked after, especially those with friends and relatives that are buried there.

What proportion of these people live in Whixall parish?

A high proportion.

How will these people benefit?

In having a pleasant outlook. Also the relatives of those buried there will have a quiet and peaceful well maintained place to visit the graves of their loved ones.

Selected option(s)

I am authorised to apply for this grant on behalf of the organisation named above, To the best of my knowledge the information included in this form is correct, I understand that details of successful grant applications will be published on the parish council website

Submitted Text

[REDACTED]

Signature

Jennifer Spenser

User's IP address:

[REDACTED]

This message was sent from the following page:

[View Page](#)

Any questions? Please don't hesitate to contact us:
team@hugofox.com.

Thank you
HugoFox Team

 Like us on Facebook

 Follow us on Twitter

From: team@hugofox.com
Sent: 23 February 2023 20:20
To: Clerk.whixallPC@hotmail.co.uk
Subject: Response to: Whixall Parish Council. Application for Community Grant. form

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

HugoFox

Response to: Whixall Parish Council. Application for Community Grant. form

Dear Whixall Parish Council,

You have received the following completed form from Miss Nicola Brayford.

Name of Organisation

Whixall CE Primary School

Your Name

Miss Nicola Brayford

Your role within the organisation

Headteacher

Address for Correspondence

Whixall CE Primary School

Brownsbrook, Whixall,

Nr Whitchurch

Shropshire

England

SY13 2SB

Email address

[REDACTED]

Phone number

[REDACTED]

Briefly describe what your organisation does

Education of children from 2 to 11 years old.

Amount of grant funding applied for

£225.00

If you are applying for funding towards a one-off project, what is the total cost of that project?

448.50

If you are successful, how will this money be used?

The money will be used to support the purchase of a commemorative coin for each child in school to celebrate the coronation of King Charles in May 2023.

Approximately how many people will benefit from the work of your organisation?

150

What proportion of these people live in Whixall parish?

75% of children live in Whixall parish

How will these people benefit?

The children will have a memento of potentially a once in a lifetime event of the coronation.

Selected option(s)

I am authorised to apply for this grant on behalf of the organisation named above, To the best of my knowledge the information included in this form is correct, I will provide a short progress report to the Council outlining how the funding has been spent, I understand that details of successful grant applications will be published on the parish council website

Submitted Text

Bank Details: Barclays Bank, Shrewsbury Account Name: [REDACTED] Sort Code: [REDACTED] A/C Number [REDACTED]

Signature

N. A Brayford

User's IP address: [REDACTED]

This message was sent from the following page:

View Page

Any questions? Please don't hesitate to contact us:

team@hugofox.com.

Thank you

HugoFox Team

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